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A Program of the Georgia Forestry Commission with support from the U.S. Forest Service

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

An Action Plan for Wildfire Mitigation and Conservation of Natural Resources

Bacon County



JANUARY 2019

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The following report is a collaborative effort among various entities. The representatives listed below comprise the core decision-making team responsible for this report and mutually agree on the plan's contents:

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Bacon County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report

Bacon County Wildfire Pre Suppression Plan

I. OBJECTIVES

The mission of the following report is to set clear priorities for the implementation of wildfire mitigation in Bacon County. The plan includes prioritized recommendations for the appropriate types and methods of fuel reduction and structure ignitability reduction that will protect this community and its essential infrastructure. It also includes a plan for wildfire suppression. Specifically, the plan includes community-centered actions that will:

- Educate citizens on wildfire, its risks, and ways to protect lives and properties,
- Support fire rescue and suppression entities,
- Focus on collaborative decision-making and citizen participation,
- Develop and implement effective mitigation strategies, and
- Develop and implement effective community ordinances and codes.

II. COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

The core team convened in February of 2009 to assess risks and develop the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The group is comprised of representatives from local government, local fire authorities, and the state agency responsible for forest management. Below are the groups included in the task force:

Bacon County Government

Fire Rescue Emergency Management Board of County Commissioners Georgia Forestry Commission GEMA

It was decided to conduct community assessments on the basis of the individual fire districts in the county. The chiefs of the six fire departments in the county assessed their districts and reconvened in March for the purpose of completing the following:

Risk Assessment	Assessed wildfire hazard risks and prioritized mitigation actions.
Fuels Reduction	Identified strategies for coordinating fuels treatment projects.
Structure Ignitability	Identified strategies for reducing the ignitability of structures within the Wildland interface.
Emergency Management	Forged relationships among local government and fire districts and developed/refined a pre-suppression plan.
Education and Outreach	Developed strategies for increasing citizen awareness and action and to conduct homeowner and community leader workshops.

III. COMMUNITY & WILDFIRE HISTORY



Bacon County, in southeast Georgia, was named for U.S. senator Augustus Octavius Bacon, who served four terms and was president pro tempore of the Senate in 1912. The 285square-mile county was created from portions of Appling, Pierce, and Ware counties in 1914. Because Bacon was the 151st county, an amendment was needed to override a previous limit of 145 counties set by Georgia voters in 1904.

The area, part of the wiregrass region, was first settled by Creek Indians and then by pioneer families from the Carolinas who sought more affordable land. Naval stores and turpentine were the key industries. The county seat, Alma, was incorporated in 1906. The courthouse, built in 1919, still serves residents and was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980.

Two stories exist about the origin of Alma's name. One, put forth in 1966 by Bernice McCullar in her book *This Is Your Georgia* and frequently repeated by local residents, is that each letter represents the first letter of four of Georgia's early state capitals, Augusta, Louisville, Milledgeville, and Atlanta. However, another story, recorded by Kenneth Krakow in *Georgia Place-Names* (1975), is that a Macon salesman, traveling through the unnamed town, offered his wife's name, Alma Sheridan. There are no other incorporated towns in the county, but other communities are Rockingham and Sessoms. The community of Rockingham was named for Rockingham, North Carolina, by settlers who hailed from there.

Most employment in Bacon County comes from the manufacturing sector, followed by service jobs and retailing. The county also supports a large blueberry industry. A satellite campus of Okefenokee Technical College opened in Alma in 1998.

In addition to the courthouse, two other Bacon County buildings are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the Alma Depot and the Rabinowitz Building on West 11th Street. The depot, added to the register in 1983, is privately owned and used as a warehouse. Other buildings and places of interest include the Old Dixon Hotel and the Camp Ground Methodist Church, dating from the early 1800s.

Two wildlife management areas, the Bacon Area and Whitehead Creek Area, allow hunting and, with Bacon County's parks, provide visitors and residents ample opportunity for recreation. Annual events include the Georgia Farm Show in January, the Wild Game Festival in April, the Georgia Blueberry Festival in June, the Guysie Mule Roundup in October, the Lions Club Big Buck Contest in October, and the Christmas Parade.

According to the 2000 U.S. census, the population of Bacon County is 10,103 (81.5 percent white, 15.7 percent black, and 3.4 percent Hispanic).

(Courtesy New Georgia Encyclopedia)

Wildfire History

While Bacon County has a significant agricultural presence, about 67% of the land area is still in woodland. With the exception of a few large blocks of industrial timberland in the northeastern portion of the county, there are homes scattered throughout the county. With significant tracts of woodlands intermixed with agriculture in the 285 square miles of land in the county, the risk from the wildland urban interface is fairly substantial and general throughout the county.

Alma and Bacon County are protected by the Alma - Bacon County Fire Department with the central station located in downtown Alma, with six rural departments well-spaced throughout the county. The Georgia Forestry Commission maintains a county protection unit located just east of Alma to respond to wildland fires within the county. The city of Alma is serviced with a modern pressurized water system with hydrants throughout the city and in the industrial area just west of the city. The unincorporated areas have a well-spaced system of 32 dry hydrants installed throughout the county.

Over the past fifty years, Bacon County has averaged 65 reported wildland fires per year and almost 55% of these have occurred during the months of December, January, February, March and April. These fires have burned an average of 403 acres annually. Of this annual acreage burned, 63% was lost during the months of February, March, April and May. Since the creation of the outdoor burning permit law over 30 years ago, the numbers of fires has decreased over the years. During the last ten years, 2008-2018, the average number of wildfires annually has dropped to 34. During these years the average number of acres burned increased to over 2400 acres burned annually. In 2011 there were large wildfires burning over 22,000 acres in the county and this caused the annual acreage burned to increase by about 10 times the typical average.

The leading causes of these fires, was debris burning causing 44% of the fires and 40% of the acres burned. Incendiary or arson was the next leading cause with 21% of the fires and 24% of the acres lost. More detailed records over the past five years show that 50% of these debris fires originated from escapes from household or residential debris burning.

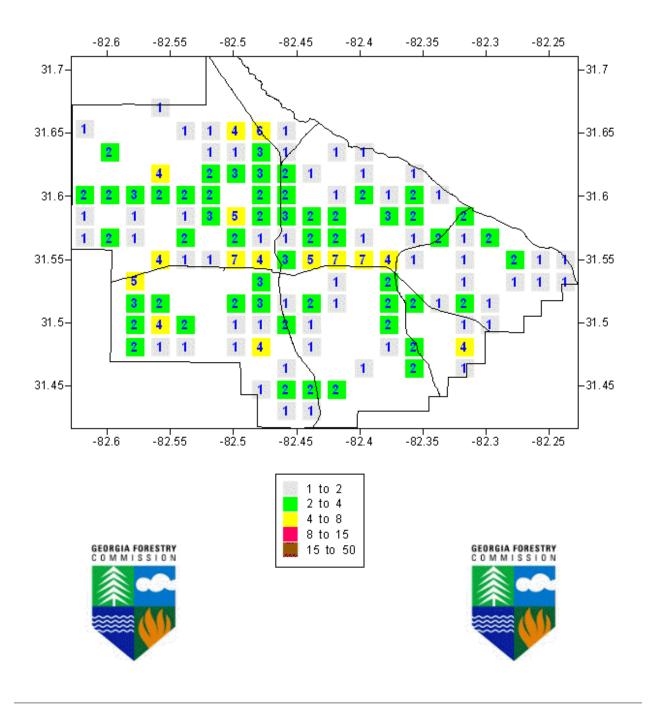
Georgia Forestry Commission wildfire records show that in the past five years, FY2014 – FY2018, 19 homes have been lost or damaged by wildfire in Bacon County resulting in estimated losses of \$522,500. According to reports during this period an additional 21 homes have been directly or indirectly threatened by these fires. Additionally 1 vehicle valued at \$1500 was lost. This is a substantial loss of non-timber property attributed to wildfires in Bacon County.

County = Bacon	Fires	Acres	Fires 5 Yr Avg	Acres 5 Yr Avg
Campfire	2	4.58	0.60	1.20
<u>Children</u>	0	0.00	0.20	0.29
Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	3	6.37	1.40	26.75
Debris: Construction Land Clearing	1	0.60	1.60	5.39
Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	0	0.00	0.40	0.64
Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	1	0.01	1.00	0.39
Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	2	1.37	4.00	12.67
Incendiary	0	0.00	3.20	157.28
<u>Lightning</u>	0	0.00	1.20	3.24
Machine Use	1	0.01	0.80	0.09
<u>Miscellaneous:</u> Fireworks/Explosives	0	0.00	0.20	0.49
Miscellaneous: Other	0	0.00	1.80	8.18
Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	0	0.00	0.20	0.04
Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	0	0.00	0.20	0.05
<u>Undetermined</u>	2	1.23	1.40	7.00
Totals for County: Bacon Year: 2018	12	14.17	18.20	223.68

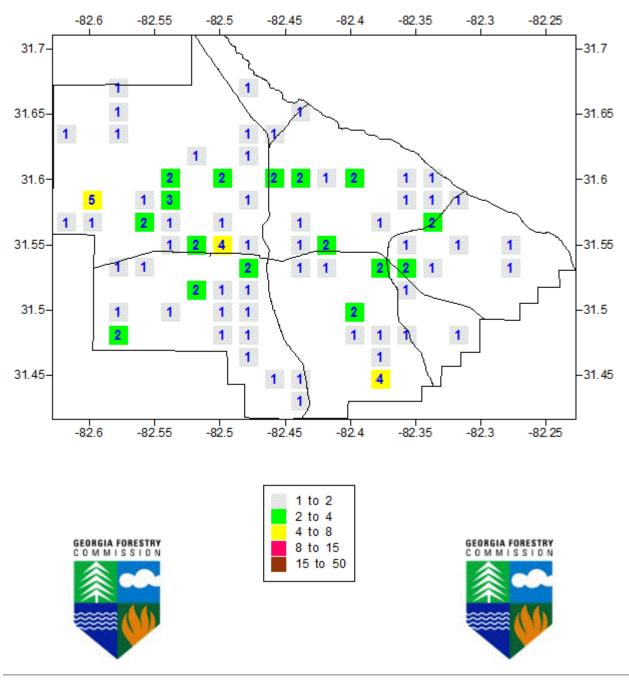
Acreage Burned /Number of Fires For Bacon County For FY 2008-2017						
Year	Acreage Burned	Number of Fires				
2008	54.09	20				
2009	120.88	44				
2010	50.76	31				
2011	22,485.60	102				
2012	159.40	45				
2013	105.47	26				
2014	24.120	9				
2015	803.42	18				
2016	133.51	11				
2017	143.19	41				
Average	2,408.04	34				

Acreage Burned /Number of Fires by Fire Cause For Bacon County For FY 2008-2017					
Fire Cause	Acreage Burned	Number of Fires			
Campfire	13.49	4			
Children	7.15	9			
Debris Burning	22,785.22	129			
Incendiary	904.72	68			
Lightning	138.01	38			
MachineUse	37.04	58			
Miscellaneous	148.11	32			
Railroad	0.00	0			
Smoking	9.75	2			
Undetermined	33.75	5			
Total	24,077.24	345			

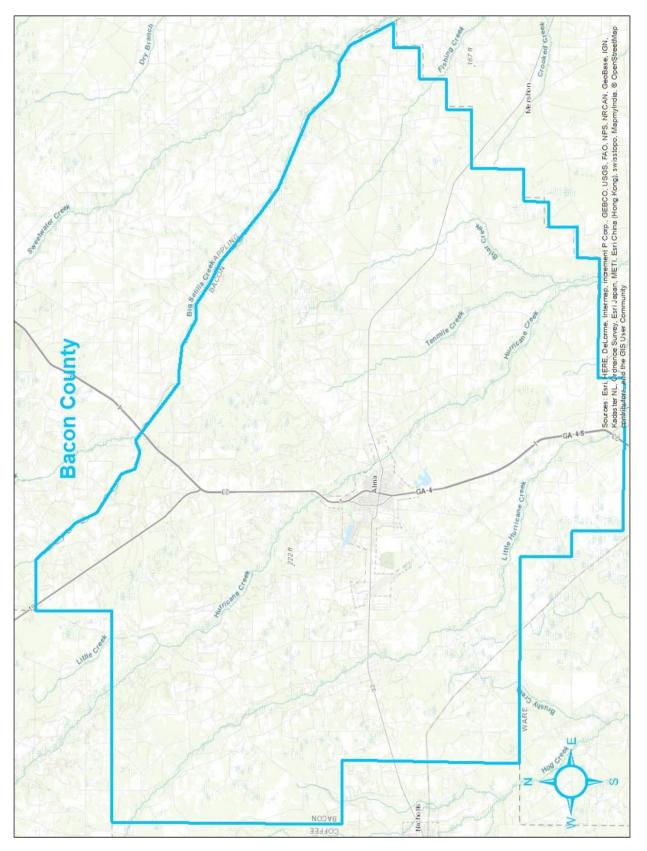
Fire Occurrence Map for Bacon County for Fiscal Year 2007-2011

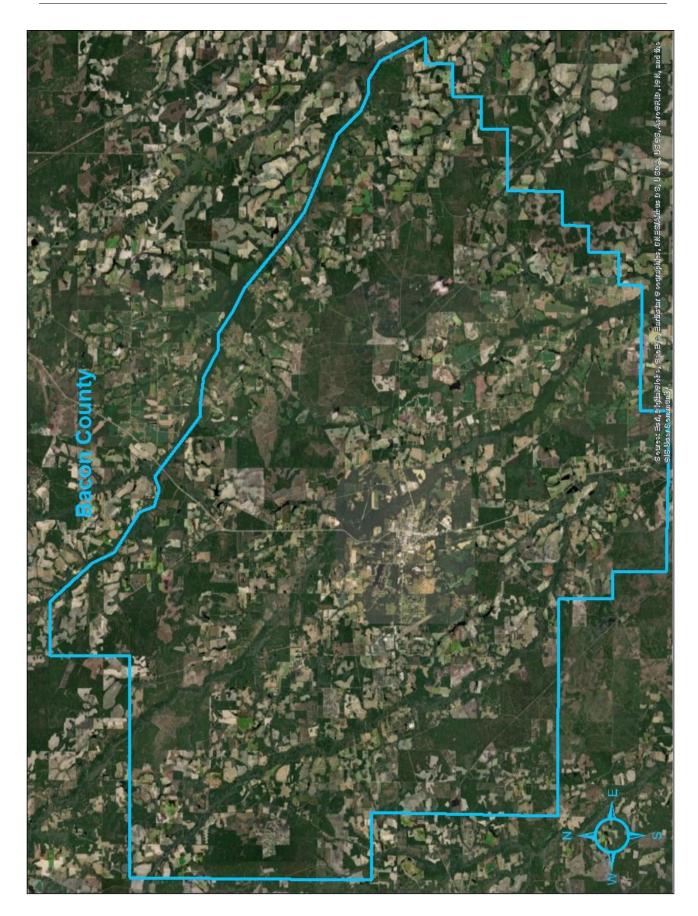


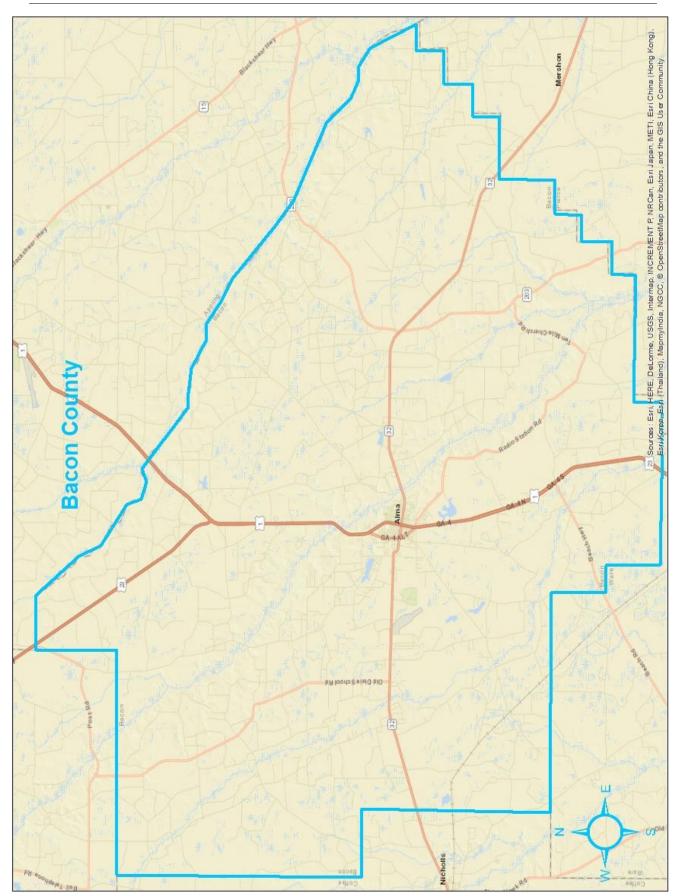
Fire Occurrence Map for Bacon County for Fiscal Year 2012-2016

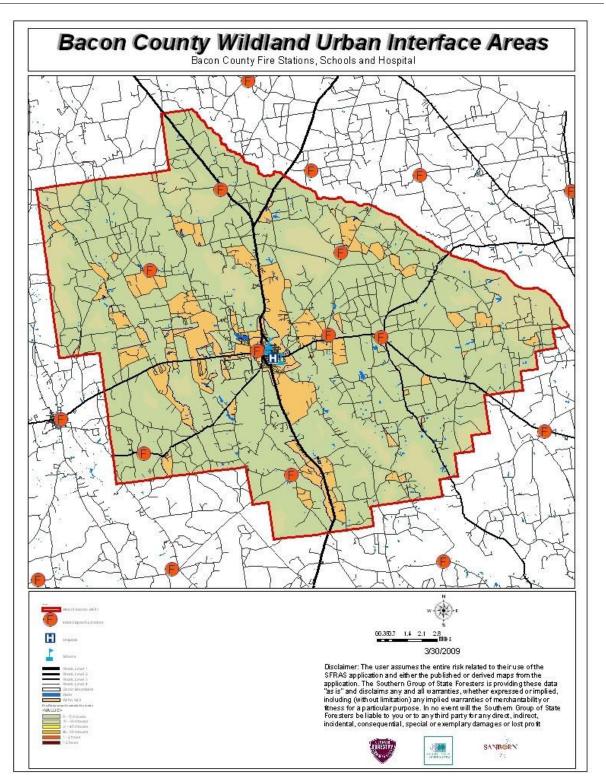


IV. COMMUNITY BASE MAP









V. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISKASSESSMENT

The Wildland-Urban Interface

There are many definitions of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), however from a fire management perspective it is commonly defined as an area where structures and other human development meet or intermingles with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. As fire is dependent on a certain set of conditions, the National Wildfire Coordinating Group has defined the wildland-urban interface as a set of conditions that exists in or near areas of wildland fuels, regardless of ownership. This set of conditions includes type of vegetation, building construction, accessibility, lot size, topography and other factors such as weather and humidity. When these conditions are present in certain combinations, they make some communities more vulnerable to wildfire damage than others. This "set of conditions" method is perhaps the best way to define wildland-urban interface areas when planning for wildfire prevention, mitigation, and protection activities.

There are three major categories of wildland-urban interface. Depending on the set of conditions present, any of these areas may be at risk from wildfire. A wildfire risk assessment can determine the level of risk.

1. "Boundary" wildland-urban interface is characterized by areas of development where homes, especially new subdivisions, press against public and private wildlands, such as private or commercial forest land or public forests or parks. This is the classic type of wildland-urban interface, with a clearly defined boundary between the suburban fringe and the rural countryside.

2. "Intermix" wildland-urban interface areas are places where improved property and/or structures are scattered and interspersed in wildland areas. These may be isolated rural homes or an area that is just beginning to go through the transition from rural to urban land use.

3. "Island" wildland-urban interface, also called occluded interface, are areas of wildland within predominately urban or suburban areas. As cities or subdivisions grow, islands of undeveloped land may remain, creating remnant forests. Sometimes these remnants exist as parks, or as land that cannot be developed due to site limitations, such as wetlands.

The wildland fire risk assessments conducted in 2009 by the Alma Bacon County Fire Department returned an average score of 136, placing Bacon County in the "high" hazard range. The risk assessment instrument used to evaluate wildfire hazards to Bacon County's WUI was the Woodland Community Wildfire Hazard Risk Assessment Checklist. The instrument takes into consideration accessibility, vegetation (based on fuel models), topography, roofing assembly, building construction, and availability of fire protection resources, placement of gas and electric utilities, and additional rating factors. The following factors contributed to the wildfire hazard score for Bacon County:

- Dead end roads with inadequate turn arounds
- Narrow roads without drivable shoulders
- Long, narrow, and poorly labeled driveways
- Limited street signs and homes not clearly marked
- Thick, highly flammable vegetation surrounding many homes
- Minimal defensible space around structures
- Homes with wooden siding and roofs with heavy accumulations of vegetative debris
- No pressurized or non-pressurized water systems available
- Above ground utilities
- Large, adjacent areas of forest or wildlands
- Undeveloped lots comprising half the total lots in many rural communities.
- High occurrence of wildfires in the several locations

Warnock Average	13 16	67 64	10 15	49 41	139 137	High Risk High Risk
Sessoms	19	71	18	48	156	Extreme Risk
New Lacy	22	62	5	46	135	High Risk
Ware	17	76	15	44	152	Extreme Risk
Taylortown	27	89	15	42	173	Extreme Risk
Bennett Still	10	54	20	36	120	Moderate Risk
City of Alma	5	32	15	21	73	Low Risk

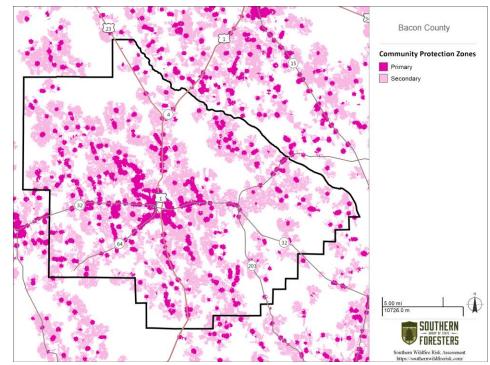
Fire District Access Site Hazard Bldg Hazard Add Hazards Total Score Hazard Rating

Summary of Bacon County Assessment Ratings

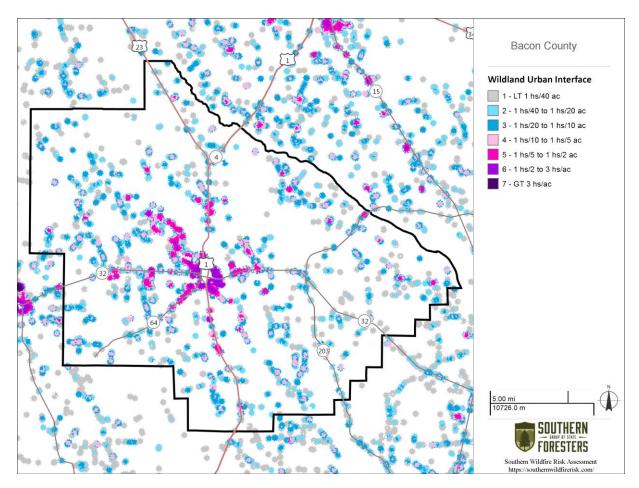
VI. COMMUNITY HAZARDS MAPS

The Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment tool, developed by the Southern Group of State Foresters, was released to the public in July 2014. This tool allows users of the Professional Viewer application of the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment (SWRA) web Portal (SouthWRAP) to define a specific project area and summarize wildfire related information for this area. A detailed risk summary report is generated using a set of predefined map products developed by the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment project which have been summarized explicitly for the user defined project area. A risk assessment summary was generated for Bacon County. The SouthWRAP (SWRA) products included in this report are designed to provide the information needed to support the following key priorities:

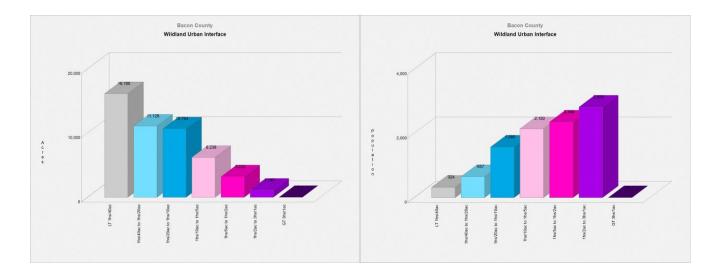
- Identify areas that are most prone to wildfire.
- Identify areas that may require additional tactical planning, specifically related to mitigation projects and Community Wildfire Protection Planning.
- Provide the information necessary to justify resource, budget and funding requests.
- Allow agencies to work together to better define priorities and improve emergency response, particularly across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Define wildland communities and identify the risk to those communities.
- Increase
 - communication and outreach with local residents and the public to create awareness and address community priorities and needs.
- Plan for response and suppression resource needs.
- Plan and prioritize hazardous fuel treatment.

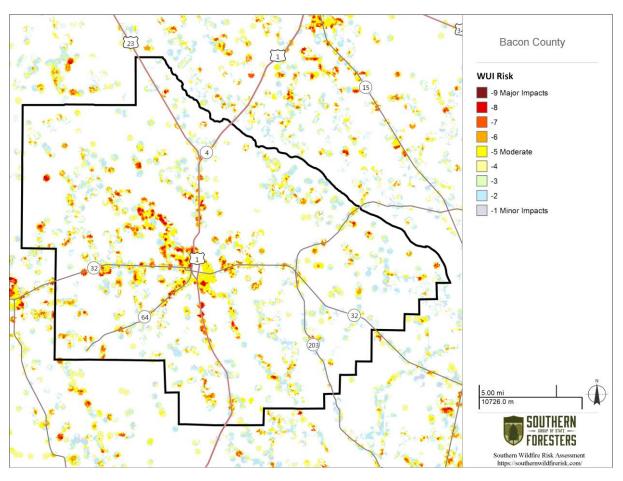


Community Protection Zones map from the Bacon County SWRA

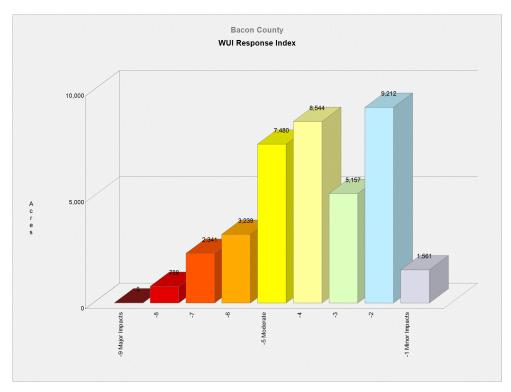


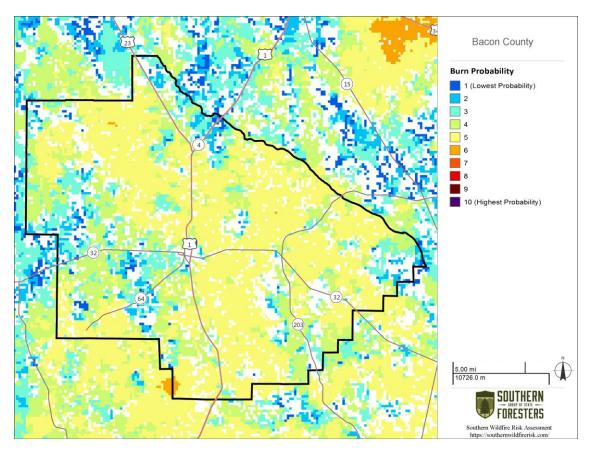
Above: Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map Below: WUI Population (left) WUI Acres (right)





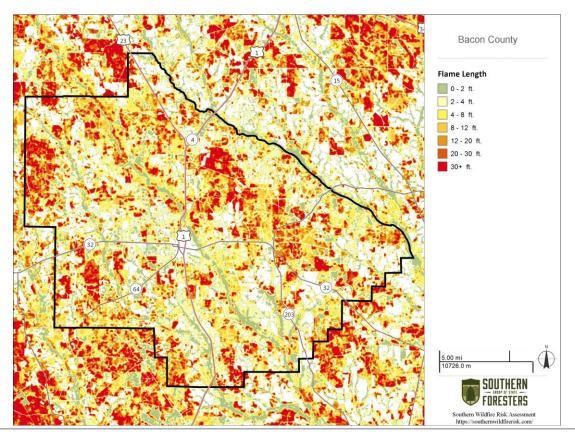
Above: Wildland Urban Interface Risk map Below: WUI Response Index

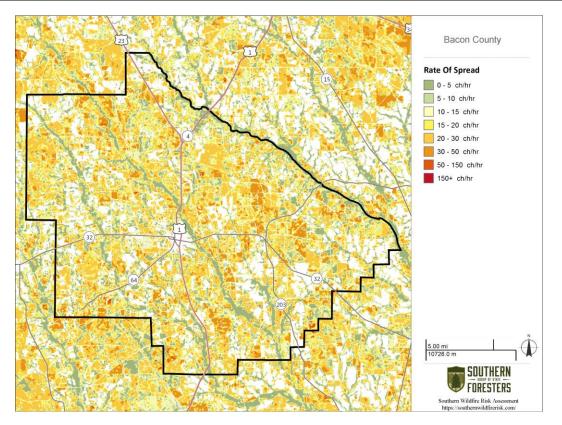




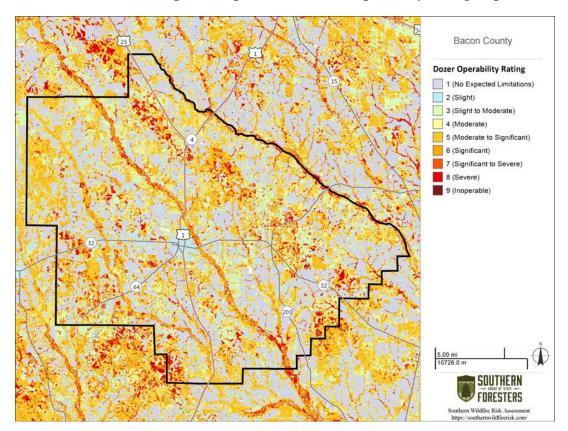
Above: Burn Probability map

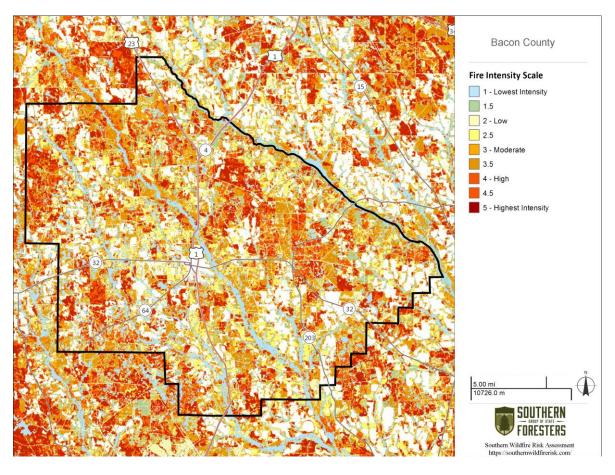






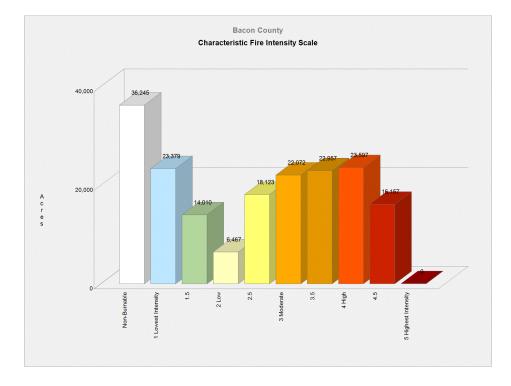
Above: Rate of Spread map Below: Dozer Operability Rating map

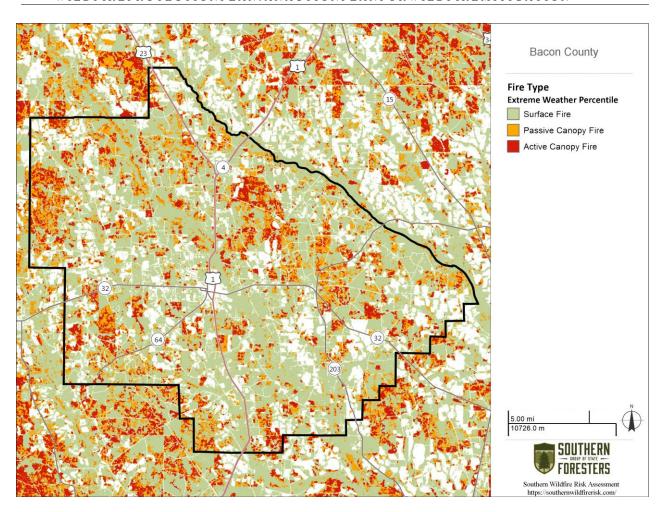




Above: Fire Intensity Scale map

Below: Fire Intensity Scale Acres





Above: Fire Type map

Surface FireA fire that spreads through surface fuel without consuming any overlying canopy fuel. Surface fuels include grass, timber litter, shrub/brush, slash and other dead or live vegetation within about 6 feet of the ground.

Passive Canopy Fire

A type of crown fire in which the crowns of individual trees or small groups of trees burn, but solid flaming in the canopy cannot be maintained except for short periods.

Active Canopy Fire

A crown fire in which the entire fuel complex (canopy) is involved in flame, but the crowning phase remains dependent on heat released from surface fuel for continued spread.







VII. PRIORITIZED MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Summary

The following recommendations were developed by the Bacon County CWPP Core team as a result of surveying and assessing fuels and structures and by conducting meetings and interviews with county and city officials. A priority order was determined based on which mitigation projects would best reduce the hazard of wildfire in the assessment area.

Primary Protection for Community and Its Essential Infrastructure					
Tre	eatment Area	Treatment Types	Treatment Method(s)		
1.	All Structures	Create minimum of 30- feet of defensible space**	Trim shrubs and vines to 30 feet from structures, trim overhanging limbs, replace flammable plants near homes with less flammable varieties, remove vegetation around chimneys.		
2.	Applicable Structures	Reduce structural ignitability**	Clean flammable vegetative material from roofs and gutters, store firewood appropriately, install skirting around raised structures, store water hoses for ready access, replace pine straw and mulch around plantings with less flammable landscaping materials.		
3.	Community Clean-up Day National Wildfire Preparedness Day	Cutting, mowing, pruning**	Cut, prune, and mow vegetation in shared community spaces.		
4.	Driveway Access	Culvert installation	See that adequate lengths of culverts are installed to allow emergency vehicle access.		
5.	Road Access	Identify needed road improvements	As roads are upgraded, widen to minimum standards with at least 50 foot diameter cul de sacs.		
6.	Codes and Ordinances	Examine existing codes and ordinances. International Wildland Urban Interface Code IWUIC	Amend and enforce existing building codes as they relate to skirting, propane tank locations, public nuisances (trash/debris on property), Property address marking standards and other relevant concerns At such time as the development of zoning, planning and subdivision ordinances become practical include fire department and emergency services input in the design of these.		

Proposed Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities

Proposed Community Wildland Fuel Reduction Priorities					
Treatment Area	Treatment Types	Treatment Method(s)			
1. Adjacent WUI Lands	Reduce hazardous fuels	Encourage prescribed burning for private landowners and industrial timberlands particularly adjacent to residential areas			
2. Railroad Corridors	Reduce hazardous fuels	Encourage railroads to better maintain their ROW eliminating brush and grass through herbicide and mowing. Maintain firebreaks along ROW adjacent to residential areas.			
3. Existing Fire Lines	Reduce hazardous fuels	Clean and re-harrow existing lines.			
Proposed Improved Comm	unity Wildland Fire Res	ponse Priorities			
1. Water Sources	Dry Hydrants	Inspect, maintain and improve access to existing dry hydrants. Add signage along road to mark the hydrants			
2. Fire Stations	Water Tanks	Install elevated "drop tanks" with automatic cut-off valves for quick refilling of trucks			
3. Fire Stations	Equipment	Wildland hand tools. Lightweight Wildland PPE Gear. Larger capacity hose. Investigate need for "brush" trucks.			
4. Emergency infrastructure	Equipment	Obtain mobile generator to provide backup power where needed.			
5. Water Sources	Drafting equipment	Investigate need for drafting fittings for area irrigation wells.			
6. Personnel	Training	Obtain Wildland Fire Suppression training for Fire Personnel.			
		Ready Set Go training.			
**Actions to be taken by homeowners and community stakeholders					

Proposed Education and Outreach Priorities

1. Conduct "How to Have a Firewise Home" Workshop for Bacon County Residents

Set up and conduct a workshop for homeowners that teach the principles of making homes and properties safe from wildfire. Topics for discussion include defensible space, landscaping, building construction, etc. Workshop will be scheduled for evenings or weekends when most homeowners are available and advertised through local media outlets.

Distribute materials promoting firewise practices and planning through local community and governmental meetings.

2. Conduct "Firewise" Workshop for Community Leaders

Arrange for GFC Firewise program to work with local community leaders and governmental officials on the importance of "Firewise Planning" in developing ordinances and codes as the county as the need arises. Identify "Communities at Risk" within the county for possible firewise community recognition.

3. Spring Clean-up Event (National Wildfire Preparedness Day – 1st Saturday in May annually)

Conduct clean-up event every spring involving the Georgia Forestry Commission, Alma Bacon County Fire and Rescue and community residents. Set up information table with educational materials and refreshments. Initiate the event with a morning briefing by GFC Firewise coordinator and local fire officials detailing plans for the day and safety precautions. Activities to include the following:

- Clean flammable vegetative material from roofs and gutters
- Trim shrubs and vines to 30 feet away from structures
- Trim overhanging limbs
- Clean hazardous or flammable debris from adjacent properties

Celebrate the work with a community cookout, with Community officials, GFC and Alma Bacon Fire and Rescue discussing and commending the work accomplished.

4. Informational Packets

Develop and distribute informational packets to be distributed by realtors and insurance agents. Included in the packets are the following:

- Be Firewise Around Your Home
- Firewise Guide to Landscape and Construction
- Firewise Communities USA brochures
- Ready Set Go materials
- Fire Adapted Community information

5. Wildfire Protection Display

Create and exhibit a display for the general public at the Georgia Blueberry Festival. The Festival usually runs in June. Display can be independent or combined with the Georgia Forestry Commission display.

6. Media

Invite the Alma Times and the Waycross Journal Herald to community "Firewise" functions for news coverage and regularly submit press releases documenting wildfire risk improvements in Bacon County. Utilize TV, radio, and social media to reach new and diverse audiences.



The Georgia Forestry Commission can assist with developing a prescribed burning plan, installation of firebreaks, and can provide equipment standby and burning assistance when personnel are available. Private forestry contractors can also provide this service.



Forestry mowers and brush cutters, such as pictured here, can be very effective in reducing understory fuels in areas where prescribed fire is not practical. Private contractors can provide this service.

VIII. ACTION PLAN

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities have been developed to implement the action plan:

Role	Responsibility				
Hazardous Fuels and Structural Ignitability Reduction					
Bacon County WUI Fire Council	Create this informal team or council comprised of residents, GFC officials, Alma Bacon Fire and Rescue officials, a representative from the city and county government and the EMA Director for Bacon county. Meet periodically to review progress towards mitigation goals, appoint and delegate special activities, work with federal, state, and local officials to assess progress and develop future goals and action plans. Work with residents to implement projects and firewise activities.				
Key Messages to focus on	1 Defensible Space and Firewise Landscaping				
	2 Debris Burning Safety				
	3 Firewise information for homeowners				
	4 Prescribed burning benefits				
Communications objectives	1 Create public awareness for fire danger and defensible space issues				
	2 Identify most significant human cause fire issues				
	3 Enlist public support to help prevent these causes4 Encourage people to employ fire prevention and defensible spaces in their communities.				
Target Audiences	1 Homeowners				
	2 Forest Landowners and users				
	3 Civic Groups				
	4 School Groups				
Methods	1 News Releases, TV, Radio				
	2 Personal Contacts, Social Media				
	3 Key messages and prevention tips				
	4 Visuals such as signs, brochures and posters				

Spring Clean-up Day				
Event Coordinator	Coordinate day's events and schedule, catering for cookout, guest attendance, and moderate activities the day of the day of the event.			
Event Treasurer	Collect funds from residents to cover food, equipment rentals, and supplies.			
Publicity Coordinator	Advertise event through neighborhood newsletter, letters to officials, and public service announcements (PSAs) for local media outlets. Publicize post-event through local paper and radio PSAs.			
Work Supervisor	Develop volunteer labor force of community residents, develop labor/advisory force from Georgia Forestry Commission, Alma Bacon Fire and Rescue, and Emergency Management Agency. Procure needed equipment and supplies. In cooperation with local city and county officials, develop safety protocol. Supervise work and monitor activities for safety the day of the event.			

Funding Needs

The following funding is needed to implement the action plan:

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source(s)
1. Create a minimum of 30 feet of defensible space around structures	Varies	Residents will supply labor and fund required work on their own properties.
2. Reduce structural ignitability by cleaning flammable vegetation from roofs and gutters, appropriately storing firewood, installing skirting around raised structures, storing water hoses for ready access, replacing pine needles and mulch around plantings with less flammable material.	Varies	Residents will supply labor and fund required work on their own properties.
3. Amend codes and ordinances to provide better driveway access, increased visibility of house numbers, properly stored firewood, minimum defensible space brush clearance, required Class A roofing materials and skirting around raised structures, planned maintenance of community lots.	No Cost	To be adopted by city and county government.
4. Spring Cleanup Day	Varies	Community Business Donations.
5. Fuel Reduction Activities	\$15 / acre	FEMA & USFS Grants

Assessment Strategy

To accurately assess progress and effectiveness for the action plan, the Alma Bacon WUI Fire Council will implement the following:

- Annual wildfire risk assessment will be conducted to re-assess wildfire hazards and prioritize needed actions.
- Mitigation efforts that are recurring (such as mowing, burning, and clearing of defensible space) will be incorporated into an annual renewal of the original action plan.
- Mitigation efforts that could not be funded in the requested year will be incorporated into the annual renewal of the original action plan.
- Continuing educational and outreach programs will be conducted and assessed for effectiveness. Workshops will be evaluated based on attendance and post surveys that are distributed by mail 1month and 6 months following workshop date.
- The Alma Bacon WUFP Team will publish an annual report detailing mitigation projects initiated and completed, progress for ongoing actions, funds received, funds spent, and in-kind services utilized. The report will include a "state of the community" section that critically evaluates mitigation progress and identifies areas for improvement. Recommendations will be incorporated into the annual renewal of the action plan.
- An annual survey will be distributed to residents soliciting information on individual mitigation efforts on their own property (e.g., defensible space). Responses will be tallied and reviewed at the next Alma Bacon WUIFC meeting. Needed actions will be discussed and delegated.

This plan should become a working document that is shared by local, state, and federal agencies that will use it to accomplish common goals. An agreed-upon schedule for meeting to review accomplishments, solve problems, and plan for the future should extend beyond the scope of this plan. Without this follow up this plan will have limited value.

IX. MITIGATION ASSISTANCE & GRANT FUNDING

Community Protection Grant: US Forest Service sponsored prescribed fire program. Communities with "at-risk" properties that lie within ten miles of a National Forest, National Park Service or Bureau of Land Management tracts may apply with the Georgia Forestry Commission to have their land prescribe burned free-of-charge. Forest mastication, where it is practical with Georgia Forestry Commission equipment, is also available under this grant program.

FEMA Mitigation Policy MRR-2-08-01: through GEMA – Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM).

- 1. To provide technical and financial assistance to local governments to assist in the implementation of long term, cost effective hazard mitigation accomplishments.
- 2. This policy addresses wildfire mitigation for the purpose of reducing the threat to all-risk structures through creating defensible space, structural protection through the application of ignition resistant construction and limited hazardous fuel reduction to protect life and property.
- 3. With a completed registered plan (addendum to the State Plan) counties can apply for pre-mitigation funding. They will also be eligible for HMGP funding if the county is declared under a wildfire disaster.

Georgia Forestry Commission: Plowing and prescribed burning assistance can be obtained from the GFC as a low-cost option for mitigation efforts.

The Georgia Forestry Commission Firewise Community Mitigation Assistance Grants – Nationally recognized Firewise Communities can receive up to \$5000 grants to help address potential wildfire risk reduction projects. Grant submission can be made through local Georgia Forestry Commission offices or your Regional Wildfire Prevention Specialist.

<u>The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)</u> and <u>American International Group,</u> <u>Inc. (AIG)</u> offer grants to assist local fire departments in establishing or enhancing their community fuels mitigation programs while educating members of the community about community wildfire readiness and encouraging personal action.

X. GLOSSARY

Community-At-Risk – A group of two or more structures whose proximity to forested or wildland areas places homes and residents at some degree of risk.

Critical Facilities – Buildings, structures or other parts of the community infrastructure that require special protection from an approaching wildfire.

CWPP – The Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Defensible Space – The immediate landscaped area around a structure (usually a minimum of 30 ft.) kept "lean, clean and green" to prevent an approaching wildfire from igniting the structure.

Dry Hydrant - A non-pressurized pipe system permanently installed in existing lakes, ponds and streams that provides a suction supply of water to a fire department tank truck.

FEMA – The Federal Emergency Management Agency whose mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

Fire Adapted Community – A community fully prepared for its wildfire risk by taking actions to address safety, homes, neighborhoods, businesses and infrastructure, forest, parks, open spaces, and other community assets.

Firewise Program -A national initiative with a purpose to reduce structural losses from wildland fires.

Firewise Community/USA – A national recognition program for communities that take action to protect themselves from wildland fire. To qualify a community must have a wildfire risk assessment by the Georgia Forestry Commission, develop a mitigation action plan, have an annual firewise mitigation/education event, have dedicated firewise leadership, and complete the certification application.

Fuels – *All combustible materials within the wildland/urban interface or intermix including, but not limited to, vegetation and structures.*

Fuel Modification – Any manipulation or removal of fuels to reduce the likelihood of ignition or the resistance to fire control.

Hazard & Wildfire Risk Assessment – An evaluation to determine an area's (community's) potential to be impacted by an approaching wildland fire.

Healthy Forests Initiative - Launched in August 2002 by President Bush (following passage of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act by Congress) with the intent to reduce the risks severe wildfires pose to people, communities, and the environment.

Home Ignition Zone (Structure Ignition Zone) - *Treatment area for wildfire protection. The "zone" includes the structure(s) and their immediate surroundings from 0-200 ft.* Mitigation – An action that moderates the severity of a fire hazard or risk.

National Fire Plan – National initiative, passed by Congress in the year 2000, following a landmark wildland fire season, with the intent of actively responding to severe wildland fires and their impacts to communities while ensuring sufficient firefighting capacity for the future.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) - An international nonprofit organization established in 1896, whose mission is to reduce the worldwide burden of fire and other hazards on the quality of life by providing and advocating consensus codes and standards, research, training, and education.

National Wildfire Preparedness Day – Started in 2014 by the National Fire Protection Association as a day for communities to work together to prepare for the approaching wildfire season. It is held annually on the first Saturday in May.

Prescribed Burning (prescribed fire) –*The use of planned fire that is deliberately set under specific fuel and weather condition to accomplish a variety of management objectives and is under control until it burns out or is extinguished.*

Ready, Set, Go - A program fire services use to help homeowners understand wildfire preparedness, awareness, and planning procedures for evacuation.

Southern Group of State Foresters – Organization whose members are the agency heads of the forestry agencies of the 13 southern states, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Stakeholders– Individuals, groups, organizations, businesses or others who have an interest in wildland fire protection and may wish to review and/or contribute to the CWPP content.

Wildfire or Wildland Fire – An unplanned and uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels.

Wildland/Urban Interface - *The presence of structures in locations in which the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) determines that topographical features, vegetation, fuel types, local weather conditions and prevailing winds result in the potential for ignition of the structures within the area from flames and firebrands from a wildland fire (NFPA 1144, 2008).*

XI. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Publications/Brochures/Websites:

- FIREWISE materials can be ordered at <u>www.firewise.org</u>
- Georgia Forestry Commission <u>www.georgiafirewise.org</u>
- Examples of successful wildfire mitigation programs can be viewed at the website for National Database of State and Local wildfire Hazard Mitigation Programs sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service and the Southern Group of State Foresters www.wildfireprograms.com
- Information about a variety of interface issues (including wildfire) can be found at the USFS website for Interface South: <u>www.interfacesouth.org</u>
- Information on codes and standards for emergency services including wildfire can be found at <u>www.nfpa.org</u>
- Information on FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) can be found at <u>www.firegrantsupport.com</u>
- Information on National Fire Plan grants can be found at <u>http://www.federalgrantswire.com/national-fire-plan--rural-fire-assistance.html</u>
- Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment website SouthWRAP_ www.SouthernWildfireRisk.com
- Fire Adapted Communities <u>www.fireadapted.org</u>
- Ready, Set, Go <u>www.wildlandfirersg.org</u>
- National Wildfire Preparedness Day <u>www.wildfireprepday.org</u>

Appended Documents:

Bacon County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SWRA)

Bacon County Wildfire assessment scoresheets

All files that make up this plan are available in an electronic format from the Georgia Forestry Commission.

GEORGIA FORESTRY



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The Georgia Forestry Commission provides leadership, service, and education in the protection and conservation of Georgia's forest resources.

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