

GEORGIA FORESTRY  
COMMISSION



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# Community Wildfire Protection Plan

*An Action Plan for Wildfire  
Mitigation and Conservation of  
Natural Resources*

## Schley County



**June, 2017**

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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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### Appended Documents:

Schley County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary (SWRA)

Schley 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 Schley 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

An initial meeting was held on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2009 at the Schley County Board of Commissioners office attended by the following core planning team;

Will Fell	GFC, CWPP Specialist
Brent McCarty	GFC, Chief Ranger Sr., Schley-Sumter County
Duane Montgomery	Fire Chief, Ellaville/Schley County Fire Department
Shane Tondee	Schley County Sheriff and EMA Director
Greg Barineau	Chairman, Schley County Board of Commissioners

After an initial discussion of the processes and goals we hope to accomplish with this report, it was decided that we would identify and evaluate areas within the wildland urban interface for the county as a whole. At the completion of this we would reconvene and discuss and evaluate the completed community wildfire risk assessment. It was further decided that we would provide for mitigation recommendations for the county. The chiefs of the County fire department and the EMA director reconvened on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2009 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 BACKGROUND AND WILDFIRE HISTORY

#### Background

Schley County, in west central Georgia, southeast of Columbus, was created in 1857 from portions of Marion and Sumter counties. Schley (pronounced "Sly") was named for Governor William Schley. Ellaville, Schley's county seat and the only incorporated town in the county, was named for Ella Burton, the daughter of the man who sold the land for the town's location.

The pioneer residents of Schley County were small-scale cotton farmers who had come to southwestern Georgia in the 1830s and 1840s from the Georgia coast, Virginia, and the Carolinas. Family farms were largely self-sufficient, and social life centered on court days and Baptist and Methodist church gatherings.

The two county representatives to the Georgia Secession Convention of 1861 cast their votes in favor of leaving the Union. Schley County provided three companies of troops during the Civil War (1861-65). At war's end the county's newly freed black population benefited from the missionary impulse. Mollie Van Layer came from the North to Schley and rented space in town for a school for black children.

The county's first newspaper, the *Schley County Enterprise*, edited by A. J. Harp, was established in the 1880s, and from its pages comes a view of the community during that period. Schley's commerce reached to neighboring Americus, Buena Vista, and Andersonville. Railroads and wagons carried cotton out of and provisions into the county. By the 1880s the county boasted of schools in Concord, County Line, Ebenezer, Ellaville, Friendship, Glen Holly, La Crosse, Lowe, and Midway.

In the 1890s the *Schley County News* provided a turn-of-the-century view of the local scene. Within the decade Schley was introduced to electricity, telephones, a bank, a new courthouse, waterworks, and an ice plant.

In 1937 Raymond Duncan established the *Ellaville Sun*. Duncan's witticisms and epigrams made the *Sun* a frequently quoted source for state and even national publications, including the *Saturday Evening Post*. The *Sun*, under Duncan's editorship until his death in 1959, provided its readers with a well-written and conscience-driven view of Schley at mid-century.

According to the 2000 U.S. census, the population of Schley was 3,766 (65.8 percent white, 31.3 percent black, and 2.4 percent Hispanic). In contrast to many other rural south Georgia counties, Schley County's population has grown each decade since the 1970s.

Agriculture makes up the core of the local economy: farmers raise beef cattle, poultry, peanuts, soybeans, and cotton. Small-scale manufacture, government service, and retail trade are the nonagricultural economic mainstays.

After a twenty-five-year partnership in a tricounty high school with Marion and Webster counties, Schley County opened its own high school in 2000. The new school has done much to regenerate a sense of identity for a county and community facing the twenty-first century.

Schley County holds its annual homecoming weekend, "Springtime Ellaville," each April.

(Courtesy *New Georgia Encyclopedia*)

## Wildfire History

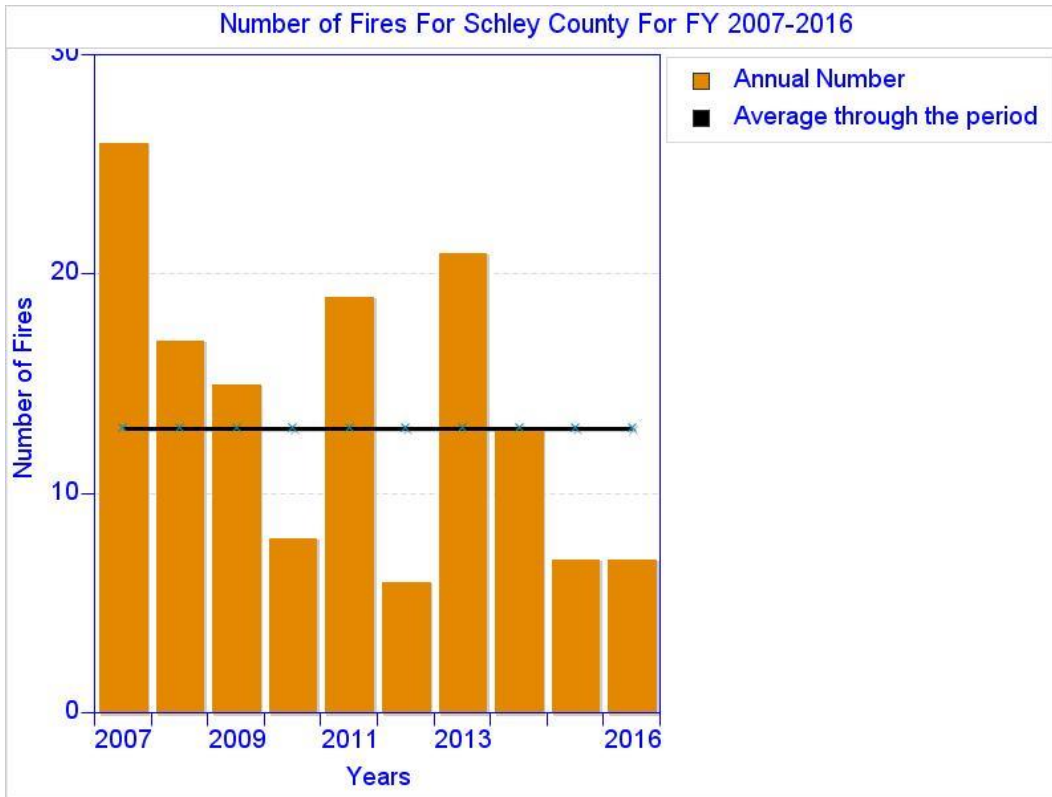
Schley County is largely a rural area with about 83% of the land area is still in woodland. With the exception of a few large unbroken blocks of woodland in the northern portion of the county, there are homes and farms scattered throughout the county. Along with the county seat of Ellaville and a few small communities, the risk from wildland urban interface is fairly general throughout the county.

Over the past forty years, Schley County has averaged 13 reported wildland fires per year averaging about one a month with a slight increase in February and March. These fires have burned an average of 55 acres annually. Of this annual acreage burned, most was lost during the winter months. Despite the advent of the outdoor burning permit law about 20 years ago, the numbers of fires have increased over the years as more residences have moved out of towns into the Wildland Urban interface.

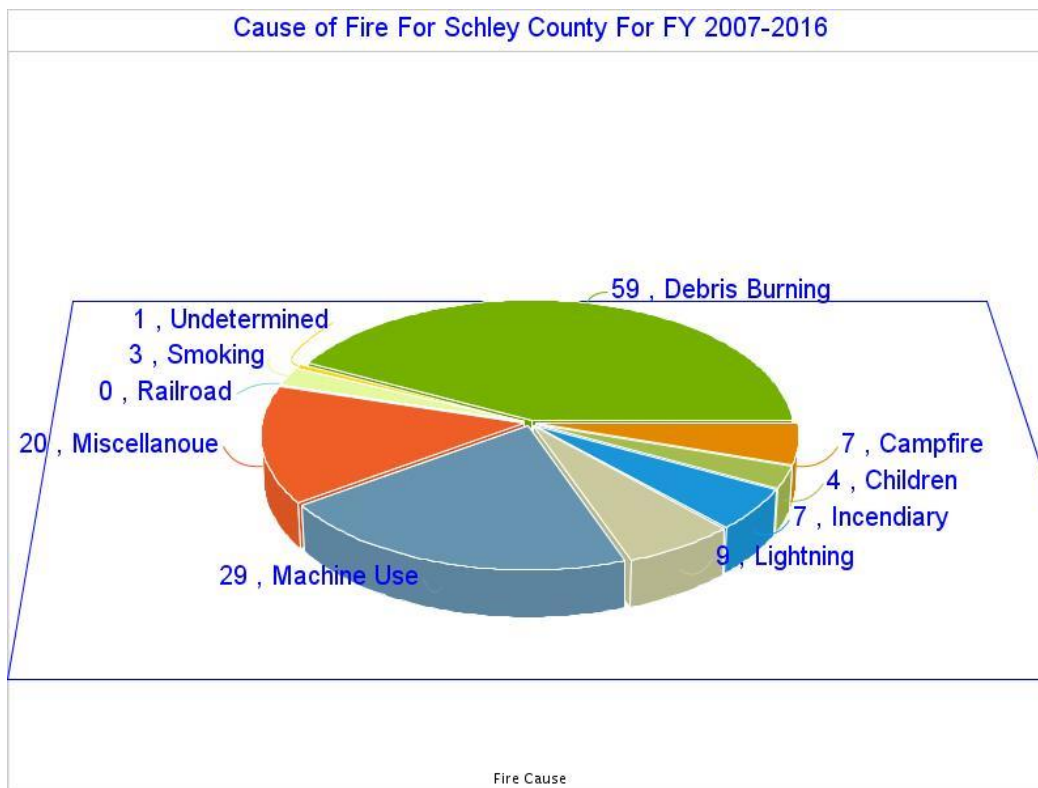
The leading cause of these fires was debris burning causing 38% of the fires and 46% of the acres burned. Machinery use was the next leading cause with 15% of the fires and 13% of the acres lost. More detailed records over the past five years show that over 50% of these debris fires originated from escapes from household or residential debris burning.

The table below and graph on the following page indicates wildfire activity in Schley County during the years 2007 thru 2016. Indicated here are the number of fires, acreage burned, and average size as compared to the statewide average.

Year	Acreage Burned	Number of Fires	Average Size	Statewide Average Size
2007	82.54	26	3.17	18.64
2008	99.04	17	5.83	4.56
2009	228.37	15	15.22	3.90
2010	4.56	8	.57	3.93
2011	37.26	19	1.96	17.56
2012	14.53	6	2.42	5.08
2013	94.93	21	4.52	4.53
2014	189.54	13	14.58	5.02
2015	17.24	7	2.46	4.42
2016	7.72	7	1.10	6.29



The County has averaged 14 wildfires annually during the past 10 years. The major cause of these fires was careless Debris Burning (42%) followed by Machine Use (21%).

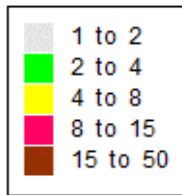
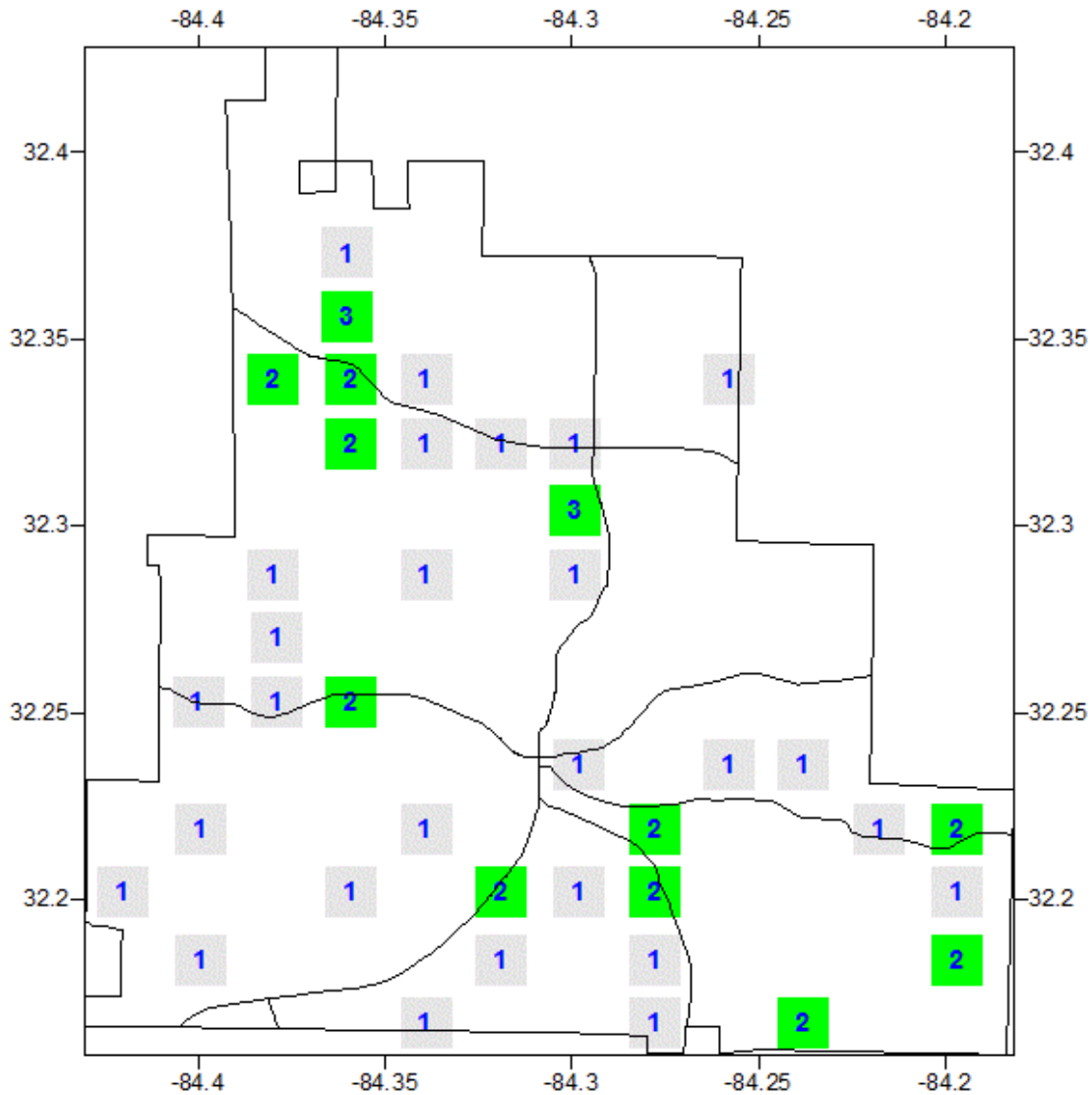


The table below is a record of wildfire activity during the current 2017 fiscal year, July 1, 2016 thru June 30, 2017.

County = Schley	Cause	Fires	Acres	Fires 5 Yr Avg	Acres 5 Yr Avg
<a href="#">Campfire</a>	Campfire	2	2.28	1.40	1.65
<a href="#">Children</a>	Children	1	0.11	0.20	0.02
<a href="#">Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc</a>	Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	0	0.00	0.80	1.18
<a href="#">Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn</a>	Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	5	12.01	3.00	40.66
<a href="#">Debris: Other</a>	Debris: Other	2	6.01	0.40	1.20
<a href="#">Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc</a>	Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	2	1.92	1.20	8.28
<a href="#">Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related</a>	Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	1	6.79	1.00	5.56
<a href="#">Incendiary</a>	Incendiary	2	4.48	0.60	0.90
<a href="#">Lightning</a>	Lightning	0	0.00	0.60	0.25
<a href="#">Machine Use</a>	Machine Use	0	0.00	0.80	1.34
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Fireworks/Explosives</a>	Miscellaneous: Fireworks/Explosives	1	1.96	0.40	0.78
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences</a>	Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	3	3.79	1.80	3.22
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion</a>	Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	0	0.00	0.40	0.60
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires</a>	Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	1	0.80	0.60	0.95
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Woodstove Ashes</a>	Miscellaneous: Woodstove Ashes	0	0.00	0.20	1.38
<a href="#">Undetermined</a>	Undetermined	2	0.20	0.60	1.98
<b>Totals for County: Schley Year: 2017</b>		22	40.35	14.00	69.96

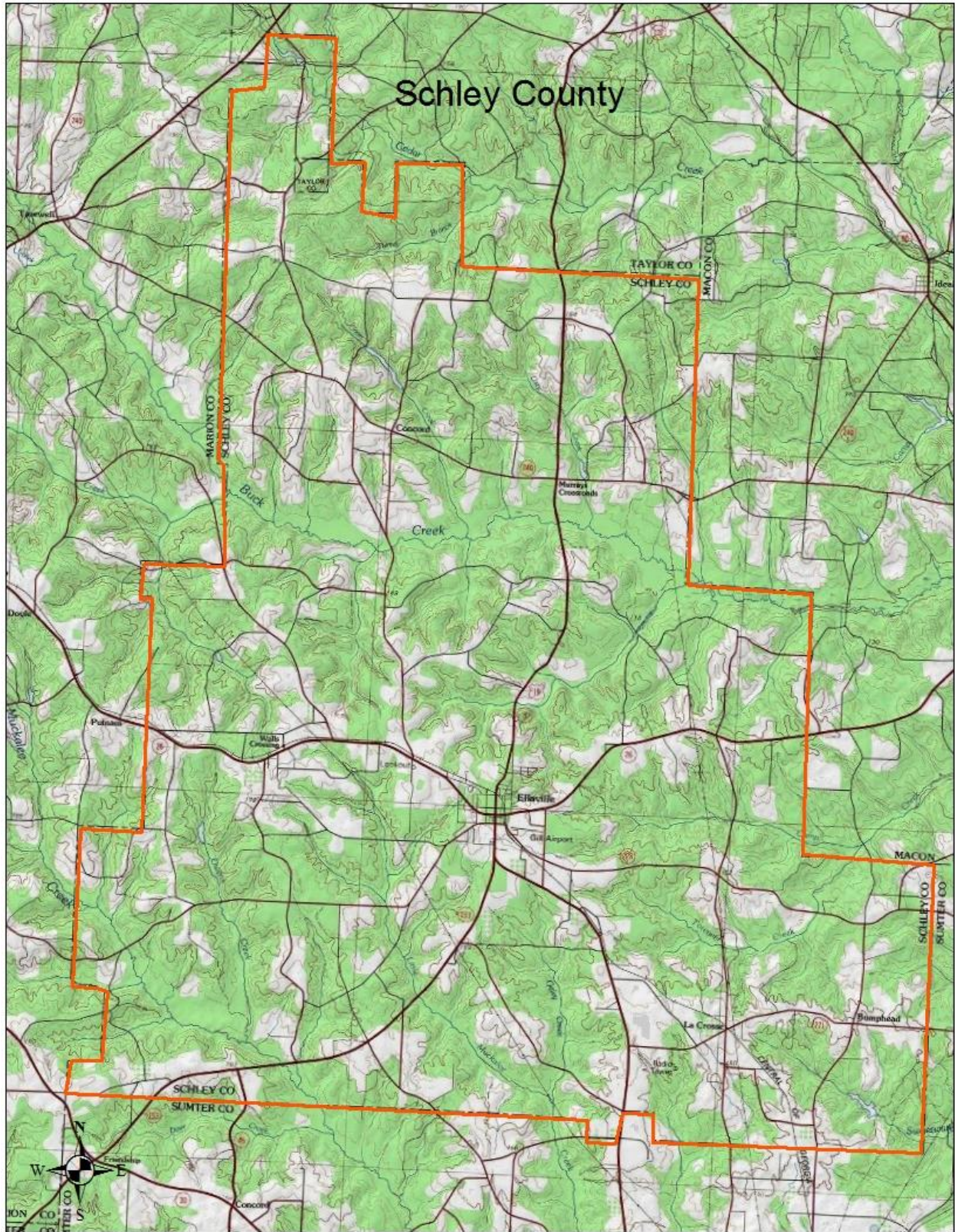


# Fire Occurrence Map for Schley County for Fiscal Year 2012-2016

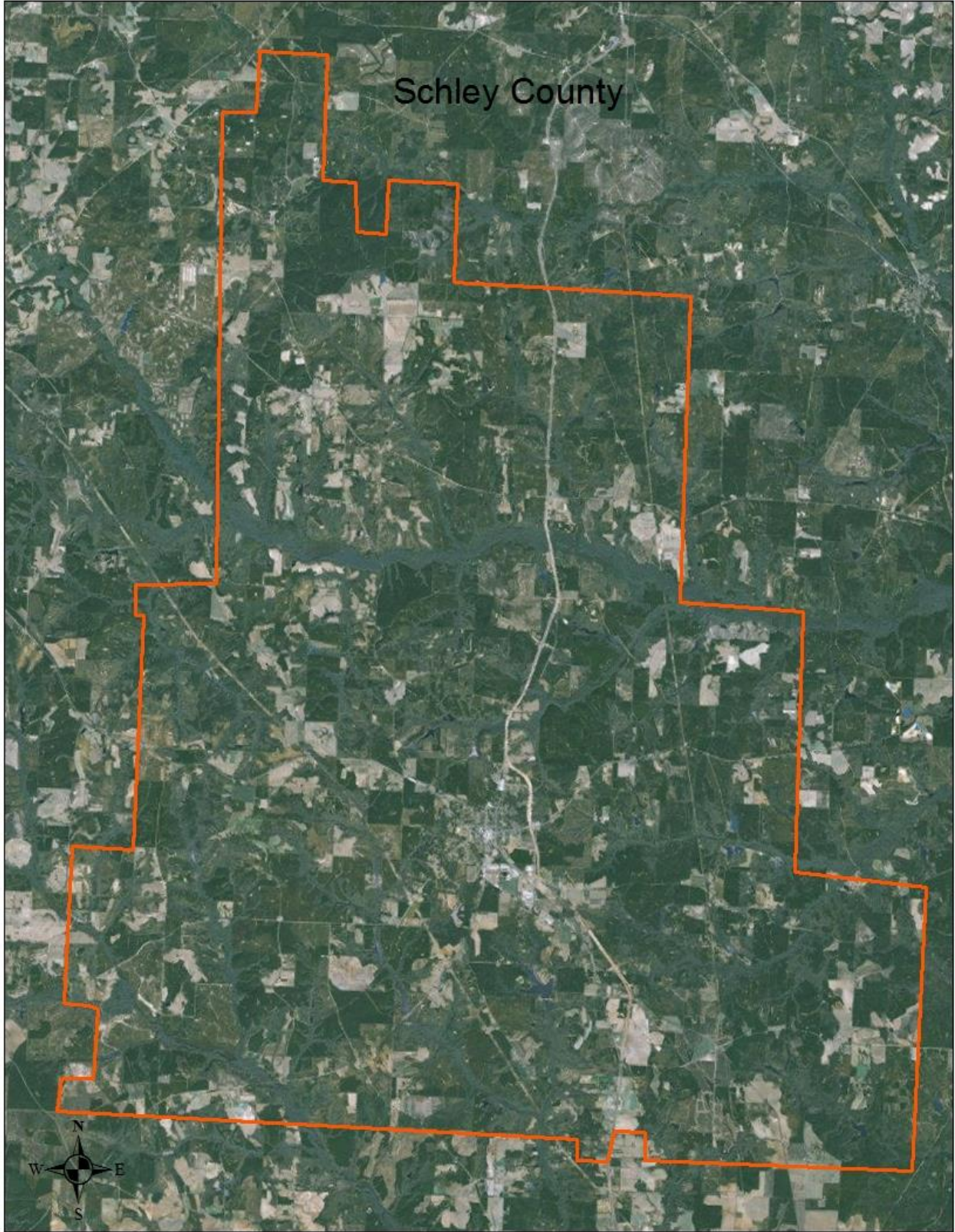




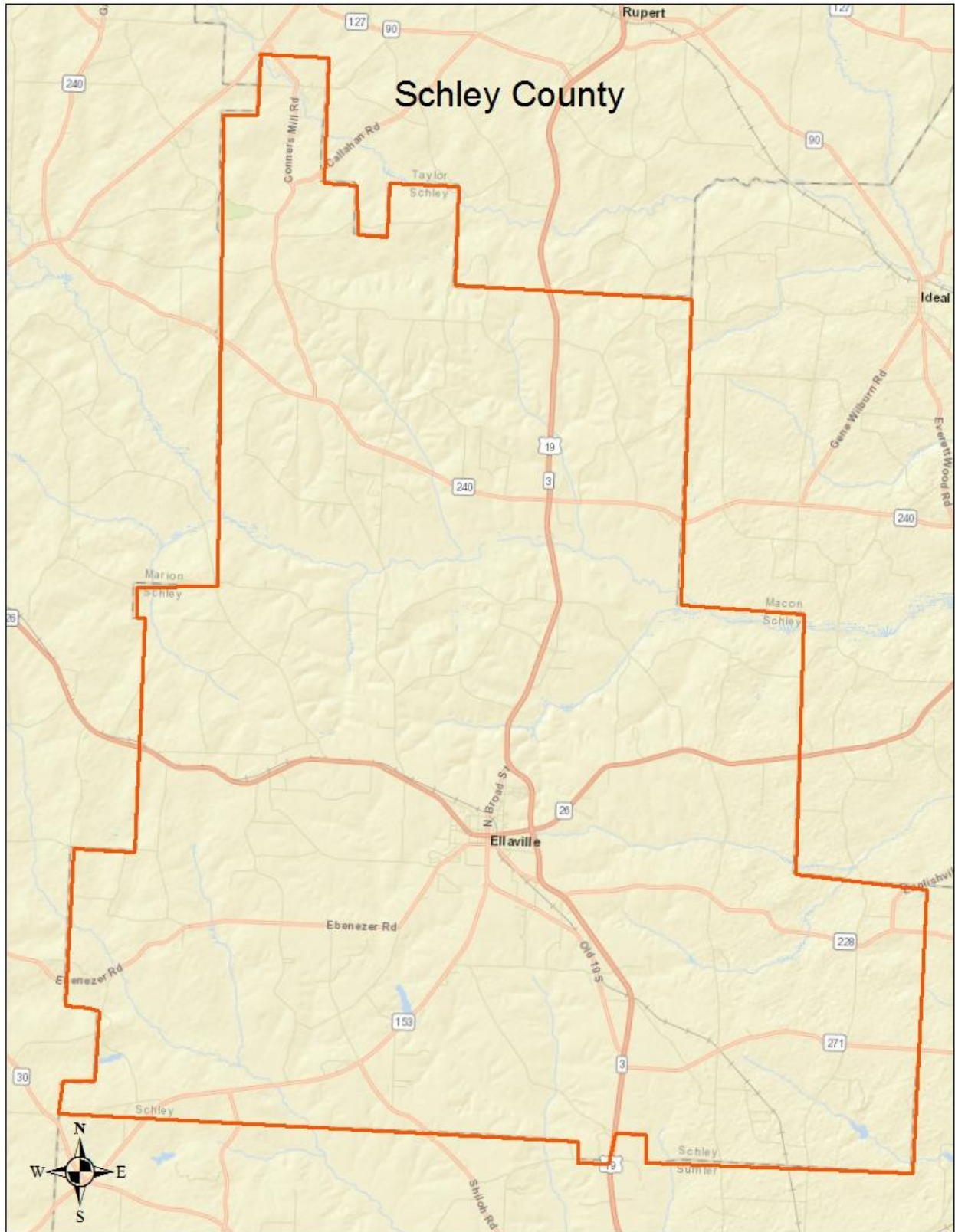
## IV. COMMUNITY BASE MAPS











## V. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

### 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.

(courtesy *Fire Ecology and Wildfire Mitigation in Florida* 2004)



**Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) is described as the area where structures and other human improvements meet and intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.**

Firefighters in the wildland urban interface may encounter hazards other than the fire itself, such as hazardous materials, utility lines and poor access.

- **Hazardous Materials**

Common chemicals used around the home may be a direct hazard to firefighters from flammability, explosion potential and/or vapors or off-gassing. Such chemicals include paint, varnish and other flammable liquids; fertilizer; pesticides; cleansers; aerosol cans, fireworks, batteries and ammunition. In addition, some common household products such as plastics may give off very toxic fumes when they burn. Stay OUT of the smoke from burning structures and any unknown sources such as trash piles.

- **Illicit Activities**

Marijuana plantations or drug production labs may be found in wildland urban interface areas. Extremely hazardous materials such as propane tanks and flammable/toxic chemicals may be encountered, as well as booby traps.

- **Propane tanks**

Both large (household size) and small (gas grill size) liquefied propane gas (LPG) tanks can present hazards to firefighters, including explosion. See the "LPG Tank Hazards" discussion for details.

- Utility lines

Utility lines may be located above and below ground and may be cut or damaged by tools or equipment. Don't spray water on utility lines or boxes.

- Septic tanks and fields

Below-ground structures may not be readily apparent and may not support the weight of engines or other apparatus.

- New construction materials

Many new construction materials have comparatively low melting points and may "off-gas" extremely hazardous vapors. Plastic decking materials that resemble wood are becoming more common and may begin softening and losing structural strength at 180° F, though they normally do not sustain combustion once direct flame is removed. However, if they continue to burn they exhibit the characteristics of flammable liquids.

- Pets and livestock

Pets and livestock may be left when residents evacuate and will likely be highly stressed, making them more inclined to bite and kick. Firefighters should not put themselves at risk to rescue pets or livestock.

- Evacuation occurring

Firefighters may be taking structural protection actions while evacuations of residents are occurring. Be very cautious of people driving erratically. Distraught residents may refuse to leave their property, and firefighters may need to disengage from fighting fire to contact law enforcement officers for assistance. In most jurisdictions firefighters do not have the authority to force evacuations. Firefighters should not put themselves at risk trying to protect someone who will not evacuate!

- Limited access

Narrow one-lane roads with no turn-around room, inadequate or poorly maintained bridges and culverts are frequently found in wildland urban interface areas. Access should be sized-up and an evacuation plan for all emergency personnel should be developed.

The wildland fire risk assessment conducted in 2009 by the Ellaville Schley County Fire Department returned an average score of 98, placing Schley County in the “low moderate” hazard range. The risk assessment instrument used to evaluate wildfire hazards to Schley 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 Schley County:

- Dead end roads with inadequate turn arounds
- Narrow roads without drivable shoulders
- Long, narrow, and poorly labeled driveways
- Minimal defensible space around structures
- Homes with wooden siding and roofs with heavy accumulations of vegetative debris.
- Lack of skirting around mobile homes.
- Above ground utilities
- Large, adjacent areas of forest or wildlands
- Undeveloped lots comprising half the total lots in many rural communities.

**Summary of Schley County Assessment Rating**

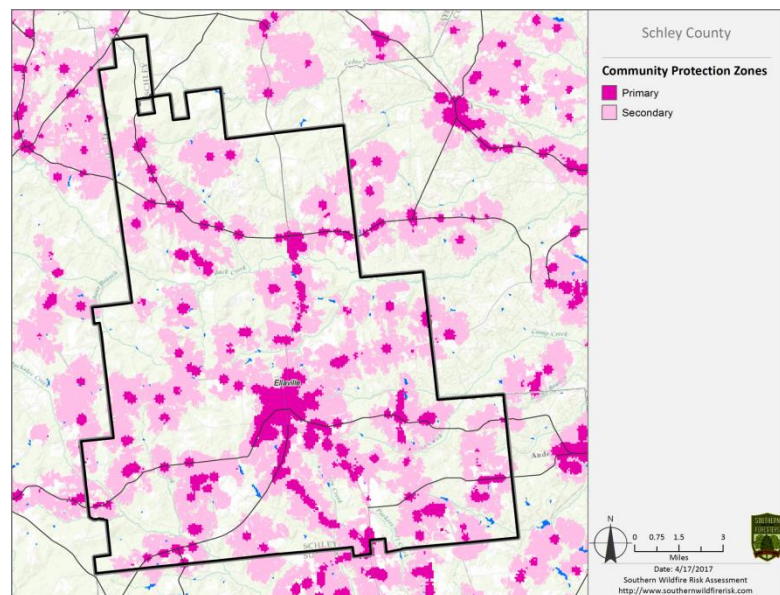
<b>Community</b>	<b>Fire District</b>	<b>Access</b>	<b>Site Hazard</b>	<b>Bldg Hazard</b>	<b>Add. Hazards</b>	<b>Total Score</b>	<b>Hazard Rating</b>
Schley Co	Ellaville – Schley FD	12	42	10	34	98	Low Moderate Risk



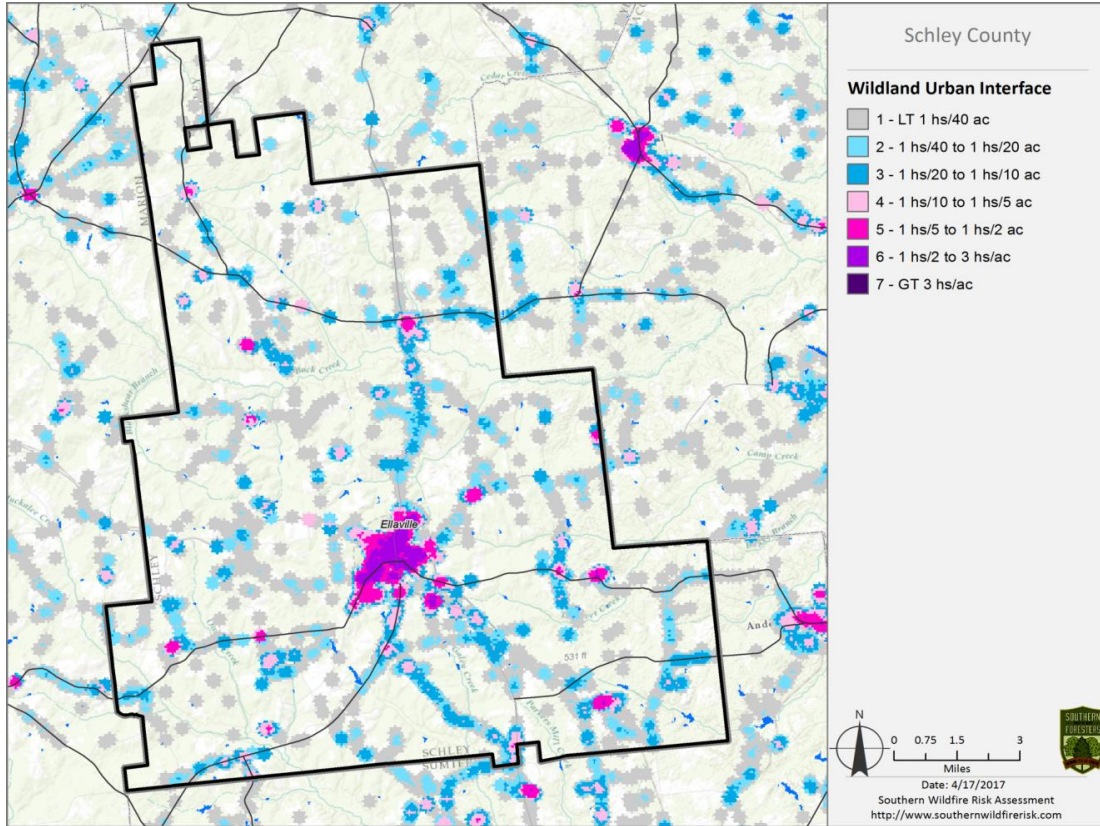
## VI. SOUTHERN WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK HAZARDS MAPS

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 Schley County. The SouthWRAP (SWRA) products included in this report are designed to provide the information needed to support the following key priorities:

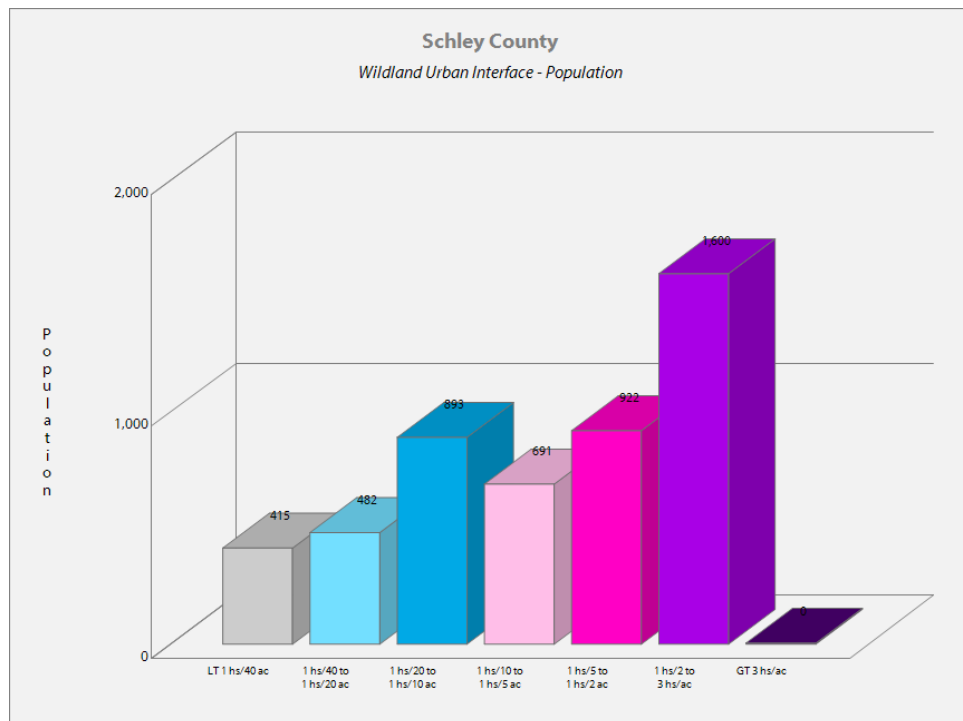
- Identify areas that are most prone to wildfire
- Identify areas that may require additional tactical planning, specifically related to mitigation projects and Community Wildfire Protection Planning
- Provide the information necessary to justify resource, budget and funding requests
- Allow agencies 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 programs

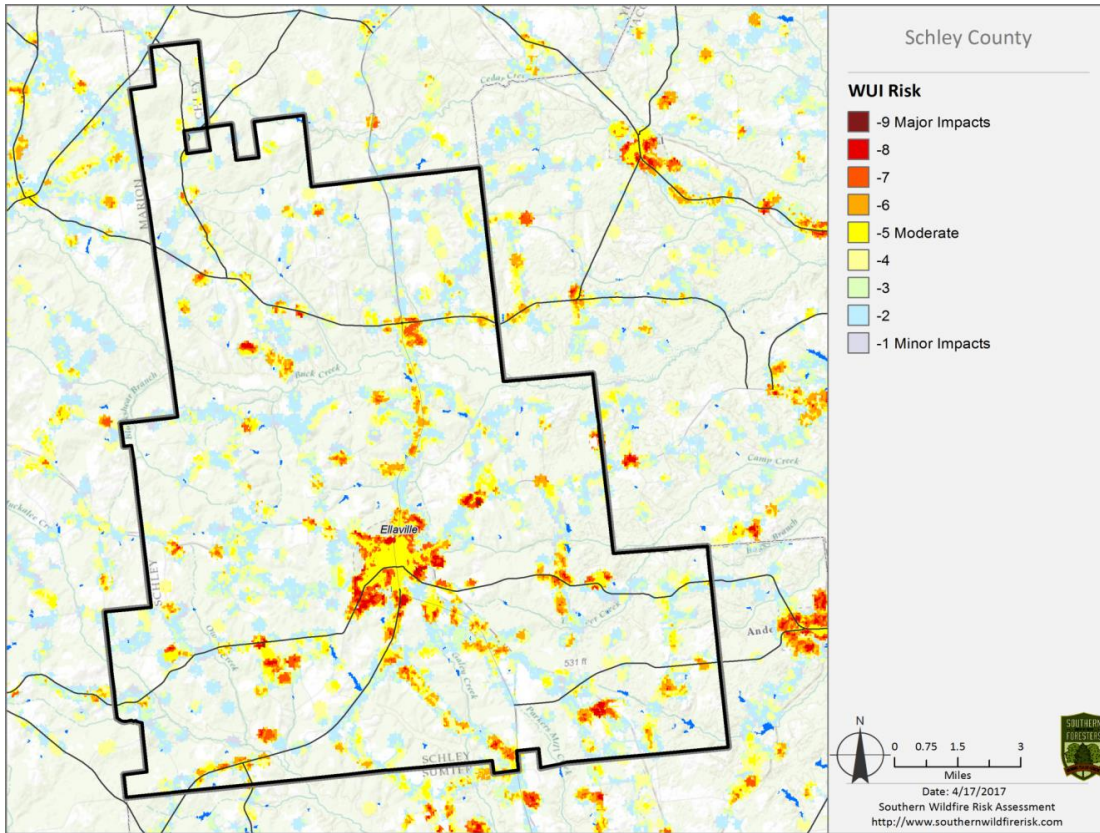


Community Protection Zones map from the Schley County SWRA Summary.

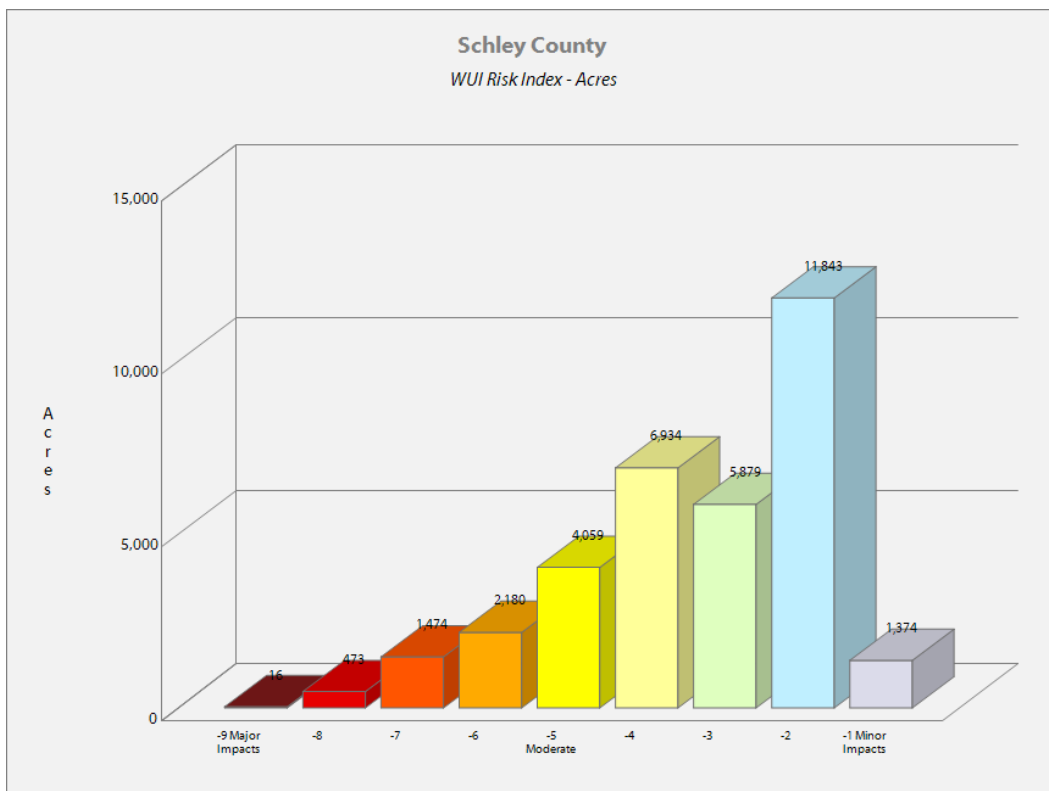


Wildland urban Interface (WUI) map from the Schley County Wildfire Risk Assessment (SWRA) pictured above, and WUI Population graph pictured below.

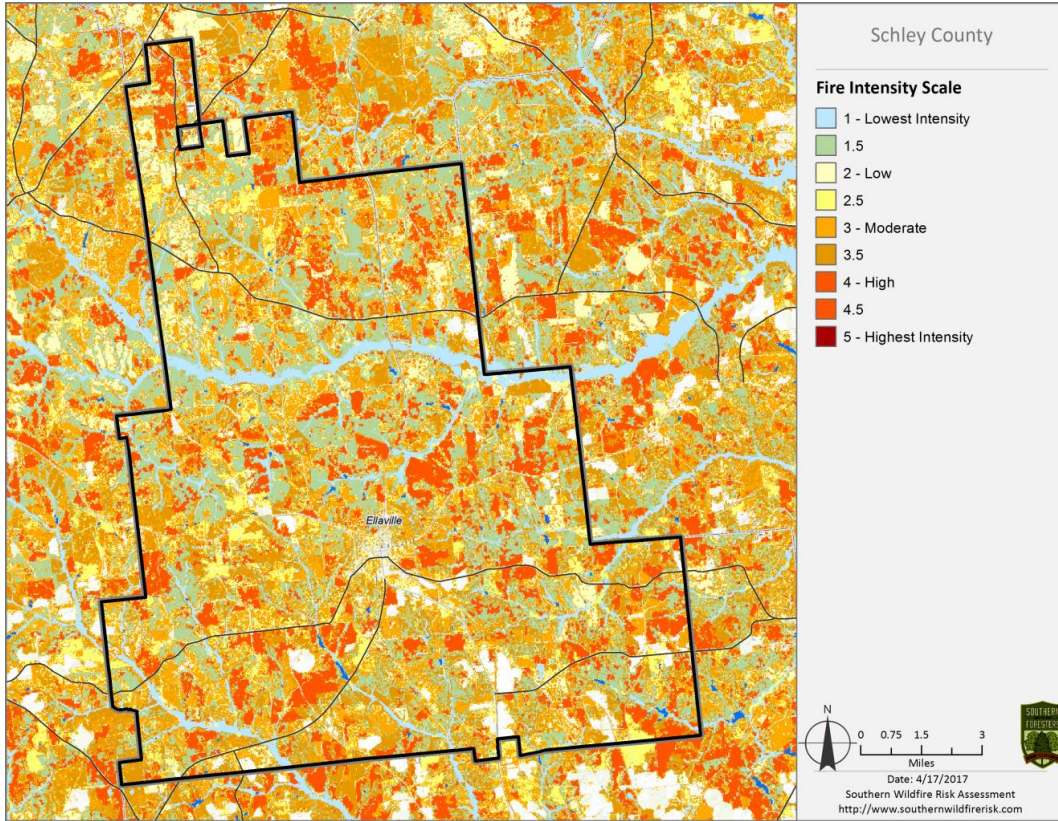




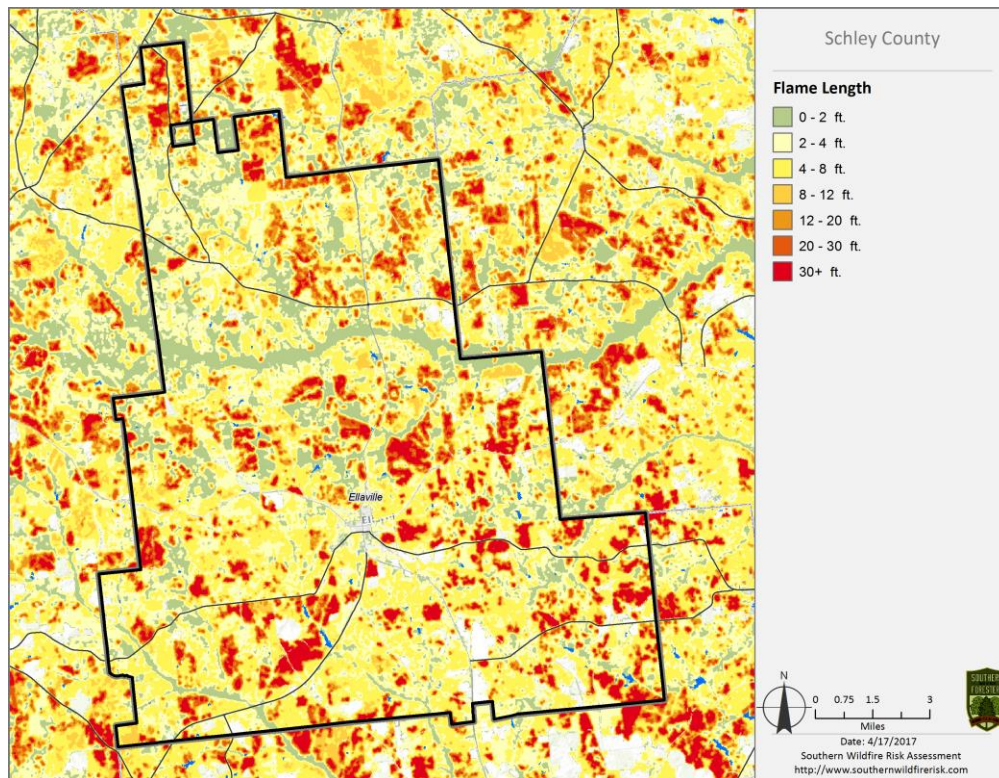
WUI Risk Map (pictured above) and WUI Risk Index – Acres graph ( pictured below)







Fire Intensity Scale map (pictured above) and Flame Length map (pictured below)



## VII. PRIORITIZED MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

### Executive Summary

The following recommendations were developed by the Schley 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.

### Proposed Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities

Primary Protection for Community and Its Essential Infrastructure		
Treatment Area	Treatment Types	Treatment Method(s)
1. All Structures	Create minimum of 30-foot 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	Cutting, mowing, pruning**	Cut, prune, and mow vegetation in shared community spaces.
4. Road Signage	At Replacement	New road signage with minimum 4 inch reflective lettering on non flammable poles. Dead end (no outlet or turn-around) should be prominently tagged.
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.	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.

<b>Proposed Community Wildland Fuel Reduction Priorities</b>		
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. Existing Fire Lines	Reduce hazardous fuels	Clean and re-harrow existing lines.
<b>Proposed Improved Community Wildland Fire Response Priorities</b>		
1. Water Sources	Hydrants	Inspect, maintain and improve access to existing hydrants. Add signage or markers along road to mark the hydrants
2. Fire Stations	Equipment	Wildland hand tools. Lightweight Wildland PPE Gear. Larger capacity hose. Investigate need for “brush” trucks.
3. Personnel	Training	Obtain Wildland Fire Suppression training for Fire Personnel.
**Actions to be taken by homeowners and community stakeholders		

**Proposed Education and Outreach Priorities**

1. Conduct “How to Have a Firewise Home” Workshop for Schley County Residents
<p>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.</p> <p>Distribute materials promoting firewise practices and planning through local community and governmental meetings.</p>
2. Conduct “Firewise” Workshop for Community Leaders
<p>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.</p>

### 3. Spring Clean-up Event

Conduct clean-up event every spring involving the Georgia Forestry Commission, Ellaville - Schley County Fire Department and community residents. National Wildfire Preparedness Day is held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of May annually. This would be a good time to hold such an event. 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 Ellaville - Schley County Fire Department 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 materials
- Fire Adapted Community materials
- Ready Set Go information

Develop small flyer for inclusion in county water bills informing residents where they can access this information.

### 5. Wildfire Protection Display

Create and exhibit a display for the general public at the Schley County Events. Display can be independent or combined with the Georgia Forestry Commission display.

### 6. Press

Invite the Tri-County Journal and the Americus Times-Recorder to community “Firewise” functions for news coverage and regularly submit press releases documenting wildfire risk improvements in Schley County.

## 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	
Schley County Wildland Urban Interface Fire Council	Create this informal team or council comprised of residents, GFC officials, Ellaville - Schley County Fire Department officials, a representative from the city and county government and the EMA Director for Schley 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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Defensible Space and Firewise Landscaping</li> <li>2 Debris Burning Safety</li> <li>3 Firewise information for homeowners</li> <li>4 Prescribed burning benefits</li> <li>5 Fire Adapted Community</li> </ol>
Communications objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Create public awareness for fire danger and defensible space issues</li> <li>2 Identify most significant human cause fire issues</li> <li>3 Enlist public support to help prevent these causes</li> <li>4 Encourage people to employ fire prevention and defensible spaces in their communities.</li> </ol>
Target Audiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Homeowners</li> <li>2 Forest Landowners and users</li> <li>3 Civic Groups</li> <li>4 School Groups</li> </ol>
Methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 News Releases and other media</li> <li>2 Personal Contacts</li> <li>3 Key messages and prevention tips</li> <li>4 Visuals such as signs, brochures and posters</li> <li>5 Social Media</li> </ol>



<b>Spring Clean-up Day</b>	
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, Ellaville - Schley County Fire Department, 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 Schley County 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, 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 1 month and 6 months following workshop date.
- The Schley County WUIFC 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 Schley County 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. GRANT FUNDING AND MITIGATION ASSISTANCE**

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, as well as forest mastication, 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.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and American International Group, Inc. (AIG) 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.

## **IX. 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 fire 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 edition).*

## X. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Publications/Brochures/Websites:

- FIREWISE materials can be ordered at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)
- Georgia Forestry Commission [www.georgiafirewise.org](http://www.georgiafirewise.org)
- 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](http://www.wildfireprograms.com)
- Information about a variety of interface issues (including wildfire) can be found at the USFS website for Interface South: [www.interfacesouth.org](http://www.interfacesouth.org)
- Information on codes and standards for emergency services including wildfire can be found at [www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)
- Information on FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) can be found at [www.firegrantsupport.com](http://www.firegrantsupport.com)
- Information on National Fire Plan grants can be found at <http://www.federalgrantswire.com/national-fire-plan--rural-fire-assistance.html>
- Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment website SouthWRAP [www.SouthernWildfireRisk.com](http://www.SouthernWildfireRisk.com)
- Fire Adapted Communities [www.fireadapted.org](http://www.fireadapted.org)
- Ready, Set, Go [www.wildlandfirersg.org](http://www.wildlandfirersg.org)
- National Wildfire Preparedness Day [www.wildfireprepdays.org](http://www.wildfireprepdays.org)

### Appended Documents:

Schley County Southern Risk Assessment Summary Report (SouthWRAP)

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

Ultimately it is our goal to help the communities by identifying the communities threatened with a high risk to wildfire and educate those communities on methods to implement on reducing those risks.



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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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