



Community Wildfire Protection Plan *An Action Plan for Wildfire Mitigation and Conservation of Natural Resources* **Telfair County, Georgia**

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



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Appended Documents:

Telfair County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SWRA)

Telfair County Wildfire Pre-suppression Plan

NFPA 1141 Standard for Fire Protection Infrastructure for Land Development in Suburban and Rural Areas.

I. OBJECTIVES

The mission of the following report is to set clear priorities for the implementation of wildfire mitigation in Telfair 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 on July 30th, 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:

Telfair County Government

Telfair County Fire Departments

Emergency Management

Board of County Commissioners

City of McRae

McRae Fire Department,

Georgia Department of Corrections

Telfair State Prison Fire Department

Georgia Forestry Commission

It was decided to conduct community assessments on the basis of individual fire districts in the county. The chiefs of the fire departments in the county assessed their districts and reconvened on Sept 1st, 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 & WILDFIRE HISTORY

Telfair County



Located in central Georgia, Telfair County is the state's thirty-fifth county and comprises 441 square miles. Created in 1807 from Wilkinson County, it was named for Georgia governor Edward Telfair. Other counties formed from portions of Telfair County are Coffee County (1854) and Dodge County (1870). In 1812 part of Telfair was transferred to Montgomery County, which was created in 1793. In 1819 and again in 1825, part of Appling County was transferred to Telfair, and between 1872 and 1877, land was shifted back into Telfair County from Dodge and Montgomery counties.

The land was originally held by Creek Indians. A large number of the earliest white settlers were Scots Highlanders from the Carolinas.

The first county seat was Jacksonville, a port on the Ocmulgee River settled in 1807 and incorporated in 1815. When the county lost some of its southern land to Coffee County in 1854, citizens began to demand a more centrally located seat of government. The process of settling upon an acceptable new location, partially interrupted by the Civil War (1861-65), took decades. The site was finally chosen in 1871, when the Macon and Brunswick Railroad took its line through eastern Telfair County, bypassing Jacksonville by eighteen miles. The railroad established a depot in what was then a central location to the county, settled by Daniel M. McRae and his family, as well as other Scots emigrants from the Carolinas. Businesses were attracted to the spot by the availability of rail transportation, and the town of McRae grew quickly enough to achieve incorporation by 1874, three years after the site was chosen as the new county seat.

Estimations from financial records show that the first courthouse was completed around 1820. No records remain about the fate of the first courthouse, or any that followed it until 1860, when records show that a two-story wooden structure was built for the purpose in Jacksonville. After the county seat was moved, a new courthouse was built in McRae in 1873. It burned in the 1930s and was replaced in 1934 by the current structure.



Telfair County Courthouse

During the War of 1812 (1812-15), General David Blackshear built Fort Clark near Jacksonville. Elsewhere in Telfair County, he built Fort Adams and Fort McIntosh. Action during the Creek Wars was seen by Telfair County men in 1818, when thirty-four Telfair militia members fought with sixty Creek Indians in the last battle between Creeks and whites in the area. The conflict, which took place in nearby Wilcox County, is known as the Battle of Breakfast Branch.

Other incorporated towns in Telfair County are Helena, Lumber City, Milan, and Scotland.

Helena was incorporated in 1890. Lumber City, home of the largest sawmill in the South when it was founded, was incorporated in 1889. It was earlier known as "Artesian City," reflecting its original reliance on artesian wells. Milan, established around a railroad depot in the 1880s, was incorporated in 1891. The town of Scotland, incorporated in 1911, was settled by so many Highlanders that it was first called McVile. After it became apparent that many people confused McVile with McRae, the name was changed to otherwise reflect the presence of the town's many settlers of Scottish extraction. Two unincorporated communities in Telfair County are Temperance, a rural community built on the grounds of an antebellum Methodist camp-meeting ground, and Towns, named for Johnson C. Towns, an early settler.

Agriculture played a large part in Telfair County's early economy, with rich soil and hardwood forests yielding well-diversified crops. Truck farming, dairy and poultry products, turpentine, and berries have been among the county's largest farm products.

Among the many notable residents of Telfair County was Georgia governor John Clark, who owned a plantation near Jacksonville. Fort Clark, built in 1813 along the Ocmulgee River, was next to his plantation and is believed to have been named after him. Other prominent residents include writer Brainard Cheney; War of 1812 veteran John Coffee; U.S. Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Marion B. Folsom, who was appointed by U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1934 to serve on the Advisory Council on Economic Security, which laid the foundation for the Social Security program; Georgia governor Eugene Talmadge; and U.S. senator Herman Talmadge.

Among the places of interest are the Horse Creek Wildlife Management Area, which includes 21,909 acres of bottomland hardwood forest, and Little Ocmulgee State Park and Lodge, a 1,360-acre park with a lake. Liberty Square, at the intersection of five of the county's highways, holds a thirty-five-foot-high replica of the Statue of Liberty and the old McRae fire bell, refurbished to resemble the Liberty Bell.

According to the 2000 U.S. census, the population of Telfair County is 11,794 (59.7 percent white, 38.4 percent black, and 1.8 percent Hispanic), a 7.2 percent increase since 1990.

Wildfire History

Telfair County is located in the heart of south central Georgia, despite a scattering of an agricultural presence, is still 88% forested. With the exception of the large blocks of woodlands along the Ocmulgee River, there are homes and communities scattered throughout the county. The risks and hazards from the wildland urban interface are fairly general and substantial throughout the county even on the edges of the major population center of McRae and Helena.

Telfair County is protected by organized volunteer fire departments within the communities of McRae, Lumber City, Jacksonville, Milan, Scotland and Horse Creek. The Georgia Forestry Commission maintains a county protection unit located about nine miles south of McRae on Hwy 441 to respond to wildfires throughout the county. The incorporated cities of the county and some adjacent areas of the county are serviced by a pressurized water system with hydrants available.

Over the past fifty years, Telfair County has averaged 98 reported wildland fires per year. These fires have burned an average of 391 acres annually. During the past 10 years, the annual average number of fires decreased to 73 and the annual acreage burned decreased to 240 acres. Despite

this welcome trend in fire behavior, more homes are being built outside of traditional communities into the wildland urban interface. Over the past 10 years, the leading causes of these fires, was debris burning causing 43% and 48% of the acreage burned. The 2nd and 3rd leading causes were Machine Use and Incendiary (arson) causing 22% and 14% respectively of the fires and 14% and 11% respectively of the acres burned. The table below is for wildfire activity during the last fiscal year 2017. Wildfire data for the preceding 10 years is on the following pages.

County = Telfair	Cause	Fires	Acres	Fires 5 Yr Avg	Acres 5 Yr Avg
Campfire	Campfire	5	42.86	1.40	12.85
Children	Children	1	0.10	0.80	1.46
Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	2	4.67	1.60	2.64
Debris: Construction Land Clearing	Debris: Construction Land Clearing	1	0.20	0.80	3.21
Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	7	13.67	10.80	21.44
Debris: Household Garbage	Debris: Household Garbage	0	0.00	0.20	0.10
Debris: Other	Debris: Other	0	0.00	0.20	0.92
Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	4	5.70	2.20	18.40
Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	15	45.71	3.80	11.27
Incendiary	Incendiary	19	117.83	6.40	29.10
Lightning	Lightning	1	84.50	2.40	24.66
Machine Use	Machine Use	1	1.64	4.40	10.85
Miscellaneous: Other	Miscellaneous: Other	1	1.90	0.40	1.36
Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	0	0.00	2.60	9.52
Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	0	0.00	0.20	0.02
Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	3	1.44	1.00	0.35
Railroad	Railroad	0	0.00	0.40	0.06
Smoking	Smoking	0	0.00	0.20	1.00
Undetermined	Undetermined	7	348.40	4.20	102.77
Totals for County: Telfair Year: 2017		67	668.62	44.00	251.99

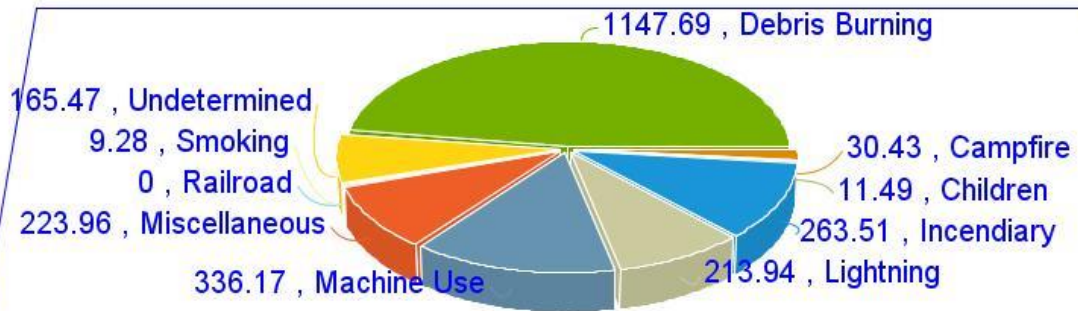
Acreage Burned /Number of Fires For Telfair County For FY 2007-2016				
Year	Acreage Burned	Number of Fires	Average Size	Statewide Average Size
2007	403.65	156	2.59	18.64
2008	283.32	73	3.88	4.56
2009	185.69	90	2.06	3.90
2010	56.40	59	.96	3.93
2011	575.36	129	4.46	17.56
2012	306.48	75	4.09	5.08
2013	102.80	49	2.45	4.53
2014	225.86	42	5.38	5.02
2015	164.77	31	5.32	4.42
2016	97.91	31	3.16	6.29
Average	240.22	73		

Acreage Burned /Number of Fires by Fire Cause For Telfair County For FY 2007-2016		
Fire Cause	Acreage Burned	Number of Fires
Campfire	30.43	11
Children	11.49	12
Debris Burning	1,147.69	317
Incendiary	263.51	102
Lightning	213.94	45
MachineUse	336.17	164
Miscellaneous	223.96	58
Railroad	0.00	0
Smoking	9.28	10
Undetermined	165.47	14
Total	2,401.94	733

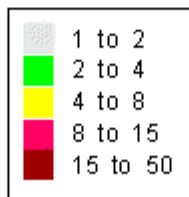
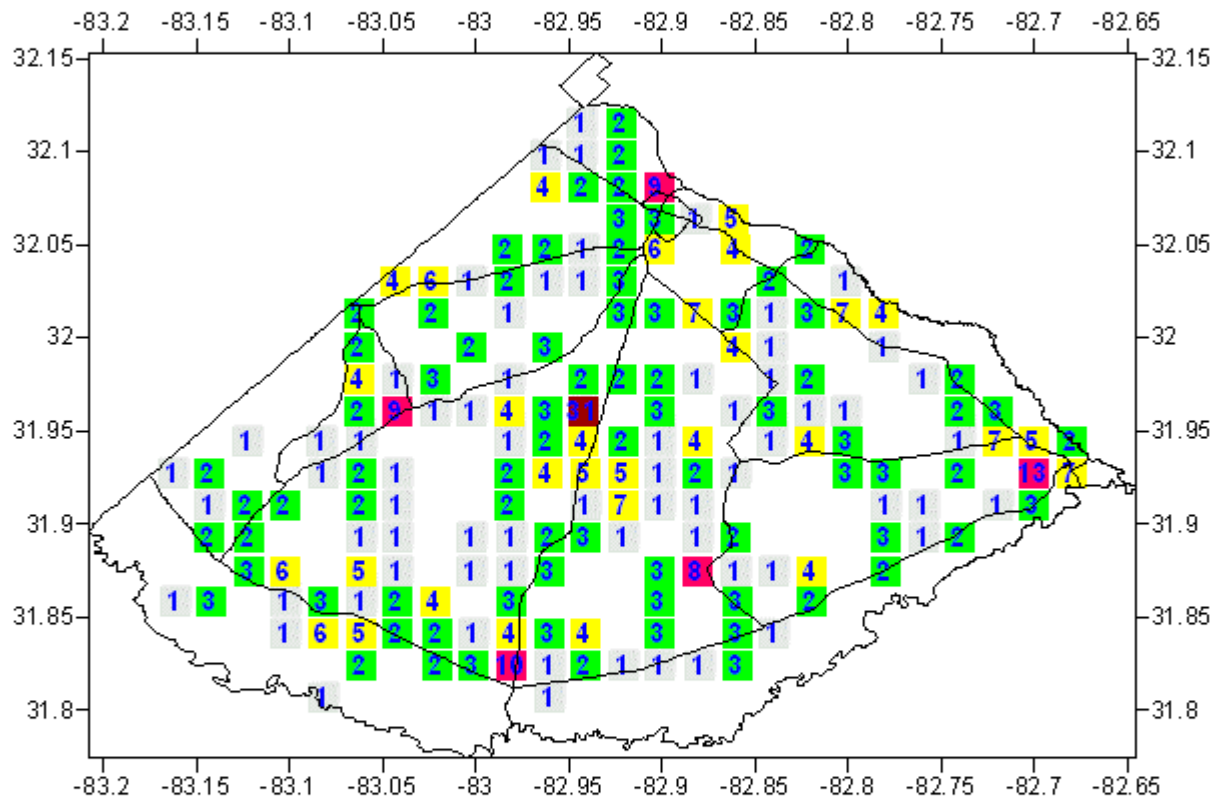
Number of Fires by Cause for Telfair County for FY 2007 to 2016

Year	Campfire	Children	Debris Burning	Incendiary	Lightning	Machine Use	Miscellaneous	Railroad	Smoking
2007	1	0	65	28	15	35	8	0	4
2008	0	2	25	16	7	14	8	0	1
2009	2	2	45	20	2	15	3	0	1
2010	0	1	23	6	0	19	9	0	1
2011	6	2	58	12	3	37	9	0	2
2012	0	2	32	7	7	23	4	0	0
2013	0	0	23	8	7	4	6	0	1
2014	2	1	20	1	0	9	9	0	0
2015	0	2	13	4	1	3	8	0	0
2016	0	0	13	0	3	5	8	2	0

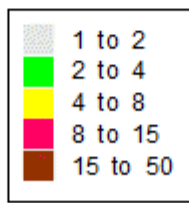
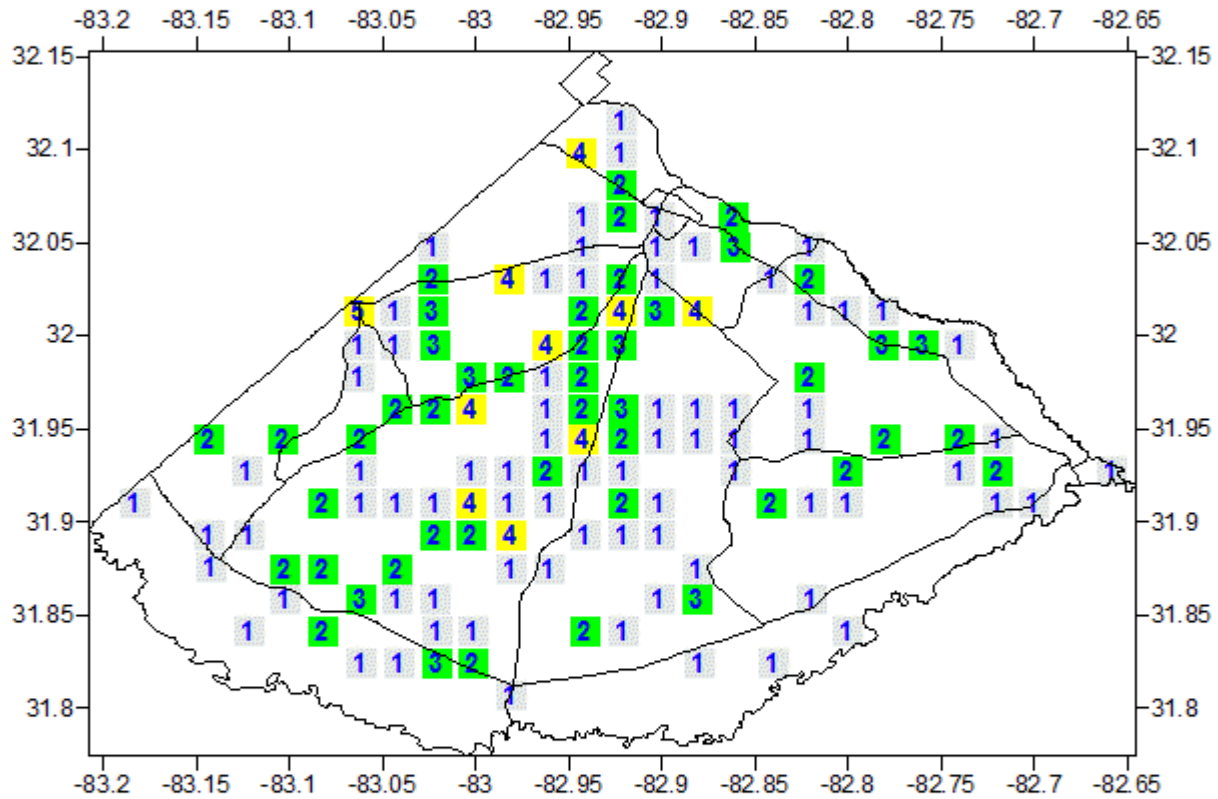
Acreage Burned by Cause of Fire For Telfair County For FY 2007-2016



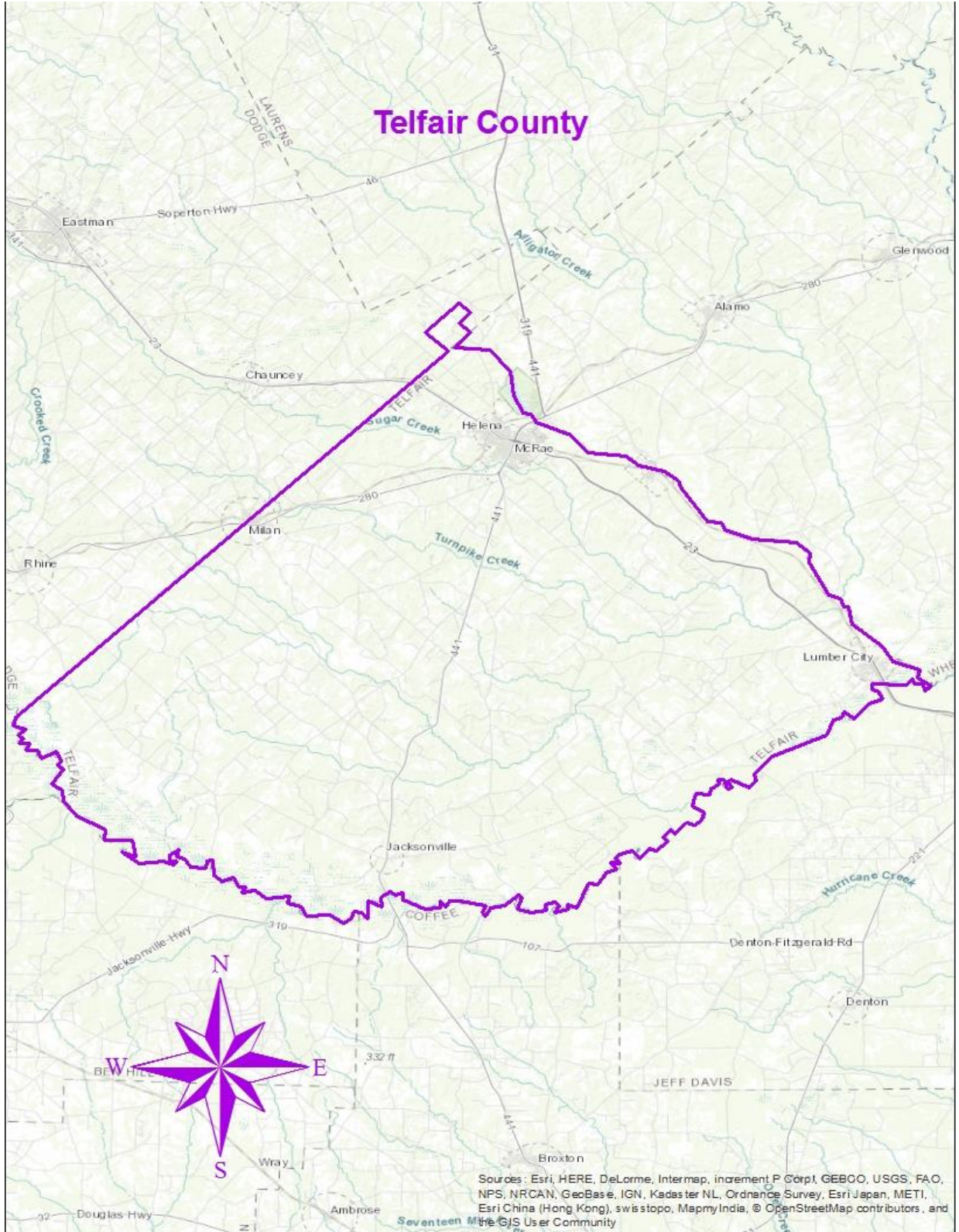
Fire Occurrence Map for Telfair County for Fiscal Year 2007-2011

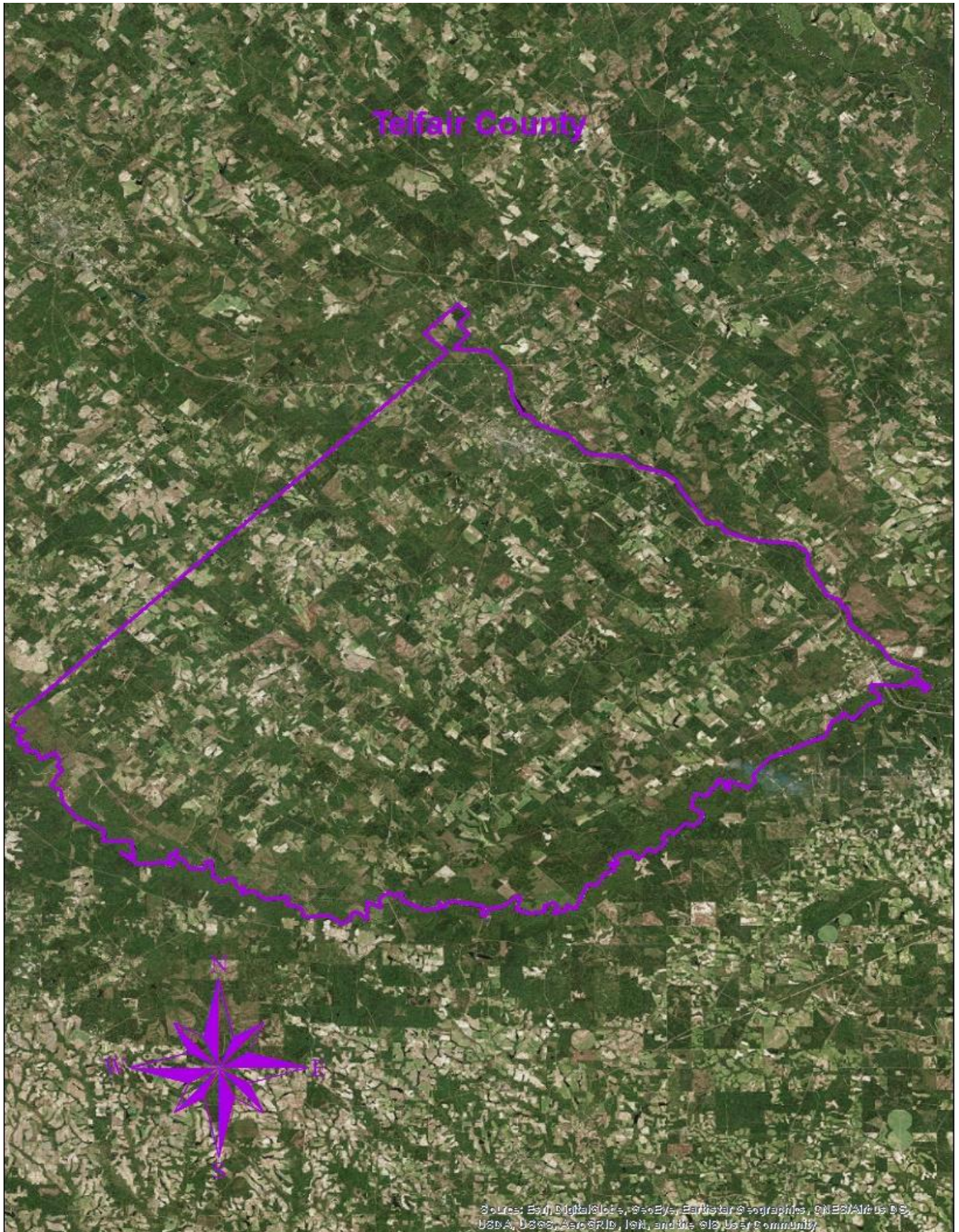


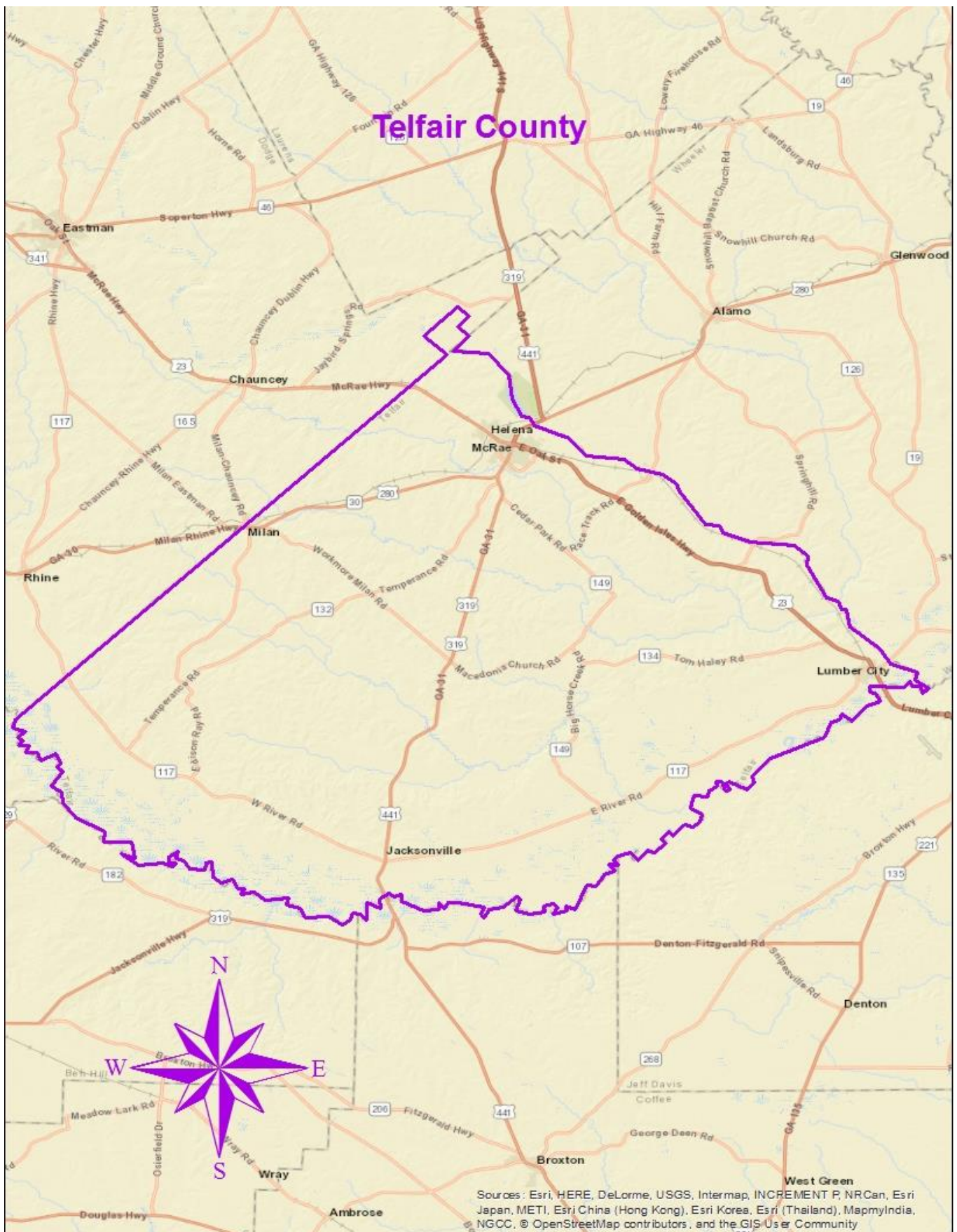
Fire Occurrence Map for Telfair County for Fiscal Year 2012-2016



IV. COUNTY BASEMAPS







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.



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

The wildland fire risk assessments conducted in 2009 by the Telfair County Fire Departments returned an average score of 105, placing Telfair County in the “high” hazard range. The risk assessment instrument used to evaluate wildfire hazards to Telfair County’s WUI was the Hazard and Wildfire Risk Assessment Checklist. The instrument takes into consideration accessibility, vegetation (based on fuel models), 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 Telfair County:

- Dead end roads with inadequate turn arounds
- Narrow roads without drivable shoulders
- Missing street signs and homes not clearly addressed
- Inadequate driveway access
- Minimal defensible space around structures
- Homes with wooden siding and roofs with heavy accumulations of vegetative debris
- Unmarked septic tanks in yards
- No pressurized or non-pressurized water systems available
- Above ground utilities
- Large, adjacent areas of forest or wildlands
- Heavy fuel buildup in adjacent wildlands
- Undeveloped lots comprising half the total lots in many rural communities.
- High occurrence of wildfires in the several locations
- Lack of homeowner or community organizations

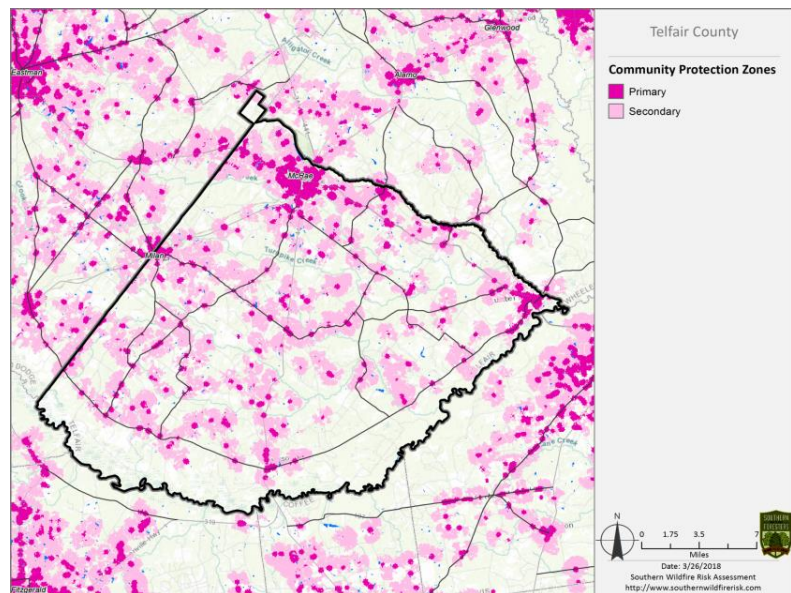
Summary of Telfair County Assessments

Area/Community	Fire Station	Community Access	Surrounding Vegetation	Building Construction	Fire Protection	Utilities	Add. Factors	Score	Hazard Rating
McRae Area	McRae	13	20	15	20	7	31	106	High
Lumber City Area	Lumber City	17	20	15	22	7	31	112	Very High
Jacksonville Area	Jacksonville	17	20	18	18	8	30	111	Very High
Milan Area	Milan	14	20	10	13	7	27	91	High
Scotland Area	Scotland	10	20	14	15	7	27	93	High
Horse Creek Area	Horse Creek	16	30	20	22	8	27	120	Very High

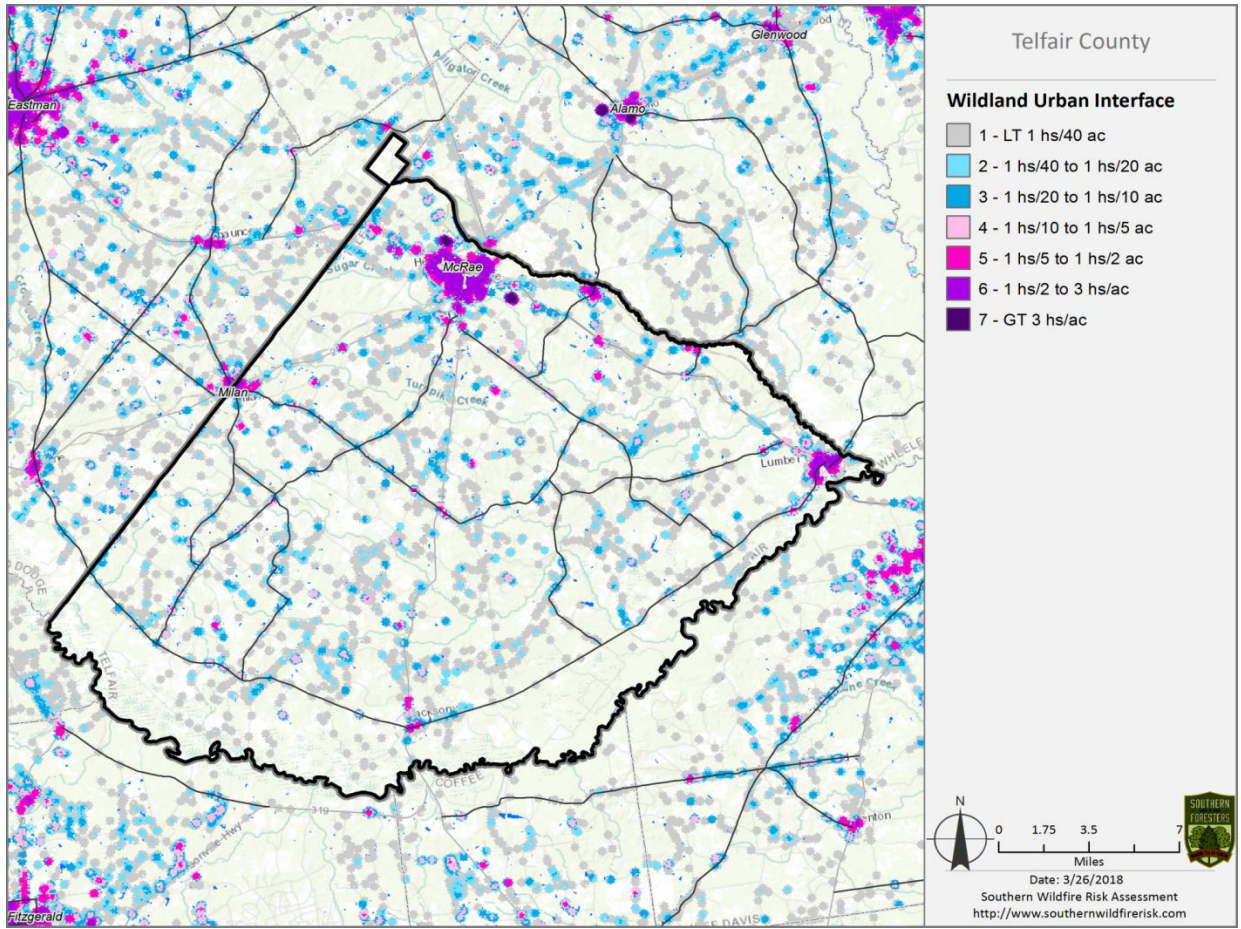
VI. SOUTHERN WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK HAZARD MAPS

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

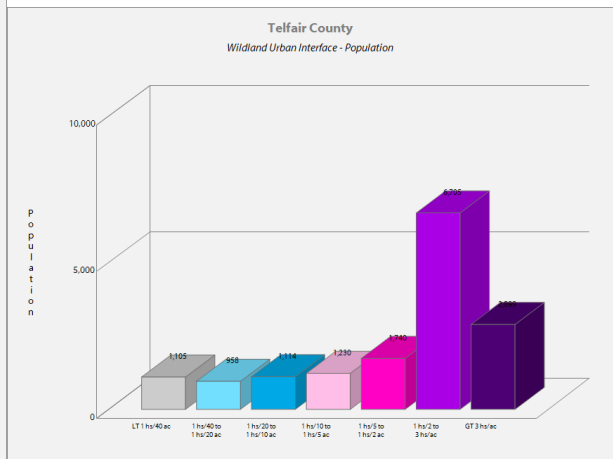
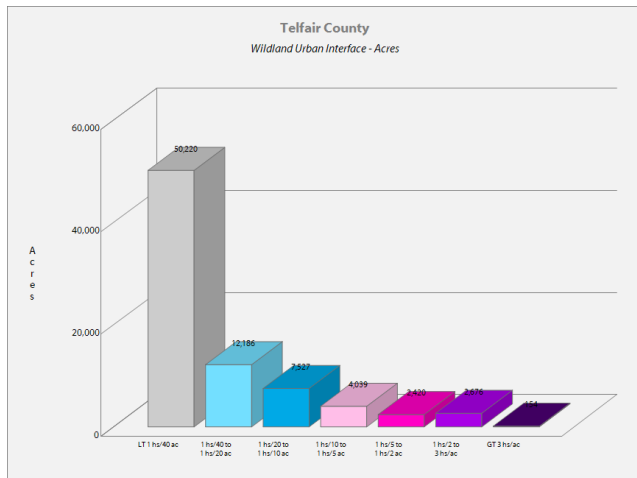
- Identify areas that are most prone to wildfire.
- Identify areas that may require additional tactical planning, specifically related to mitigation projects and Community Wildfire Protection Planning.
- Provide the information necessary to justify resource, budget and funding requests.
- Allow agencies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

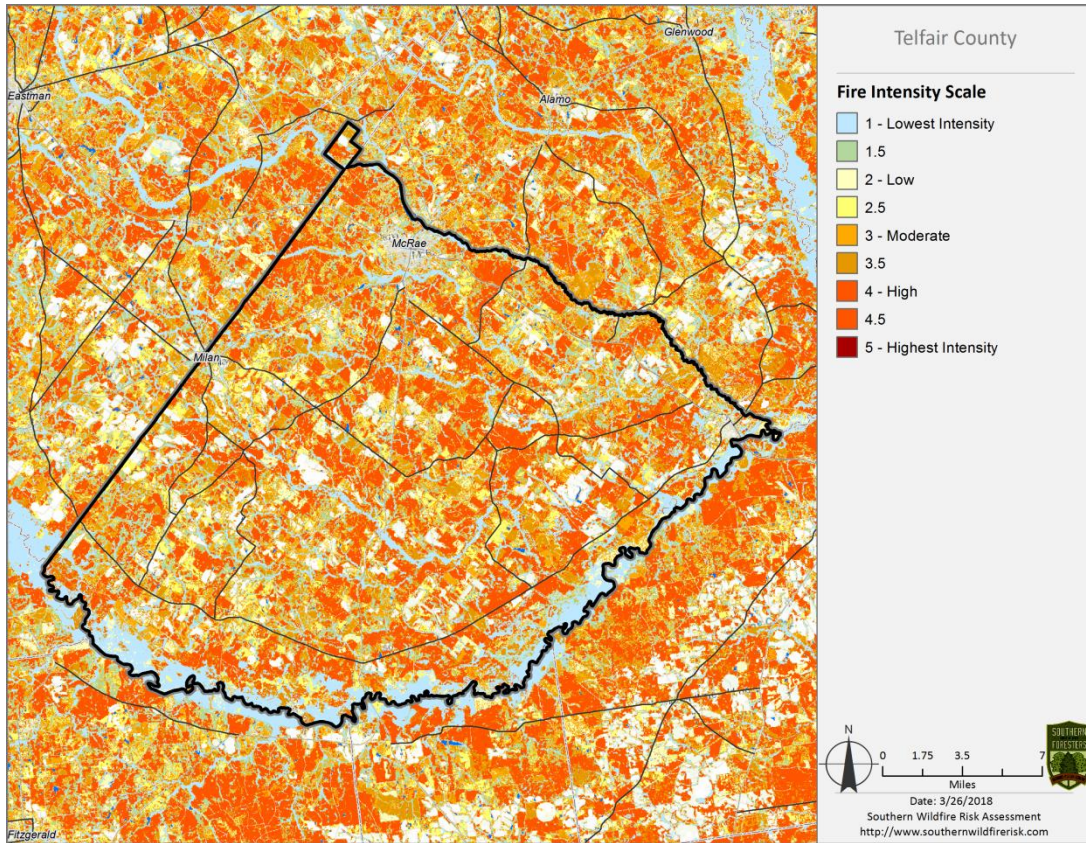


Community Protection Zones map from the Telfair County SWRA

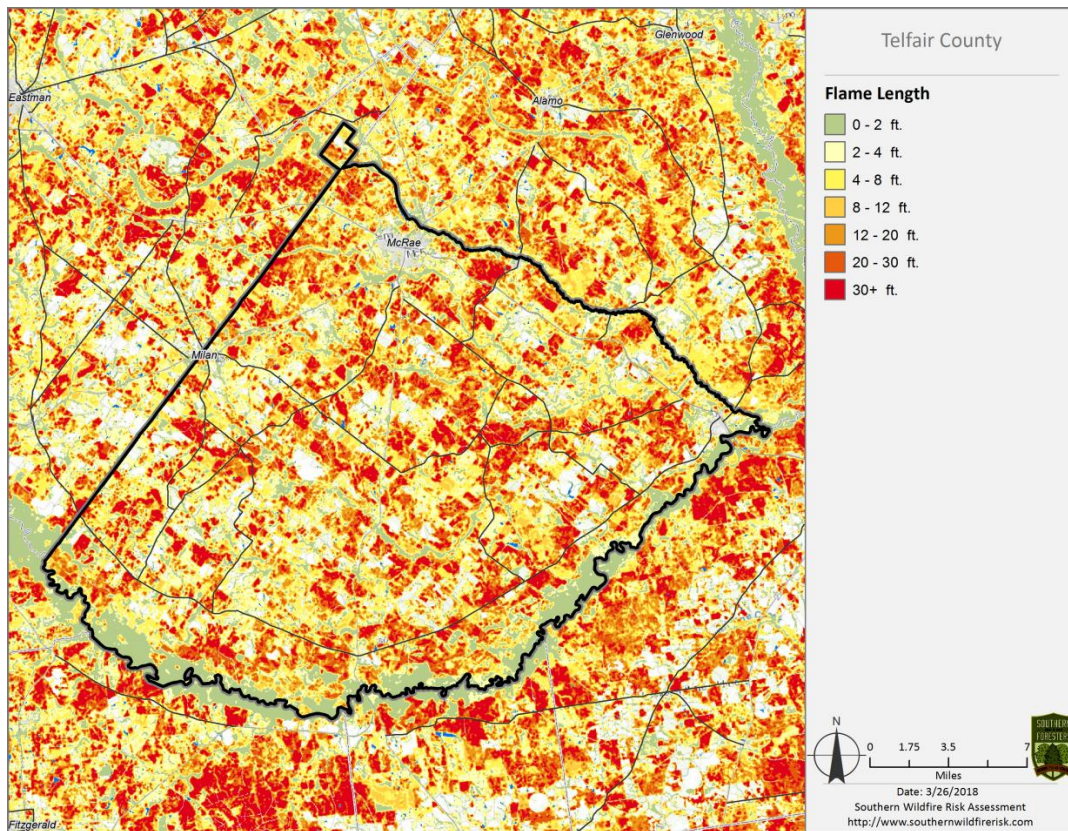


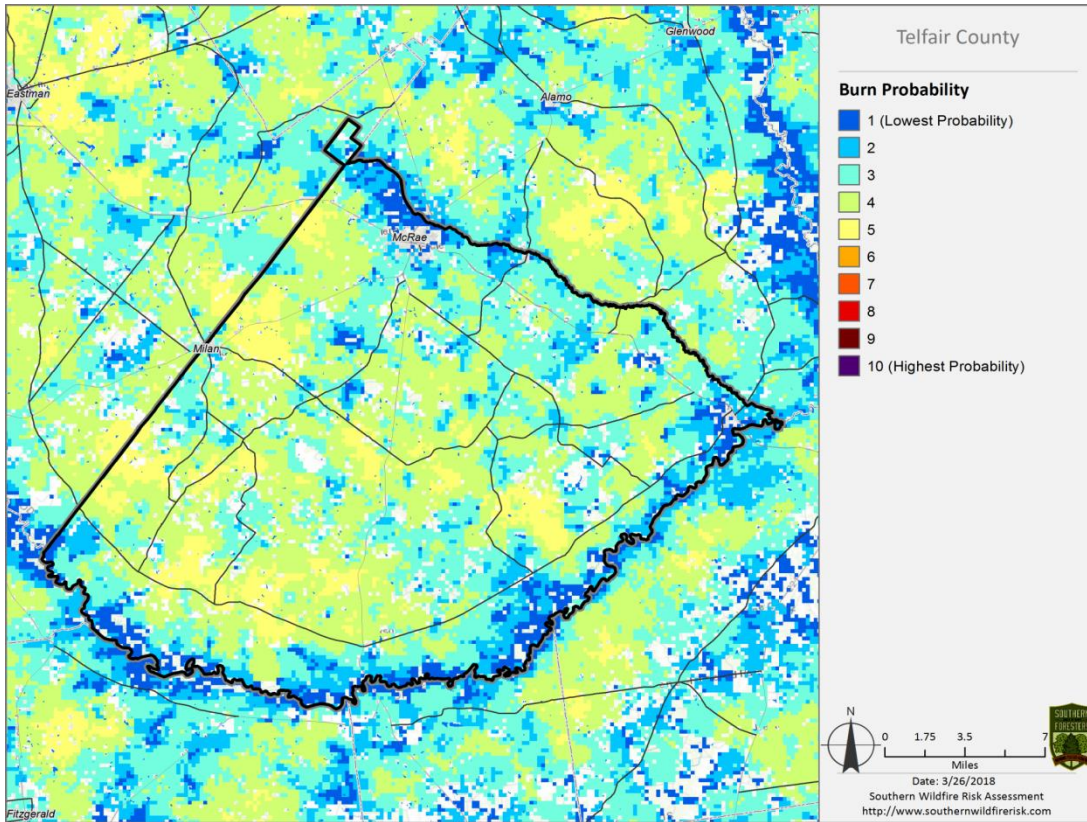
Above: Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map Below: WUI Acres (Left) and WUI Population (Right)



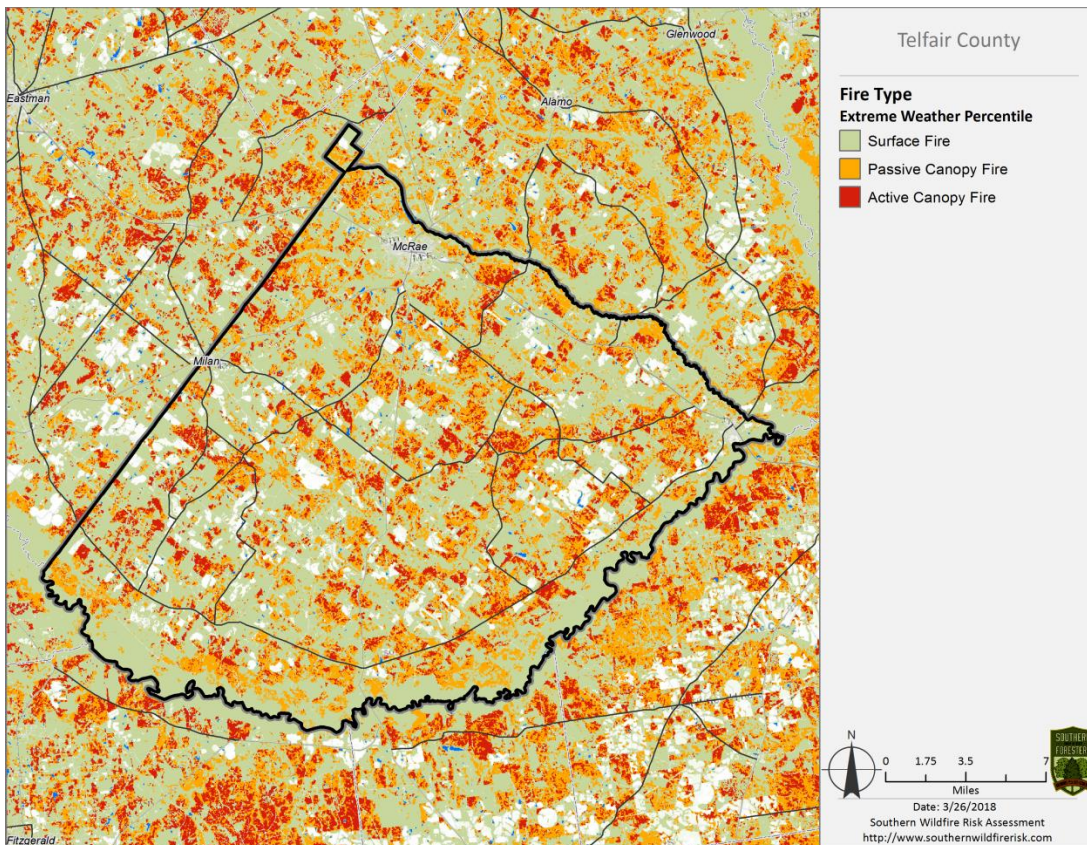


Above: Fire Intensity Scale map Below: Flame Length map





Above: Burn Probability map Below: Fire Type map



VII. PRIORITIZED MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Summary

As South Central Georgia continues to see increased growth from other areas seeking less crowded and warmer climates, new development will occur more frequently on forest and wildland areas. Telfair County will have an opportunity to significantly influence the wildland fire safety of new developments. It is important that new development be planned and constructed to provide for public safety in the event of a wildland fire emergency.

Over the past 20 years, much has been learned about how and why homes burn during wildland fire emergencies. Perhaps most importantly, case histories and research have shown that even in the most severe circumstances, wildland fire disasters can be avoided. Homes can be designed, built and maintained to withstand a wildfire even in the absence of fire services on the scene. The national Firewise Communities program is a national awareness initiative to help people understand that they don't have to be victims in a wildfire emergency. The National Fire Protection Association has produced two standards for reference: NFPA 1144 Standard for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire. 2008 Edition and NFPA 1141 Standard for Fire Protection Infrastructure for Land Development in Suburban and Rural Areas.

In 2012 the International Code Council developed the International Wildland Urban Interface Code (IWUIC). This code is endorsed by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). In 2014 the Georgia Legislature adopted this code for use by Georgia counties in building codes and zoning regulation to help minimize structure loss from wildfire in WUI areas. When new developments are built in the Wildland/Urban Interface, a number of public safety challenges may be created for the local fire services: (1) the water supply in the immediate areas may be inadequate for fire suppression; (2) if the Development is in an outlying area, there may be a longer response time for emergency services; (3) in a wildfire emergency, the access road(s) may need to simultaneously support evacuation of residents and the arrival of emergency vehicles; and (4) when wildland fire disasters strike, many structures may be involved simultaneously, quickly exceeding the capability of even the best equipped fire departments.

The following recommendations were developed by the Telfair 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, and 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. Driveway Access	Right of Way Clearance	Maintain vertical and horizontal clearance for emergency equipment. 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 or turn arounds.
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 Review Subdivision and development ordinances for public safety concerns. Enforce uniform addressing ordinance. Need effective skirting ordinance.
7. Burn Permits	Education and Enforcement	Greater Burn Permit enforcement and education from the Georgia Forestry Commission.

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. Seek grant for prescribed burning in WUI areas. Seek grant for WUI mitigation team.
2. Existing Fire Lines	Reduce hazardous fuels	Clean and re-harrow existing lines. Fuel reduction in WUI areas.
Proposed Improved Community Wildland Fire Response Priorities		
1. Water Sources	Dry Hydrants	Inspect, maintain and improve access to existing dry hydrants. Add signage along road to mark the hydrants. Locate additional dry hydrants as needed. Locate and pre-clear helicopter dip sites.
2. Fire Stations	Equipment	Wildland hand tools. Lightweight Wildland PPE Gear. Investigate need for “brush” trucks.
3. Initial Response	Fire Stations	Investigate need for additional Fire Stations for better response.
4. Road Names	Road Signage	Improved Road Signage at Crossroads. “Dead End” or “No Outlet” Tags on Road Signs.
5. Personnel	Training	Obtain Wildland Fire Suppression training for Fire Personnel. Ready Set Go training.
6. Water Handling	Tanker refill	Develop better water supply at Horse Creek Station.
**Actions to be taken by homeowners and community stakeholders		

Proposed Education and Outreach Priorities

1. Conduct “How to Have a Firewise Home” Workshop for Telfair 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 (National Wildfire Preparedness Day – 1st Saturday in May annually
<p>Conduct clean-up event every spring involving the Georgia Forestry Commission, Telfair County Fire Departments 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 <p>Celebrate the work with a community cookout, with Community officials, GFC and Telfair County Fire Departments discussing and commending the work accomplished.</p>
4. Informational Packets
<p>Develop and distribute informational packets to be distributed by realtors and insurance agents. Included in the packets are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be Firewise Around Your Home• Firewise Guide to Landscape and Construction• Firewise Communities USA materials• Fire Adapted Community information• Ready Set Go materials

5. Wildfire Protection Display

Create and exhibit a display for the general public at the July 4th Fireworks, Lumber City Farm Days and other local events. Display can be independent or combined with the Georgia Forestry Commission display.

Hold Open House at individual Fire Stations to promote Community Firewise Safety and develop community support and understanding of local fire departments and current issues.

6. Media

Invite the McRae news media to community “Firewise” functions for news coverage and regularly submit press releases documenting wildfire risk improvements in Telfair County. Utilize radio and social media to reach new audiences.



Prescribed burning is a best management practice to reduce hazardous fuel buildup. The Georgia Forestry Commission can assist by developing a prescribed burning plan, installation of firebreaks, and can provide equipment standby and burning assistance when personnel are available. Forestry consultants and contractors can also assist with this management practice.

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	
Telfair County WUI Fire Council	Create this informal team or council comprised of residents, GFC officials, Telfair County and McRae Fire department officials, a representative from the city and county governments and the EMA Director for Telfair 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"> 1 Defensible Space and Firewise Landscaping 2 Debris Burning Safety 3 Firewise information for homeowners 4 Prescribed burning benefits
Communications objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 causes 4 Encourage people to employ fire prevention and defensible spaces in their communities.
Target Audiences	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Homeowners 2 Forest Landowners and users 3 Civic Groups 4 School Groups
Methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 News Releases 2 Radio and TV PSA's for area stations 3 Personal Contacts 4 Key messages and prevention tips 5 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, Telfair County Fire Departments, 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	\$35 / acre	FEMA & USFS Grants

Assessment Strategy

To accurately assess progress and effectiveness for the action plan, the Telfair 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, 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 1 month and 6 months following workshop date.
- The Telfair County WUI Council 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 Telfair County WUI Council 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, 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.

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 www.firewise.org
- Georgia Forestry Commission 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
- Information about a variety of interface issues (including wildfire) can be found at the USFS website for Interface South: www.interfacesouth.org
- Information on codes and standards for emergency services including wildfire can be found at www.nfpa.org
- Information on FEMA Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) can be found at 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
- Fire Adapted Communities www.fireadapted.org
- Ready, Set, Go www.wildlandfirersg.org
- National Wildfire Preparedness Day www.wildfireprepdays.org

Appended Documents:

Telfair County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SWRA)

Telfair County Wildfire assessment scoresheets

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



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