

GEORGIA FORESTRY
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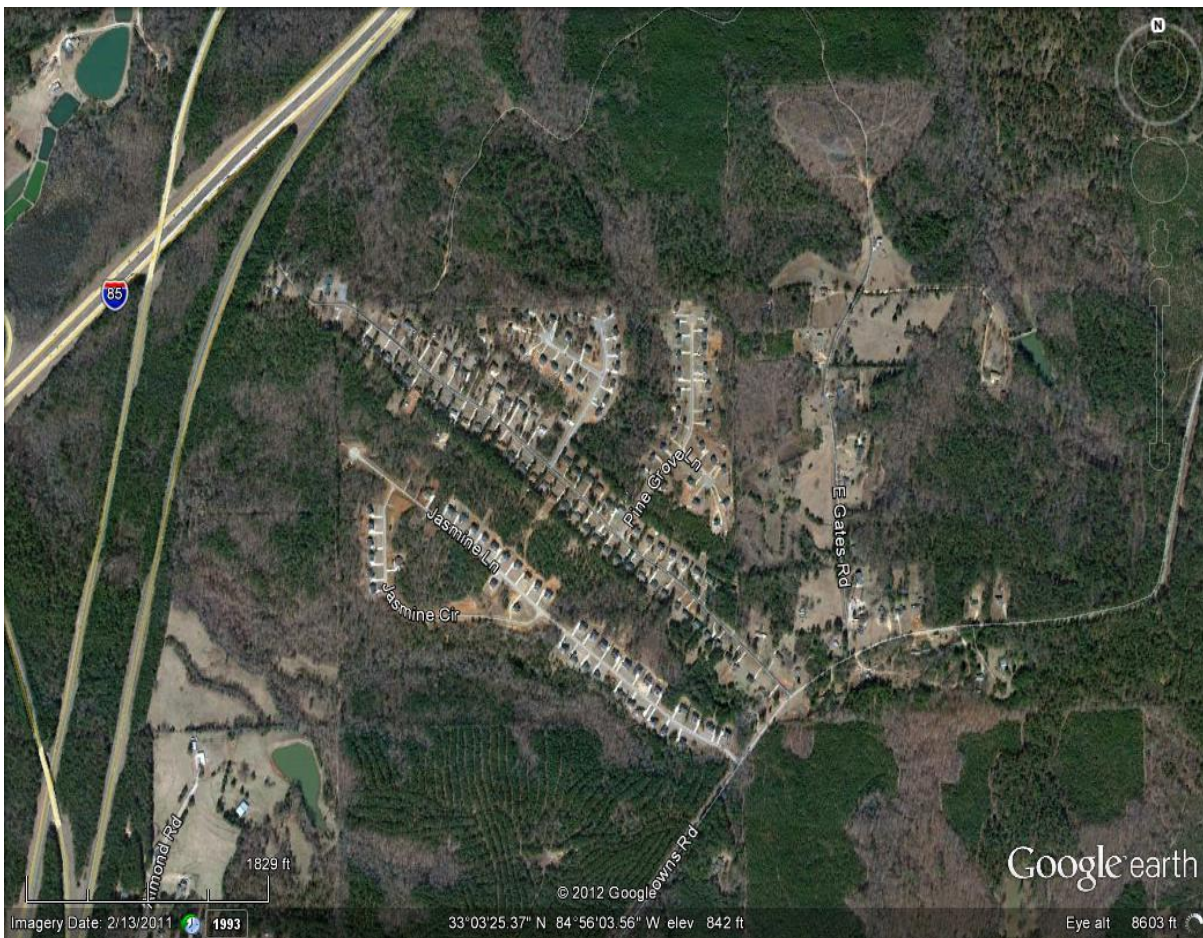


A Program of the Georgia Forestry Commission
with support from the U.S. Forest Service

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

An Action Plan for Wildfire Mitigation and Conservation of Natural Resources

Troup County



APRIL 2017

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

Troup County Representatives

Patrick Crews, Chairman, District One Commissioner

Signature

Ellis P. Cadenhead, Commissioner, District Two

Signature

Lewis C. Davis Jr., Commissioner, District Three

Signature

Morris Jones III, Commissioner, District Four

Signature

Richard English Jr., Commissioner, District Five

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Dennis Knight, Fire Chief, Director, Troup County Fire & Emergency Management

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Louis Dekmar, Chief of Operations Fire Dept. City of LaGrange

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Milton Smith, Fire Chief, City of West Point

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Georgia Forestry Commission Representatives

Amy Weaver, Chief Ranger, Heard –Troup Counties

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Signature

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Appended Documents:

Troup County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SouthWRAP)

This plan should become a working document that is shared by local, state, and federal agencies that will use it to accomplish common goals. It is intended to amend the present County Hazard mitigation plan. 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.

I. OBJECTIVES & GOALS

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) provides a community with a road map to reduce its risk from wildfire. A CWPP is designed through collaboration between state and local fire agencies, homeowners and landowners, and other interested parties such as city councils, utilities, home owner associations, environmental organizations, and other local stakeholders.

The plan identifies strategic sites and methods for risk reduction and structural protection projects across jurisdictional boundaries.

Comprehensive plans provide long-term guidance for growth, reflecting a community's values and future expectations. The plan implements the community's values and serves to protect natural and community resources and public safety. Planning also enables communities to address their development patterns in the Wildland Urban Interface and determine how they can reduce their risk through alternative development patterns. The formal legal standing of the plan and its central role in local government decision making underscores the opportunity to use this planning process as an effective means for reducing wildfire risk.

The mission of the following plan is to set clear priorities for the implementation of wildfire mitigation in Troup County. The plan includes prioritized recommendations for the appropriate types and methods of fuel reduction and structure ignitability reduction that will help 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 about 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.
- Develop and implement effective community ordinances and codes.

II. COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

Wildfire risk reduction strategies are most effective when approached collaboratively – involving groups of residents, elected officials, community decision makers, emergency managers, and natural resource managers –and when combined with effective outreach approaches.

Collaborative approaches make sense as the initial focus of any community attempting to work toward wildfire risk reduction. In all Community Wildfire Protection Plan collaborations, the goal is to cooperatively identify problems and reach a consensus for mutual action. In the case of wildfire mitigation, a reduction in the wildfire risk to the community's lives, houses, and property is the desired outcome.

The collaborative core team convened in March 2011 to initiate development of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The group is comprised of representatives from Troup County Board of Commissioners, Troup County Fire Department, Troup County Emergency Management, and the Georgia Forestry Commission. The benefits that will be gained from the development of this CWPP are summarized below:

- 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

III. COMMUNITY BACKGROUND & WILDFIRE HISTORY

Troup County



Troup County, Georgia's sixty-third, was established on the border of Alabama, along with four other counties, by an act of the state legislature in 1825. Georgia governor George Troup, for whom the county was named, signed an act organizing the former Creek Indian lands into counties.

As one of its first official acts, the new Troup County government selected a site for the county seat. They chose a location near the geographic center of the county and named the town after the Chateau de LaGrange, the country estate of the Marquis de Lafayette, a French general and hero of the American Revolution (1775-83). LaGrange was incorporated in December 1828. Two other cities, West Point and Hogansville, are located in the county. West Point, in the southwest corner along the Alabama border, was incorporated under the name Franklin in 1831; the legislature changed the town's name in 1832. Hogansville, in the northeast portion of the county, was incorporated in 1870.



Troup County Courthouse

Troup County, which comprises 414 square miles, prospered in the nineteenth century as an agricultural area with rich soil watered by the Chattahoochee River and its tributaries. Growing into a center of commerce, government, and education, LaGrange, supported two female colleges and a male university. One of these schools, LaGrange College, was founded in 1831 and continues to serve the area as a coeducational Methodist-affiliated institution with more than 1,000 students. Beautiful homes and gardens, several of which are now part of historic districts or are listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places, were built in the city.

The Civil War (1860-65) found Troup County residents ready to serve the Southern cause. Located along the Atlanta and West Point rail line, which remained open almost until the end of the war, LaGrange served as a hospital center for the Confederacy.



Bellevue

Leading statesman and U.S. and Confederate senator Benjamin Hill lived there. His home, Bellevue, built from 1853 to 1855, is a National Historic Landmark. The Battle of West Point occurred at nearby Fort Tyler along the Georgia-Alabama line on April 16, 1865. The following day a corps of ladies, calling themselves the Nancy Harts in honor of Nancy Hart, the Revolutionary War

heroine from Georgia, defended LaGrange from an invasion of Union troops led by Colonel Oscar H. LaGrange. The Nancy Harts gave up their arms when the colonel promised not to burn their homes and town.

Led by such families as the Callaways, Dunsons, Truitts, Laniers, and Huguleys, Troup County entered the industrial era of the "New South" by the late nineteenth century. During this time the county's economy centered on textile mills. Since the 1960s Troup

County has successfully attracted diversified industry from around the world, including plants from Japan and Germany. In October 2006 Kia Motors Corporation, a Korean automobile manufacturer, broke ground in West Point for its first factory in the United States. The plant opened in February 2010 with an initial workforce of 1,200 employees. Another large employer in the county is Interface, a manufacturer of commercial carpeting.

LaGrange and Troup County have within their borders West Point Dam and Lake, constructed primarily for flood control in the 1960s and 1970s by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. West Georgia Medical Center is the leading hospital in the county, and West Georgia Technical College serves students in the area. The county is home to an impressive variety of art and cultural institutions, including museums, theaters, ballets, and orchestras.



West Point Dam and Lake

According to the 2010 U.S. census, the population of Troup County was 67,044, an increase from the 2000 population of 58,779.

The above material is courtesy of the New Georgia Encyclopedia

Wildfire History

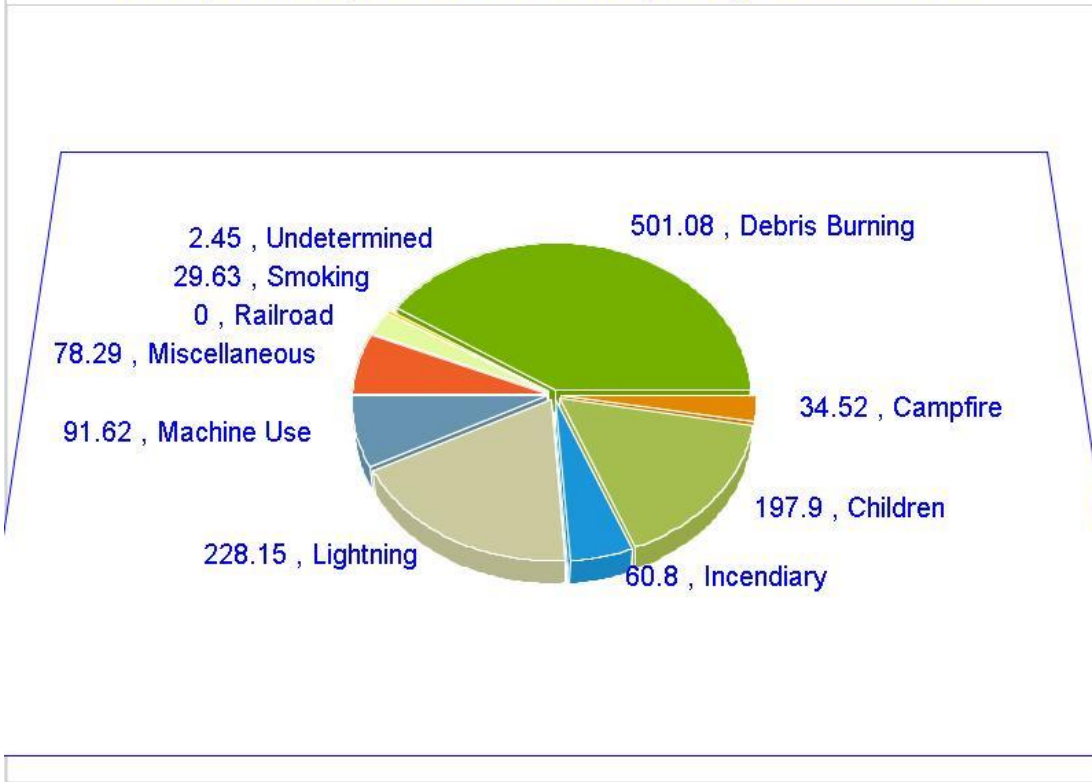
Wildland Fire activity in Troup County has been consistent with historical trends in past years. Escapes from Debris burning along with incendiary fires are the leading causes. The following table outlines fire activity for fiscal years 2007 through 2016. As seen in the chart below, activity was increased statewide in 2007 and 2011 due to large wildfires in SE Georgia and the Okefenokee Refuge. In 2015 Troup County had the lowest ever wildfire activity and acreage burned due to above average rainfall during the year.

Fiscal Year	Number of Wildfires	Acres burned Troup County	Average Size	Statewide Average Size
2016	11	60.09	5.46	6.29
2015	8	9.17	1.15	4.42
2014	16	37.16	2.32	5.02
2013	18	110.51	6.14	4.53
2012	25	105.62	4.22	4.98
2011	36	123.82	3.44	17.56
2010	19	159.61	8.40	3.56
2009	16	93.82	5.86	3.90
2008	25	254.50	10.18	4.56
2007	38	274.64	7.23	18.64

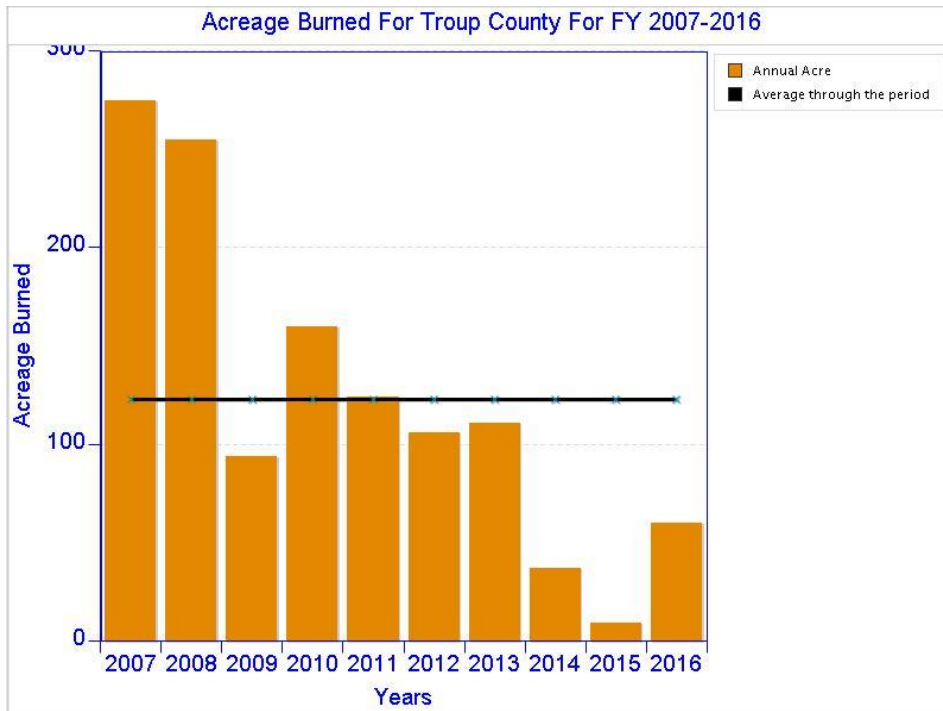
The following table outlines fire activity for the fiscal year (FY 2017) which began on July 1, 2016 and ends on June 30, 2017. The major cause of these wildfires so far is children playing, debris burning, and machine use. Wildfire activity has significantly increased during this year due to drought.

County = Troup	Cause	Fires		Acres	Fires 5 Yr Avg	Acres 5 Yr Avg
Campfire	Campfire	2		0.50	1.20	1.14
Children	Children	6		2.31	2.20	2.99
Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	0		0.00	0.20	0.02
Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	0		0.00	2.20	13.78
Debris: Other	Debris: Other	0		0.00	0.20	0.05
Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	5		11.35	2.20	3.57
Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	0		0.00	0.40	0.00
Incendiary	Incendiary	1		4.70	0.80	4.61
Lightning	Lightning	0		0.00	0.40	6.92
Machine Use	Machine Use	5		19.50	1.40	4.01
Miscellaneous: Other	Miscellaneous: Other	3		4.20	1.00	10.66
Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	2		7.72	1.00	2.12
Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	3		0.80	0.60	0.16
Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	0		0.00	0.60	1.82
Miscellaneous: Woodstove Ashes	Miscellaneous: Woodstove Ashes	2		0.10	1.20	1.27
Railroad	Railroad	1		0.20	0.20	0.04
Smoking	Smoking	1		2.38	0.20	0.48
Undetermined	Undetermined	1		8.00	1.00	2.09
Totals for County: Troup Year: 2017		32		61.76	17.00	55.74

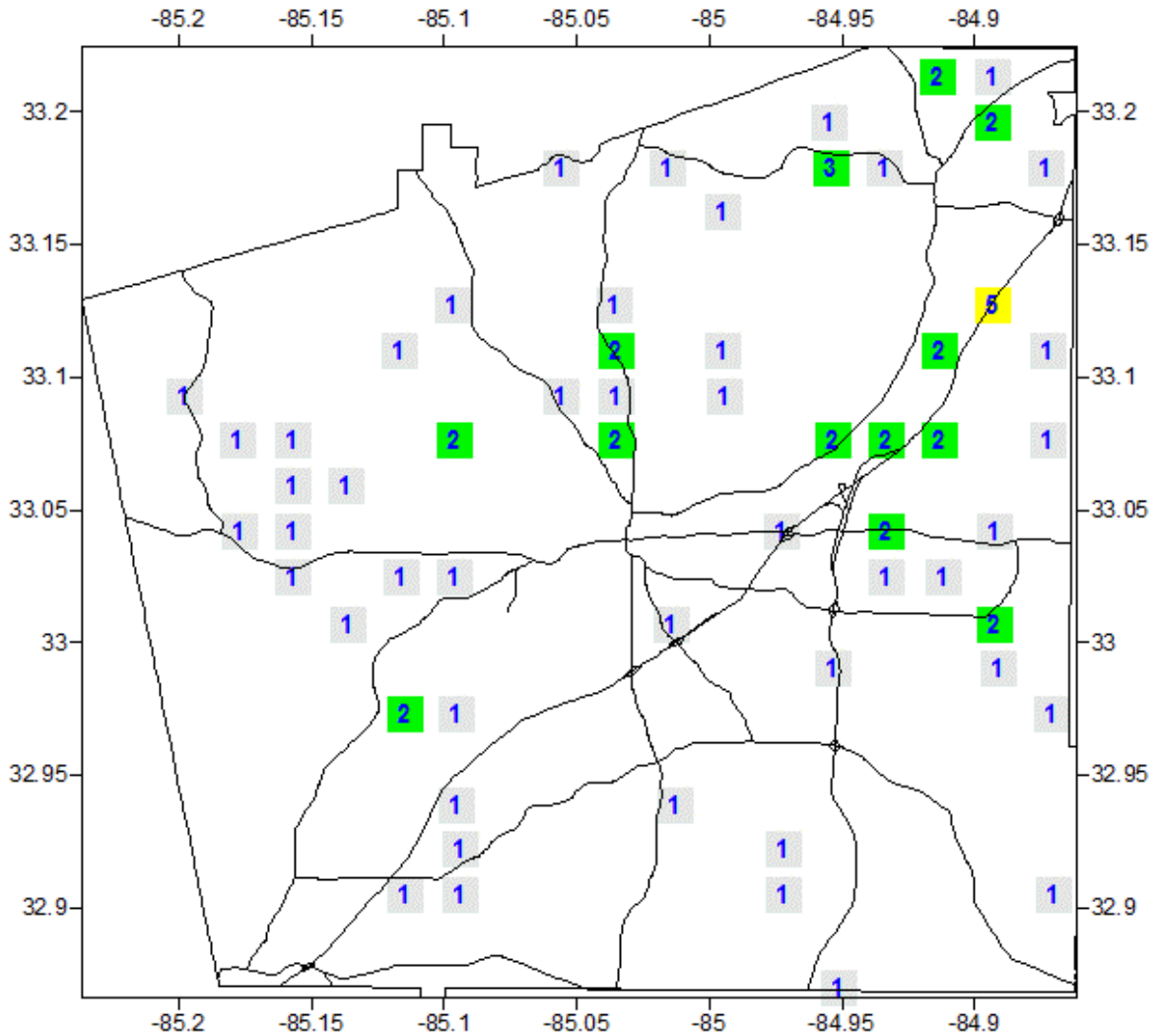
Acreage Burned by Cause of Fire For Troup County For FY 2007-2016



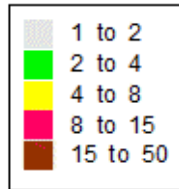
Acreage Burned For Troup County For FY 2007-2016



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



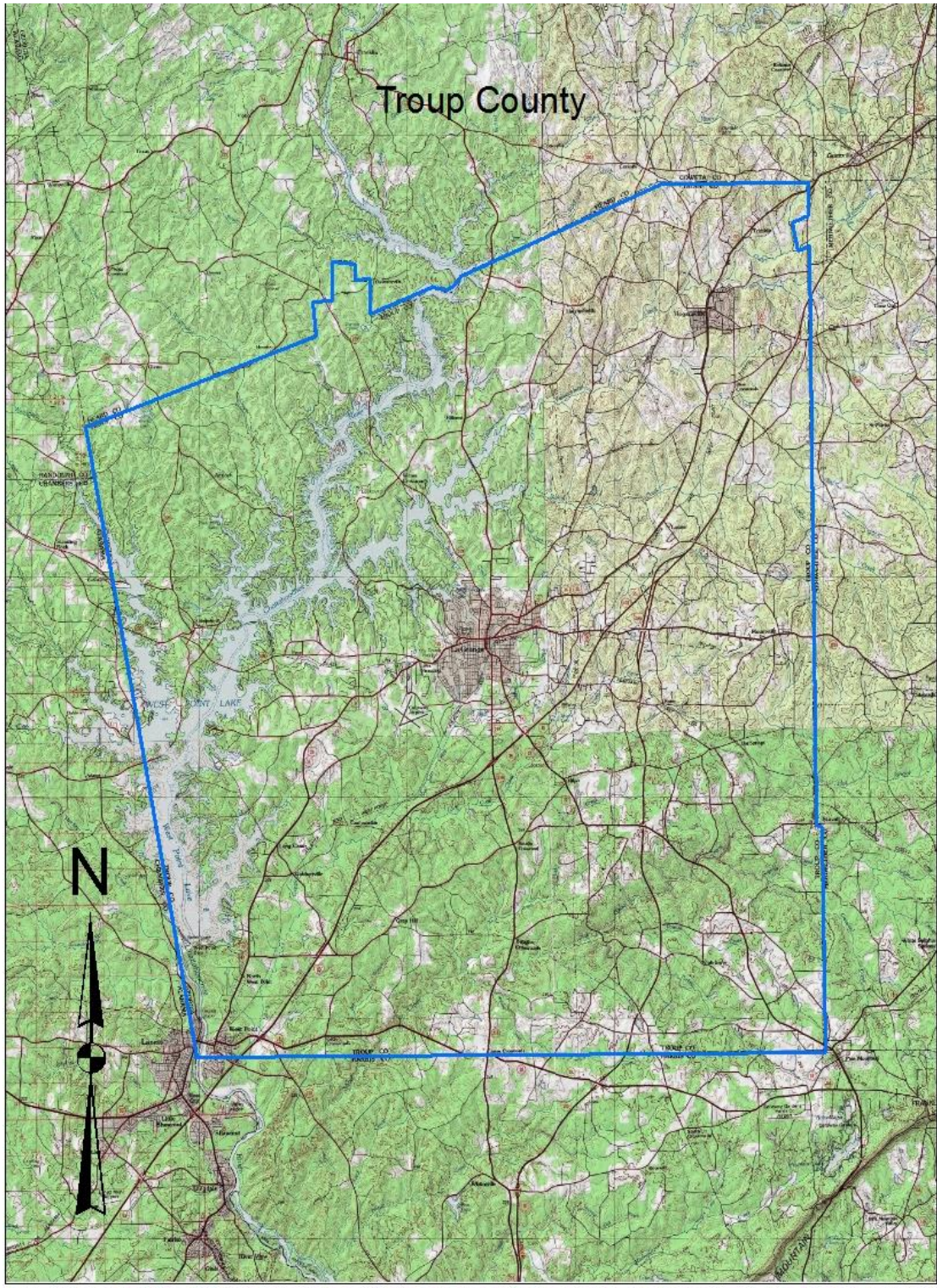
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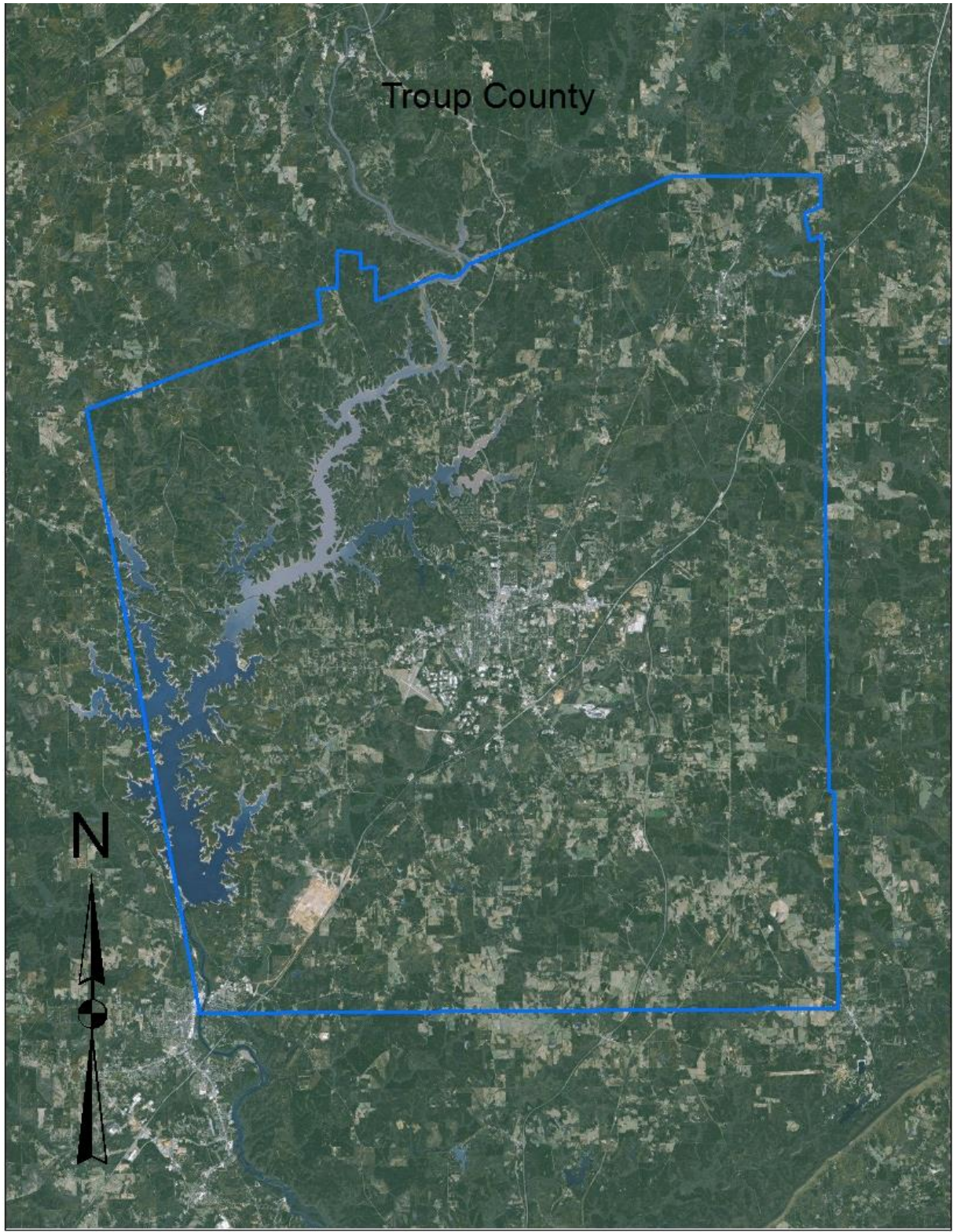


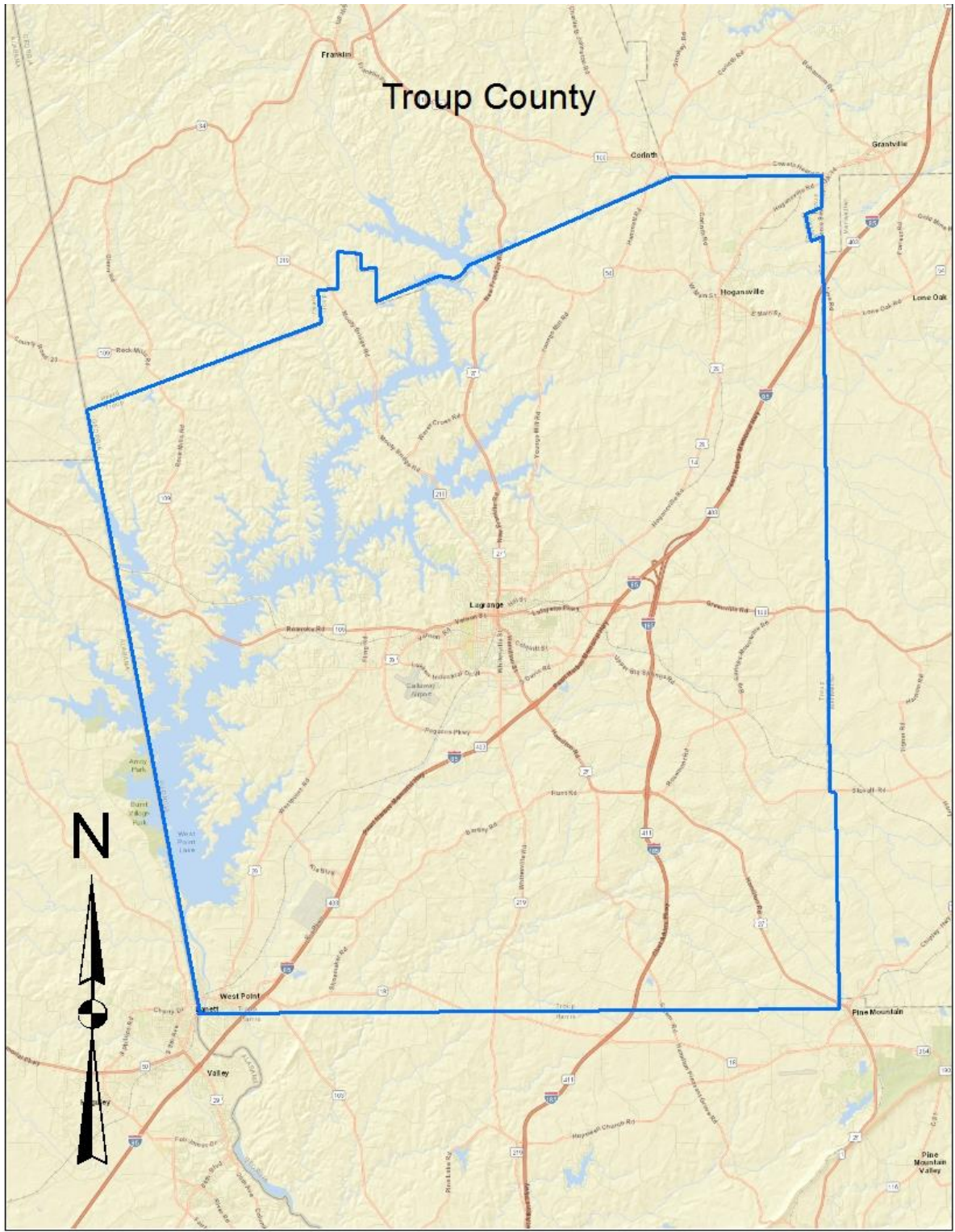
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IV. COUNTY BASE MAPS







V. 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)

Troup County is typical of a county that is undergoing a rapid transition from an isolated rural county to a more urbanized county. This transition resulted from influence of the I-85 and I-185 corridor. The location of the Kia automobile plant has stimulated growth which has improved the housing market in rural areas. This economic boost could result in increased wildland urban risk.



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Wildland Urban Interface Hazards

Firefighters in the wildland urban interface may encounter hazards other than the fire itself, such as hazardous materials, utility lines and poor access. Some of these hazards are listed below:

- **Hazardous Material**
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. These areas may also contain some type of booby trap.
- **Propane Tanks**
Both large (household size) and small (gas grill size) liquefied propane gas (LPG) tanks can present hazards to firefighters, including explosion.

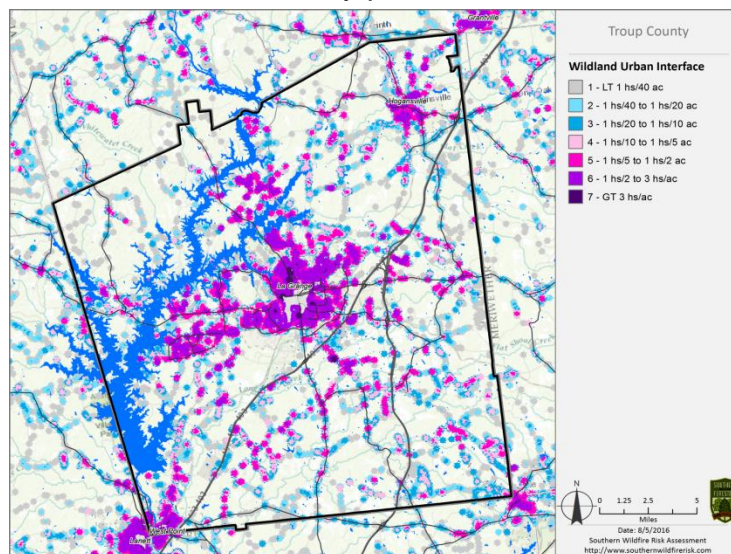
- **Utility Lines**
Utility lines may be located above and below ground and may be cut or damaged by tools or equipment. Don't spray water on utility lines or boxes.
- **Septic Tanks and Fields**
Below-ground structures may not be readily apparent and may not support the weight of engines or other apparatus.
- **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 structure strength at 180 degrees Fahrenheit 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.
- **Abandoned wells**
Found around old home sites, open wells can be a hazard for firefighters, especially while working a wildfire during the night.

There is a map in the appendix which shows the track of the tornado which occurred on April 27, 2011. Firefighting in areas affected by this storm will be extremely difficult and dangerous should they remain unchanged from when they occurred. Structures in close proximity to this track are at heightened risk.

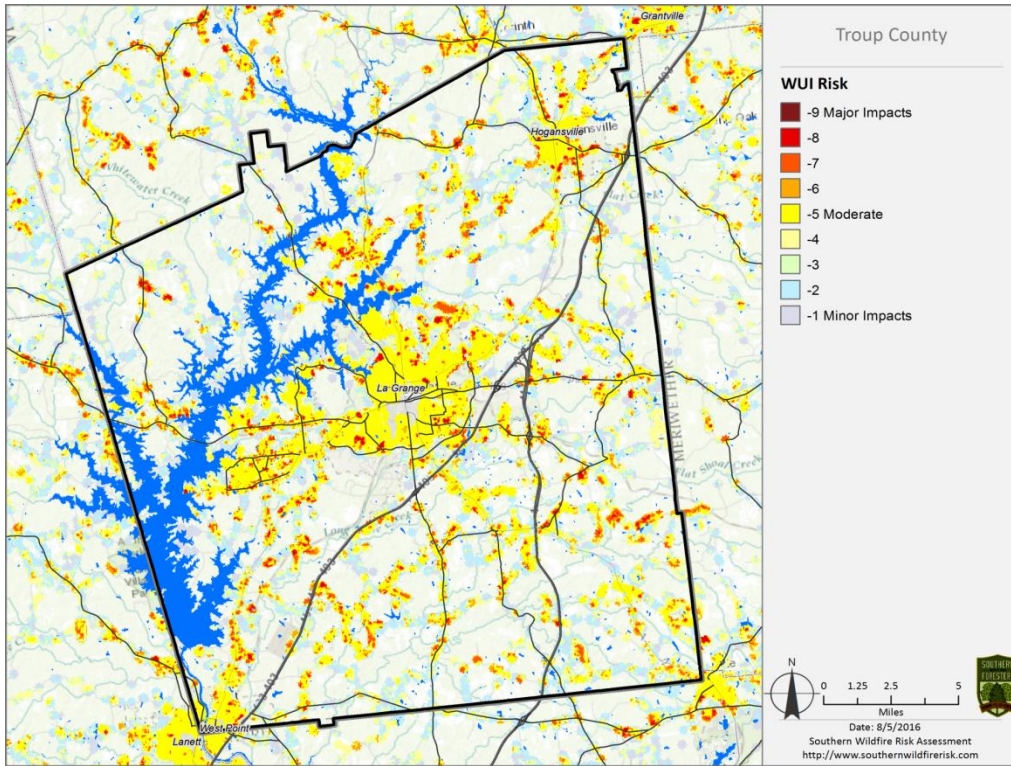
VI. SOUTHERN WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT & HAZARDS MAPS

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

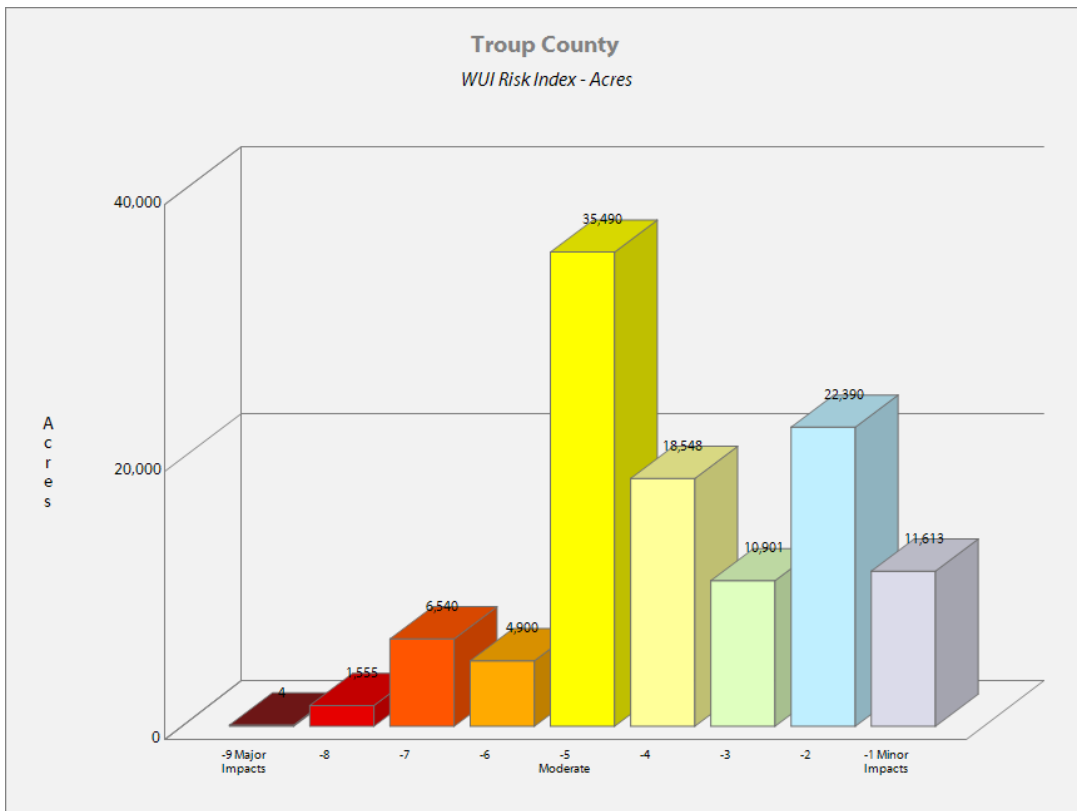
- Identify areas that are most prone to wildfire
- Identify areas that may require additional tactical planning, specifically related to mitigation projects and Community Wildfire Protection Planning
- Provide the information necessary to justify resource, budget and funding requests
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- Plan for response and suppression resource needs
- Plan and prioritize hazardous fuel treatment programs

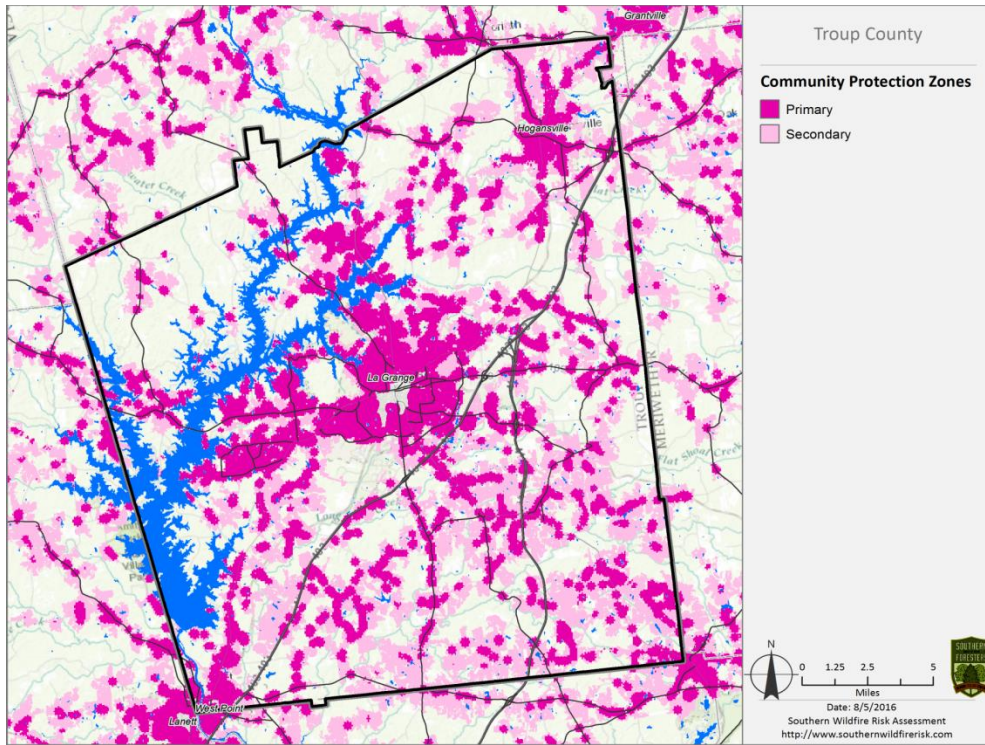


Wildland Urban Interface map from Troup County SouthWRAP report

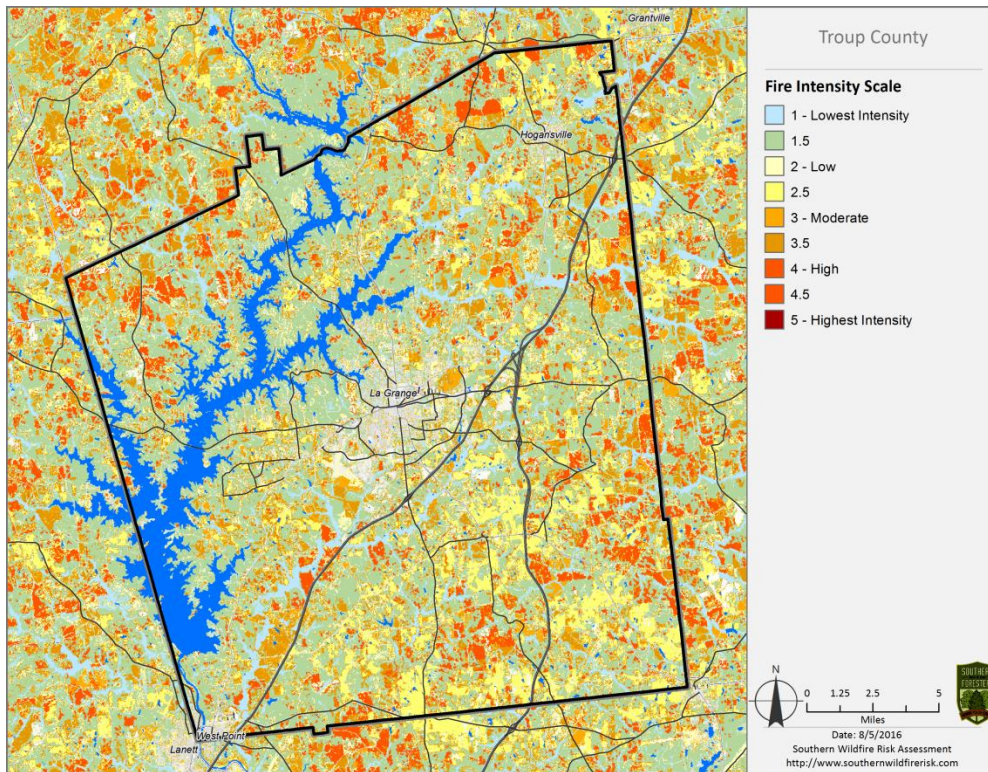


Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Risk map (above) and WUI Risk Index Acres graph (below) from the Troup County SWRA report





Community Protection Zones map (above) and Fire Intensity Scale map (below)



VII. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

Following a meeting between the Georgia Forestry Commission and Troup County and municipal fire department personnel on March 3, 2011 assessments of communities at risk from wildland fire was undertaken. The risk assessment instrument used to evaluate wildfire hazards was the GFC Community Wildfire Risk Assessment. This 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 the higher risk communities and developments in Houston 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 addressed
- Thick, highly flammable vegetation surrounding many homes
- Minimal defensible space around structures
- Homes with wooden siding and roofs with accumulations of vegetative debris
- No pressurized or non-pressurized water systems available
- Above ground utilities
- Large, adjacent areas of forest or wildlands
- Heavy fuel buildups in adjacent wildlands
- Undeveloped lots
- High occurrence of wildfires in several locations
- Distance from fire stations
- Lack of homeowner or community organizations

Wildfire Risk (rating scale):

Low Risk: Total Wildfire Risk Rating is 0 - 75 points:

The chances of your home surviving a wildfire are GOOD. Little is needed to improve your situation.

Moderate Risk: Total Wildfire Risk Rating is 76 - 130 points:

The chances of your home surviving a wildfire are FAIR. Some Minor improvements will make your home more fire resistant.

High Risk: Total Wildfire Risk Rating is Over 130 points:

Your home is at risk and improvements are necessary to reduce risk!

Extreme Risk: Total Wildfire Risk Rating is Over 140 points:

Your home MAY NOT SURVIVE if a wildfire passes through the area.

This assessment process was based on information provided by the Georgia Forestry Commission from the Southern Fire Risk Assessment supplemented by

local knowledge of high risk areas. Communities were assessed using the Georgia Forestry Commissions Form 140 for Woodland Community Wildfire Hazard Assessment. This form determines risk based on four criteria subdivision design, site hazard, building construction, and additional factors. Communities are assigned a risk category based on a numerical score. Communities are designated as being at extreme, high, moderate, or low risk. Assessments were declared complete on July 16, 2012. The original assessments are retained by the Georgia Forestry Commission. These documents would be useful if they were referenced to determine how risk categories could be improved.

Thirty seven (37) communities were assessed. Of these 12 were classified as being at moderate risk and 25 were determined to be at low risk. Information on the assessed communities is shown on a spreadsheet entitled 'Risk Summary Troup County' which is included in the appendix. This document contains summary information from the assessment forms. The locations for the communities are shown on the Wildland Fire Susceptibility map for Troup County. All maps are in PDF format which allows for file sharing and printing in all formats.

Community Name or Location	Map Number	Latitude	Longitude	Homes	score	Risk Category	Jurisdiction
Graysons Landing	1	33°10'23.703"N	85°2'55.4833"W	135	123	moderate	Sta 2
Pioneer Dr	2	32°56'42.0762"	85°1'5.8212"	18	111	moderate	Sta 1
Whitaker Acres	3	33°2'55.7864"N	85°6'3.551"W	150	102	moderate	Sta 4
Cherokee Resort	4	32°54'21.962"N	84°51'55.2461"W	47	97	moderate	Sta 12
Amhurst Subdiv.	5	32°54'54.3105"N	85°5'39.4747"W	20	89	moderate	Sta 7
St. Anthony Ct.	6	33°4'28.0505"N	85°2'38.8028"W	13	85	moderate	Sta 4 Lagrange
Vernon Ferry Rd	7	33°2'34.812"N	85°8'0.284"W	250	84	moderate	Sta 10
Grove Point	8	33°7'26.4392"N	84°53'27.8442"W	23	84	moderate	Sta 11
Lakeshore Dr / Highland Park	9	33°4'9.809"N	85°4'2.5521"W	26	80	moderate	Sta 4 Lagrange
Greenbriar Subdiv.	10	33°1'7.8972"N	84°56'36.5143"W	70	79	moderate	Sta 9
Long Cane Community	11	32°55'3.8387"N	85°9'13.062"W	30	78	moderate	Sta 4
Homecoming	12	33°3'53.6878"N	85°0'42.0504"W	7	78	moderate	Sta 3 Lagrange
The River Club	13	33°5'43.7873"N	85°6'11.4227"W	17	74	Low	Sta 2
Brookwood Dr Spring Valley	14	33°2'53.8871"N	85°5'45.285"W	105	73	Low	Sta 2
Foxcroft Dr	15	33°4'1.1098"N	85°5'26.1039"W	22	73	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Willowcrest Way	16	33°3'40.6037"N	85°5'33.7313"W	77	73	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Pine Grove	17	33°3'20.9151"N	84°56'7.86"W	112	72	Low	Sta 9
Baileys Pointe	18	33°3'20.9151"N	84°56'7.86"W	42	71	Low	Sta 9
Millridge Jackson Creek	19	33°3'55.755"N	85°4'41.9847"W	7	71	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Deal Dr	20	33°3'50.9075"N	85°4'30.6574"W	14	71	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Bryant Lake	21	33°0'14.0369"N	84°59'57.1263"W	18	71	Low	Sta 1 Lagrange
Ashford Circle	22	33°5'4.5247"N	85°2'50.9996"W	93	69	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Hummingbird Estates	23	33°9'10.6369"N	84°54'16.0338"W	73	69	Low	Sta 11
Northridge Dr	24	33°4'52.788"N	85°2'53.7517"W	48	69	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Eagles Rest	25	33°6'4.5289"N	85°3'44.9415"W	53	68	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Country Club Rd	26	33°2'56.7783"N	85°3'2.1959"W	120	68	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Ashling Dr. Lismore Dr.	27	33°4'35.6968"N	85°2'31.4162"W	90	67	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Sunny Point Dr.	28	33°5'7.0702"N	85°3'1.9995"W	41	67	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Auburn Ave. Guinn St.	29	33°1'0.0071"N	85°1'0.8122"W	46	66	Low	Sta 1 Lagrange
Hampton Green	30	33°7'40.6619"N	85°3'21.7217"W	300	65	Low	Sta 2
Wexford	31	33°0'38.5313"N	84°57'42.5887"W	30	62	Low	Sta 1
Morgan Dr. Victoria Dr.	32	33°4'6.6656"N	85°5'4.1736"W	37	62	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
North Pointe Dr.	33	33°4'51.533"N	85°0'2.3766"W	68	61	Low	Sta 3 Lagrange
Upper Big Springs Rd	34	33°0'59.1346"N	84°59'2.1734"W	160	56	Low	Sta 1 Lagrange
Overlook / Troon Way	35	32°56'17.7838"N	84°57'48.7079"W	44	54	Low	Sta 1
North and South Page St.	36	33°3'53.2202"N	85°1'29.9164"W	70	49	Low	Sta 4 Lagrange
Villages of HuntCliff	37	33°10'31.3449"N	84°55'5.4294"W	23	28	Low	Hogansville

VII. MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN

The following recommendations were developed by collaboration between the Georgia Forestry Commission and various County Fire and Emergency Services. A priority order was determined based on which mitigation projects would best reduce the hazard of wildfire in the assessment area.

- Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Reduction
- Wildland Fuel Reduction or Modification
- Improvements to Capabilities of Wildland Response Agencies
- Public Education Regarding Risk of Wildland Fire

Proposed Community and Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities:

1. Locate lack of and improve defensible space around structures in communities at risk
2. Identify access problems that affect initial attack in communities at risk
3. Identify structural ignitability concerns in communities at risk
4. Identify and resolve problems with codes, covenants, or ordinances that negatively influence structural ignitability

Proposed Wildland Fuel Reduction or Modification Priorities:

1. Reduction or modification of wildland fuel in proximity to communities at risk
2. Reduction or modification of fuel concentrations in shared spaces inside communities at risk

Proposed Improvements to capabilities of Wildland Response agencies:

1. Identify needs and improve training and qualification of wildland response agencies
2. Identify needs and recommend equipment acquisitions for wildland response agencies

Proposed Education and Outreach Priorities:

1. Improve public knowledge in communities at risk and in the general population of the County regarding Firewise principles.
2. Notification of communities at risk regarding wildland fire hazard
3. Improvements to public notification during periods of high to extreme fire danger.

Steps to implement Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Priorities

Hazard	Specific Action and Responsible Party
Lack of Defensible Space	Using the risk summaries referenced in section 3, each department should conduct inspections of communities at risk in their jurisdiction or area of response for lack of defensible space. Findings will be conveyed to residents and treatment methods will be recommended in accordance with Firewise principles. This would probably be best accomplished by approaching homeowners associations or organizations. Ultimately, the message should reach individual homeowners in each community. Should local organizations not exist, the builder or developer could be contacted. Such contacts would also influence future projects or developments
Access problems	Using individual Communities at Risk maps for each station, the Georgia Forestry Commission and Troup County Fire officials should visit all identified communities at risk for the purpose of locating and resolving access difficulties. This inspection should extend into the wildland adjacent to the communities at risk looking for hindrances to suppression tactics
Structural Ignitability	Troup County Fire officials should examine structures for structural ignitability concerns at the time when the communities at risk are inspected for lack of defensible space. Using firewise guidelines for reducing structural ignitability, (a checklist could be formulated and used) structures should be assessed and findings conveyed to residents. This could be through use of media or by direct contact with residents or homeowners associations.
Codes and Ordinances	Troup County and municipal Fire Marshalls should closely examine all codes and ordinances for gaps and oversights which could cause problems in the wildland fire arena. Examples include proximity of propane tanks to structures, accumulations of debris, lack of proper identification pertaining address or street names, set back distances from wildland fuels, road widths in new developments. The International Wildland Urban Interface Code (IWUIC) was adopted for use in Georgia in 2014.

In regard to priority, the above steps should first extend to the higher numbers in from the risk summary as these communities are at a higher degree of risk.

Steps to implement Fuel Reduction or Modification Priorities

Hazard	Specific Action and Responsible Party
Hazardous Wildland Fuel Accumulations	The Georgia Forestry Commission will prioritize prescribed burning projects adjacent to Communities at risk where burning is determined to be appropriate. Due to the nature of smaller sizes holdings and steeper terrain, burn projects may have to be small scale and carefully managed. A suggested project to reduce fuel near the Baileys Point and Pine Grove Communities is included in the appendix. <u>This is a suggested</u>

	<u>project only.</u> Landowner cooperation and approval will be needed on this and any project undertaken.
Fuel Continuity between Wildland and Woodland Communities	In areas where the need exists and fuel reduction by burning is determined to be inappropriate, permanent or semi-permanent fuel breaks could be established. These breaks should be maintained annually prior to the arrival of prime burning times. Their locations should be mapped and made known to local, state, and federal response personnel. Residents of the Communities adjacent to these breaks should be advised of their purpose and their cooperation in protecting them should be gained. These breaks could be installed by the Georgia Forestry Commission.
Hazardous Fuel Accumulations in communities and hindrances to suppression	Using the risk summary in section 3, Fire departments could conduct community clean up days in communities at risk in their respective jurisdictions aimed at reducing hazardous fuels and hindrances to suppression in shared community space. Residents would be provided with guidance and access to disposal alternatives for materials removed.

Steps to implement improvements to wildland response capability

Improvement needed	Responsible Party and specific action
Improve training and qualification of Troup County Wildland firefighters	The Chief Ranger and Assistant District Manager of the Georgia Forestry Commission and Troup County Fire Chief should examine all training records for personnel under their supervision. All personnel assigned or anticipated to be assigned wildland response responsibilities should be certified Georgia Basic Wildland Firefighter or higher in qualification. Additional training and qualification should be sought for personnel identified in the Troup County Fire plan who are assigned specific Incident Command System (ICS) functions. Sources for available funds for training should be sought at local, state, and federal levels.
Improve or acquire wildland fire fighting equipment	All stations for Troup County Fire Departments should inventory their present equipment relating to their wildland capability. Funding sources should be investigated from available grants or other sources. Needs for job specific wildland responses should be examined by the Georgia Forestry Commission Chief Ranger and the Troup County Fire Chief.

The type 6 engine stationed at Troup County Station 1 should be retained and brought up to national standard as regards response capability.

Steps to educate or inform the Public regarding wildland fire prevention and responsibilities

Opportunity	Responsible Party and Specific Action
Improve Public Education through formal certification	Before the end of calendar year 2013 the Georgia Forestry Commission and Troup County Fire should obtain Firewise certification for the Grayson's Landing Community. Should this goal not be realistic, another community from the risk summary should be selected for certification.
Improve Public Education through direct contact	Prior to the onset of fire season(s) rangers of the Georgia Forestry Commission and Troup County Fire personnel should conduct firewise meetings in conjunction with normally scheduled fire department meetings. People living in or near extreme and high risk communities should be invited to these meetings by use of door to door campaigns. Notices regarding these meetings could be placed in local post offices or stores near communities at risk. A Firewise display should be acquired and utilized at this meeting. This display would be retained by the Heard - Troup unit of the Georgia Forestry Commission and used for all firewise meetings in those Counties. Local news media should be invited to these meetings. Goals for potential Firewise certified communities in Troup County could be considered after these meetings are completed.
Improve Public Education through use of media	Prior to the onset of fire season(s) or during periods of particularly high fire danger use of the media should be stepped up by personnel of the Georgia Forestry Commission. This should include use of all available media in the County. PSA's should be run weekly during periods of high to extreme fire danger. Signs or poster boards could be developed for display in public spaces near communities at risk advising residents that they live in areas that are susceptible to wildland fire and directing them to sources of information regarding wildland fire and their role in improving their own personal safety. Signs directing residents to the firewise website could be effective. Firewise materials could be provided to the County building permit office.

Timetables for Actions

Steps to implement Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Priorities

- Steps to examine communities at risk for defensible space and structural ignitability should take place during the winter of 2012-13.
- Pre-planning to examine access and suppression problems should take place at any time during the current burning season.
- Codes and Ordinances should be examined as soon as possible in order for the legal workings of changes to take place.

Steps to implement Fuel Reduction or Modification Priorities

- Any identified prescribed burn projects should take place in late winter 2012-13. Any other priority burn projects or installation of pre suppression fuel breaks should take place during this same window.
- Steps to reduce fuels in communities at risk should coincide with steps to improve defensible space and reduce structural ignitability. Timing of these actions would be dependent upon Fire station availability during the late winter of 2012 - 13.

Steps to implement improvements to wildland response capability

- Cooperation between state and local wildland suppression forces regarding improvements to firefighter qualification, training, and equipment acquisition should begin immediately.

Steps to educate or inform the Public regarding wildland fire prevention and responsibilities

- Direct contact with residents in Communities at risk should take place as soon as possible during calendar years 2012 and 2013
- The use of media should coincide with the above action.
- Certification of Firewise communities should follow the timetable associated with the action plan

Assessment of Actions

Reduction of Community hazard and structural ignitability

- Direct measurement of the number of communities assessed would be the appropriate measure of success
- Any meetings that result in cooperation between wildland departments should be logged along with minutes of those meetings. Goals should be set and reviewed after each meeting.
- Any changes to or additions to codes and ordinances would be an obvious measure of success.

Steps to implement Fuel Reduction or Modification Priorities

- Acres burned would be the appropriate measure for fuel reduction. A direct measure of linear feet of firebreaks would be an appropriate measure for pre suppression breaks.
- Fuel reduction in communities at risk would be measured by the number of communities affected and number of projects completed.

Steps to implement improvements to wildland response capability

- A direct measure of the number of capabilities or qualifications gained would be the appropriate measure of success.
- Any equipment acquired or any equipment brought up to national standards would be the appropriate measure of success.

Steps to educate or inform the Public regarding wildland fire prevention and responsibilities

- Direct measurement of the number of persons contacted, literature distributed, public notices posted, and news articles published, radio programs aired, etc. would be the best measure of success. The number of communities that achieve Firewise status would be an obvious measure of success.



Prescribed burning of woodlands is the best management practice to reduce hazardous fuel accumulation. The Georgia Forestry Commission can provide a prescribed burning plan, establish fire breaks, and can also provide equipment standby and assist with burning when personnel are available.

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.

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 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).

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.wildfireprepday.org

Appended Documents:

Troup County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SouthWRAP)

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



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