



# Community Wildfire Protection Plan

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

### Jones County

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



April 2018

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.

**County Representatives:**

**Jones County Commissioners Office**

Chris Weidner – Chairman

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Jonathan Pitts – District Two

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Sam Kitchens – Vice Chairman/District 1

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Tommy Robinson – District Three

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Daylan Martin –District Four

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

**Local Fire Emergency Services Representatives:**

Don Graham Director Jones County EMA

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

**Local Georgia Forestry Commission Representatives:**

Russell Fowler – Chief Ranger

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Carl Melear – CWPP Specialist Forest Protection (Initial Plan 2010)

Beryl Budd, Wildfire Prevention Specialist (Revised Plan 2018)

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Jones County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SWRA)

## I.OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

There are several reasons to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). First and foremost, a successful Community Wildfire Protection Plan provides a community with a set of objectives and actions specifically designed to address the threat of wildfire. These objectives and actions can help:

- Enhance public safety
- Improve community sustainability
- Protect ecosystem health
- Raise public awareness of wildfire hazards and wildfire risk
- Educate landowners on how to reduce home ignitability
- Build and improve collaboration at multiple levels

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan is a critical tool required to obtain hazard mitigation grants through the National Fire Plan, FEMA mitigation grants and other national funding sources. Under the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003, communities that seek grants from the federal government for hazardous fuels reduction work are required to prepare a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The minimum requirements for a Community Wildfire Protection Plan as described in the HFRA are:

- **Collaboration:** A Community Wildfire Protection Plan must be collaboratively developed by local and state government representatives, in consultation with federal agencies\* and other interested parties.
- **Prioritized Fuel Reduction:** A Community Wildfire Protection Plan must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment that will protect one or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure.
- **Treatment of Structural ignitability:** A Community Wildfire Protection Plan must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

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

## II. COMMUNITY & WILDFIRE HISTORY



Located near the geographic center of Georgia, Jones County possesses a rich historical and architectural heritage. Created in 1807, the state's thirty-second county ranks as the sixty-first in area (almost 400 square miles). Jones County's fertile soil made it prime cotton land in the nineteenth century, as well as a center for peach and pepper production for much of the twentieth century.

The county's position astride the fall line has determined much of its history. Several important Indian trails and trading paths crossed the area, following the flat shoals of the fall line and lower Piedmont. One of these trails, the Lower Creek Trading Path, formed the basis for the Garrison Road, which was completed across the southern part of Jones just before the county was organized. This military thoroughfare would become a segment of the Federal Road linking Washington, D.C., with New Orleans, Louisiana.

In 1807, the year after the county's area was acquired from the Creek Indians, the territory was distributed by land lottery in lots of 202.5 acres, and the county was created by the state legislature. Its name honors James Jones (1769-1801), principal protégé of Georgia governor James Jackson (1798-1801) and noted adversary of the perpetrators of the Yazoo land fraud. The name of the first county seat, Clinton (1808-1905), has been variously linked to two prominent political leaders of the early 1800s: DeWitt Clinton, mayor of New York City from 1803 to 1815, and his uncle George Clinton, vice president in the administrations of U.S. presidents Thomas Jefferson, from 1805 to 1809, and James Madison, from 1805 to 1812.

After the War of 1812 (1812-15) came a great influx of westward-bound settlers. By 1820 they had made Jones the most densely populated of Georgia's counties, with 43.5 people per square mile (9,821 whites; 6,886 slaves). In comparison Chatham County, home to Savannah, at that time the state's largest city, had only 35.1 people per square mile. Clinton's 1820 population of almost 850 people made it Georgia's fourth largest town.

Between 1810 and 1830 Clinton's most impressive residences were built, many of which survive. The town, proud of its stature, was among those



DeWitt Clinton



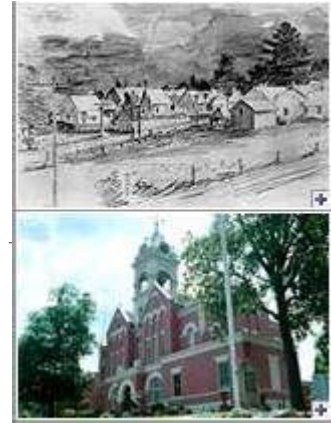
George Clinton

visited by the Marquis de Lafayette during his 1825 tour of Georgia. But Jones County's heyday was over. With the opening of Indian lands west of the Ocmulgee River, the flood of settlers rushed on, and Macon, in Bibb County, became the population center of central Georgia. Jones County's white population declined to 6,471 by 1830 and was only 3,084 in 1860. Nonetheless, important gains had been made in the antebellum period, both educationally and industrially. The Clinton Female Seminary, founded in the early 1830s by Thomas Bog Slade, later provided the nucleus for what would become Macon's Wesleyan College. Samuel Griswold prospered as a cotton gin manufacturer and in 1849 created the industrial hamlet Griswoldville on the Central of Georgia Railway in southern Jones County.



As the nation began to break apart in the winter of 1860-61, Jones County elected to the Milledgeville Convention two immediate secessionists, who voted for Georgia to secede from the Union. One of them, James Madison Gray, also outfitted an entire company, the "Gray Infantry," Company F, Forty-fifth Georgia Volunteer Infantry. During the Civil War (1861-65), Samuel Griswold's pistol works supplied the Confederacy with more sidearms than any other private firm. Additionally, two significant engagements were fought in the county. The Battle of Sunshine Church, one of the few Confederate victories of the Atlanta campaign, was fought in the summer of 1864. In November of that same year, the only major engagement of the Savannah Campaign was fought at Griswoldville, as Jones County was devastated by Major General William T. Sherman's march to the sea. The aftermath of war brought political turmoil, continued population decline, and plummeting land prices. The concentration of population shifted to fall along two new rail lines, and several villages grew up along these lines. Gray (named for the secessionist planter-politician) became the largest of these villages, and in 1905 it became the county seat.

By 1920 the vast majority of the county's acreage remained in farms. Farmland averaged a little over 110 acres, though half was concentrated in the hands of about fifty families, some having parcels of more than 12,000 acres. In 1917 the county shipped almost 11,000 bales of cotton, along with a quarter million crates of peaches. But the county's cotton lands, particularly in the area's northwest corner, had become depleted. By the 1930s more than 30,000 acres (including land in adjoining Jasper County) were being converted into the Piedmont National Wildlife Refuge.



Jones County Courthouse



Historic Clinton

In the late 1950s the county's appreciation of its past increased with a Sesquicentennial Celebration and the publication of a county history. Over the next several decades historical interest increased with the opening of the Jarrell Plantation State Historic Site, which also supervises the Griswoldville Battlefield site. In the 1970s the Old Clinton Historical Society was founded, and soon thereafter Clinton was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Well-known residents of the county include Harrison Berry, a literate slave who published tracts about slavery and race; nineteenth-century state legislator James Blount; Confederate general Alfred Iverson Jr.; governor William J. Northen; baseball manager George Stallings; and twentieth-century state legislator Denmark Groover.



Jarrell Plantation

Central Georgia Technical College operates a learning center in Gray.

The 1980 U.S. census showed that Jones County had finally returned to its 1820 population size. But the county has been transformed. Neither agriculture nor industry, which is principally represented by two gravel quarries, looms large, and the county itself has become a bedroom community for people working in nearby Macon or Milledgeville. Jones County continues to grow, with a population of 23,639 (75 percent white, 23.3 percent black, and less than 1 percent Hispanic), according to the 2000 U.S. census.

## Wildfire History

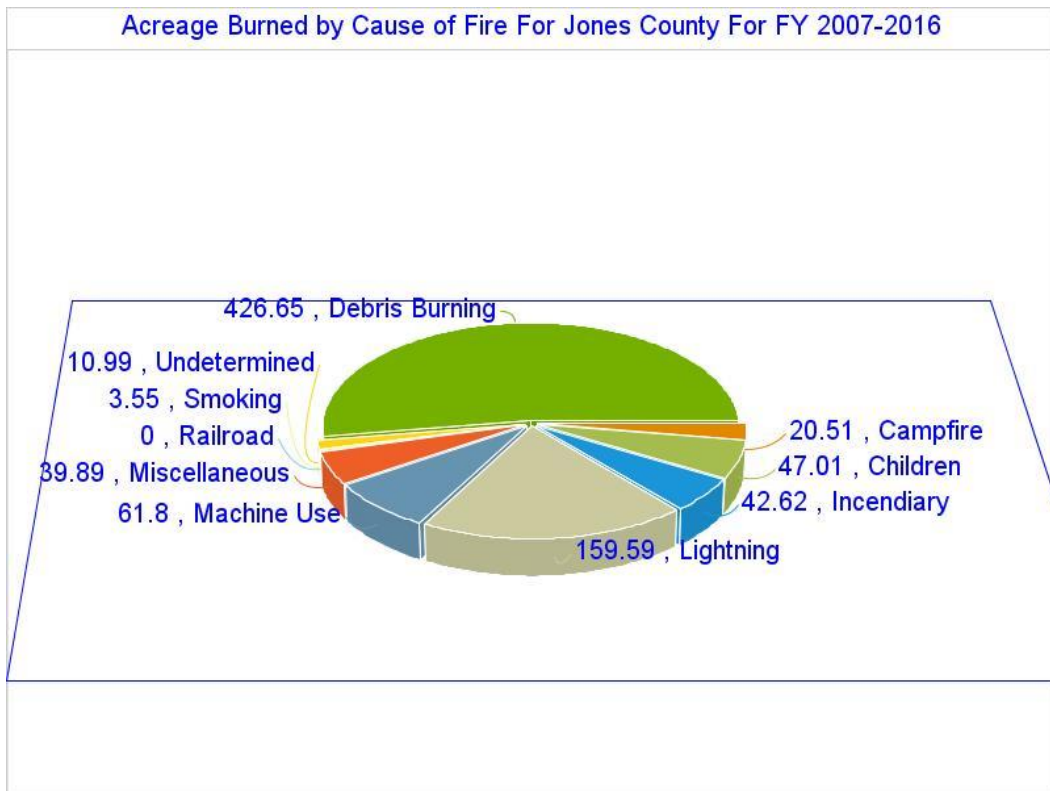
Wildland Fire has not been a serious problem in Jones County in recent years. In the most complete fiscal year there were 49 wildland responses documented. These fires burned 86.47 acres total for an average size of 1.76 acres. This low average size illustrates the rapid response and excellent cooperation between Jones County Fire Departments and the Commission. In FY 2017 the statewide County average is 11.60 acres. The following table outlines Fire activity in FY 2017. Thus far in FY 2018 thru April there have been 19 wildfires which involved 75.49 acres.

County = Jones	Cause	Fires	Acres	Fires 5 Yr Avg	Acres 5 Yr Avg
<a href="#">Campfire</a>	Campfire	6	7.55	2.00	3.24
<a href="#">Children</a>	Children	4	3.24	1.40	1.31
<a href="#">Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc</a>	Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	1	2.42	1.00	1.42
<a href="#">Debris: Construction Land Clearing</a>	Debris: Construction Land Clearing	1	0.47	1.00	1.80
<a href="#">Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn</a>	Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	6	25.32	8.20	43.50
<a href="#">Debris: Other</a>	Debris: Other	0	0.00	0.20	1.42
<a href="#">Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc</a>	Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	9	27.46	4.60	8.29
<a href="#">Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related</a>	Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	0	0.00	0.60	0.02
<a href="#">Incendiary</a>	Incendiary	0	0.00	0.40	0.40
<a href="#">Lightning</a>	Lightning	1	0.83	1.00	5.28
<a href="#">Machine Use</a>	Machine Use	5	8.42	3.80	3.50
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Cutting/Welding/Grinding</a>	Miscellaneous: Cutting/Welding/Grinding	0	0.00	0.20	0.03
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Firearms/Ammunition</a>	Miscellaneous: Firearms/Ammunition	0	0.00	0.20	2.34
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Other</a>	Miscellaneous: Other	0	0.00	0.20	0.09
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences</a>	Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	5	1.86	2.80	0.82
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion</a>	Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	1	1.40	0.20	0.28
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires</a>	Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	4	1.86	2.80	1.06
<a href="#">Miscellaneous: Woodstove Ashes</a>	Miscellaneous: Woodstove Ashes	1	1.80	1.60	1.32
<a href="#">Smoking</a>	Smoking	3	0.34	0.60	0.07
<a href="#">Undetermined</a>	Undetermined	2	3.50	2.40	2.90
<b>Totals for County: Jones Year: 2017</b>		49	86.47	35.20	79.08

**WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN: AN ACTION PLAN FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION**

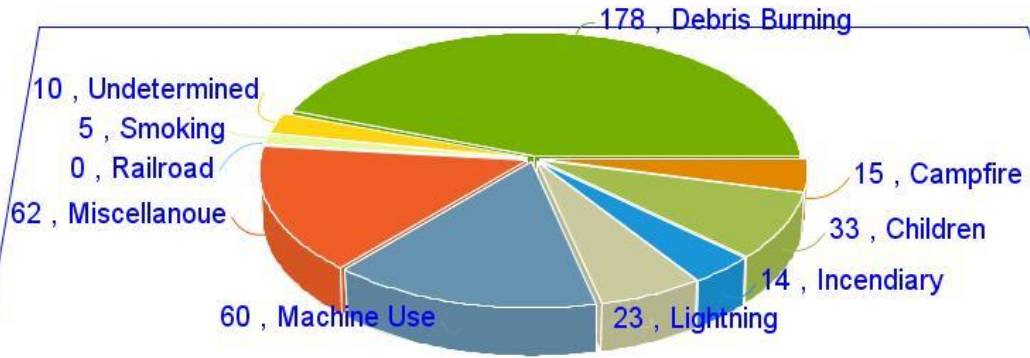
On the following pages is wildfire data for Jones County during the last 10 years (FY 2007 thru FY 2016). The major cause was from Debris Burning accounting for 44% of these fires. The second leading cause was Machine Use accounting for 15% of the total.

<b>Acreage Burned /Number of Fires For Jones County FY 2007-2016</b>				
<b>Year</b>	<b>Acreage Burned</b>	<b>Number of Fires</b>	<b>Average Size</b>	<b>Statewide Average Size</b>
2007	173.10	77	2.25	18.64
2008	52.78	49	1.08	4.56
2009	87.47	37	2.36	3.90
2010	38.69	19	2.04	3.93
2011	108.78	57	1.91	17.56
2012	57.00	40	1.43	5.08
2013	66.04	33	2.00	4.53
2014	141.71	45	3.15	5.02
2015	84.17	32	2.63	4.42
2016	17.01	17	1.00	6.29



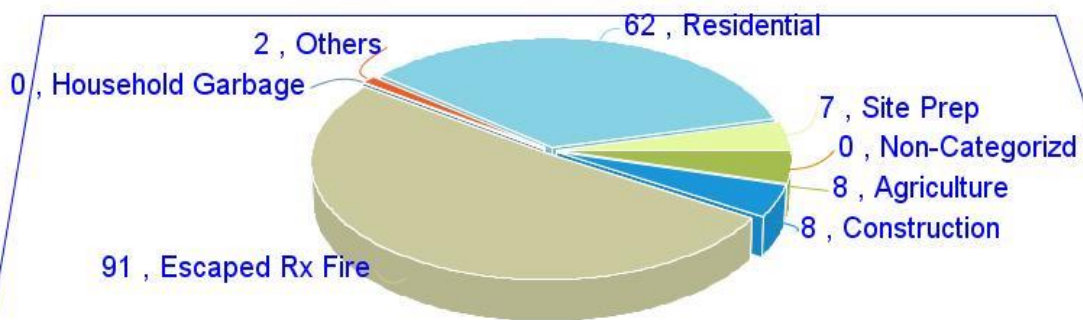


Cause of Fire For Jones County For FY 2007-2016

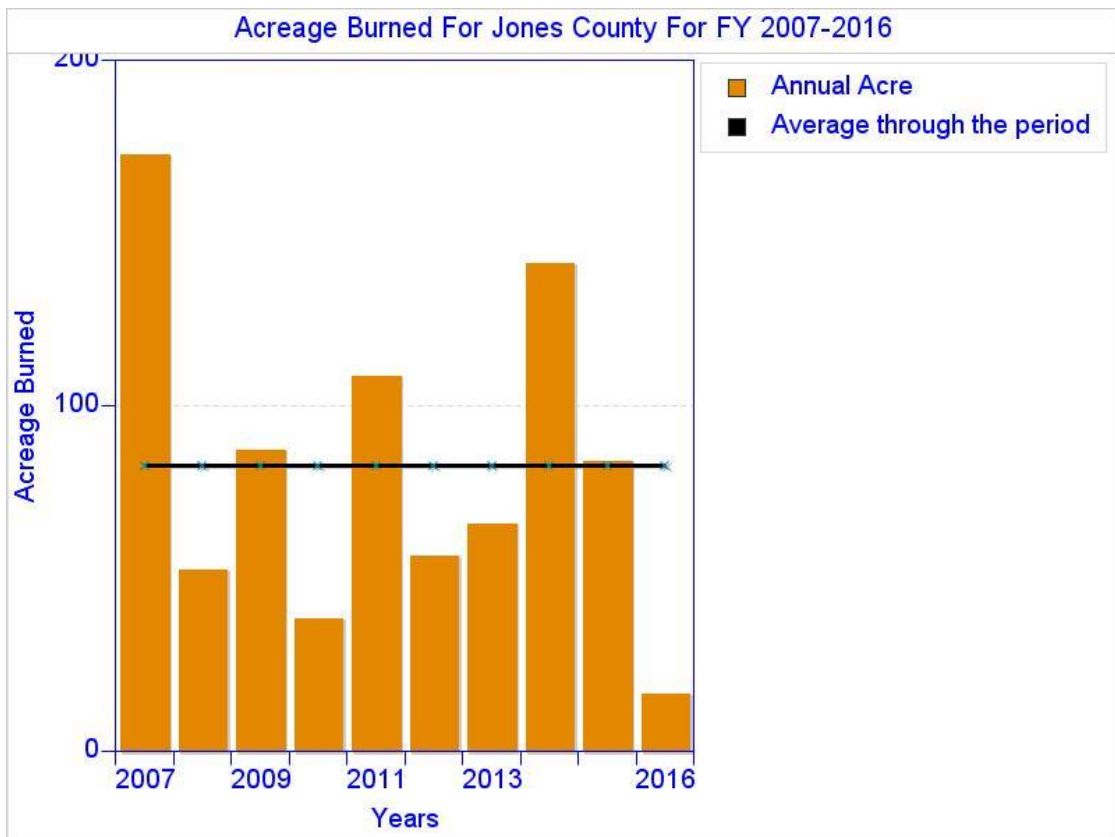
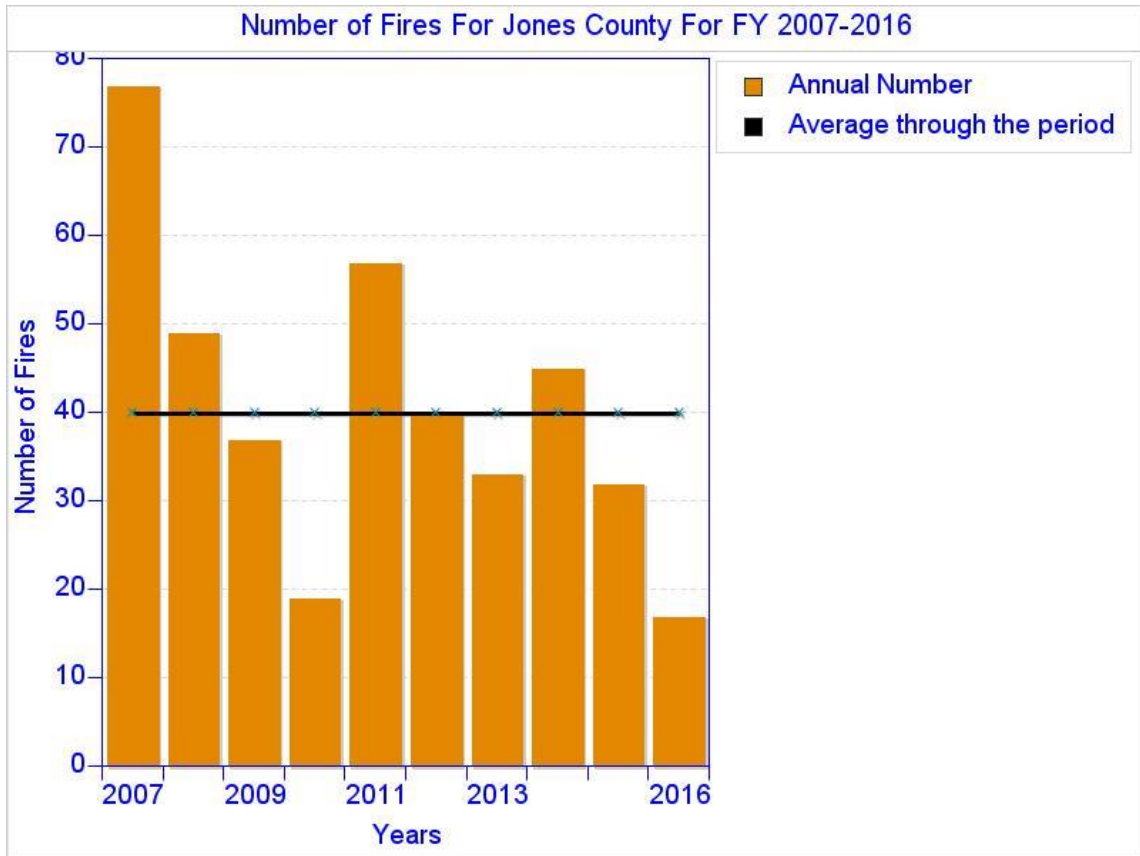


Fire Cause

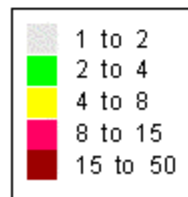
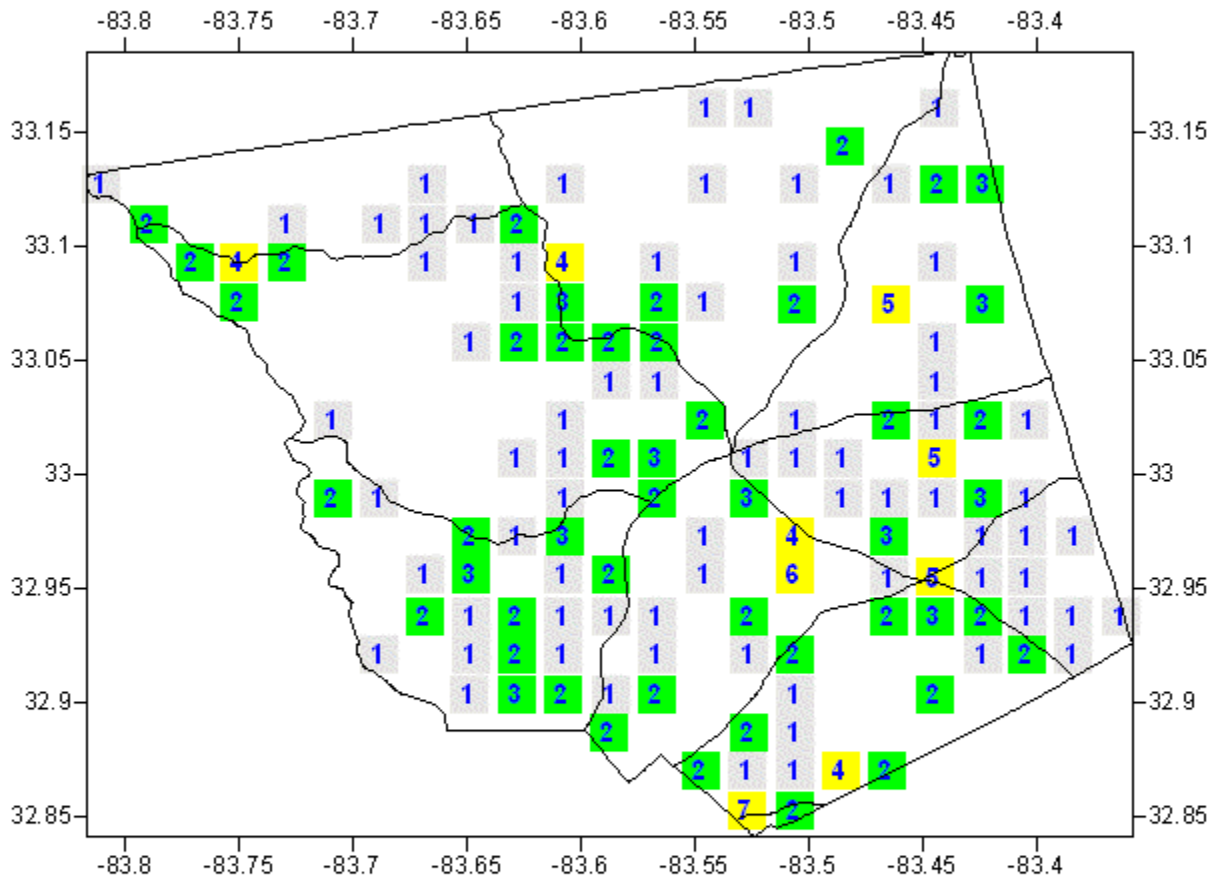
Debris Burning Sub Cause For Jones County For FY 2007-2016



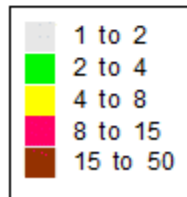
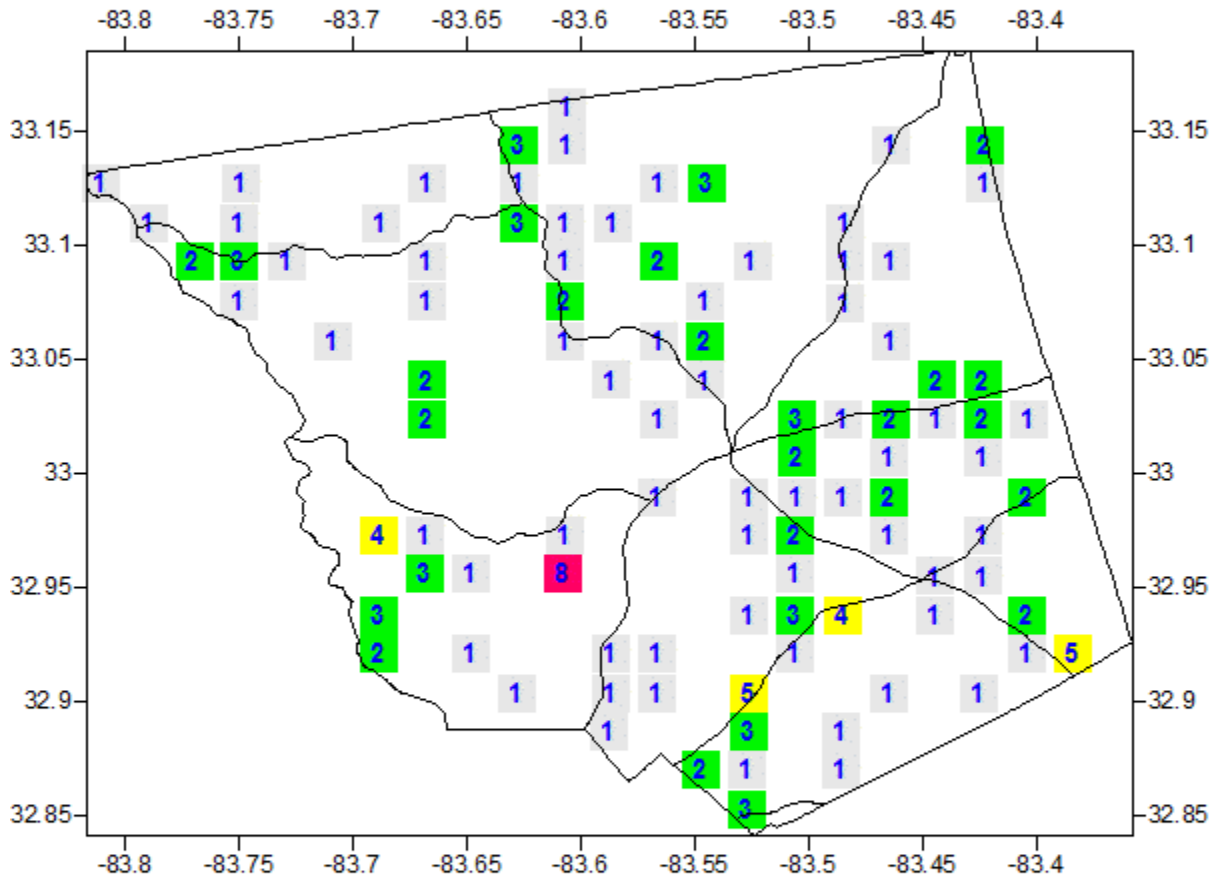
Fire Cause



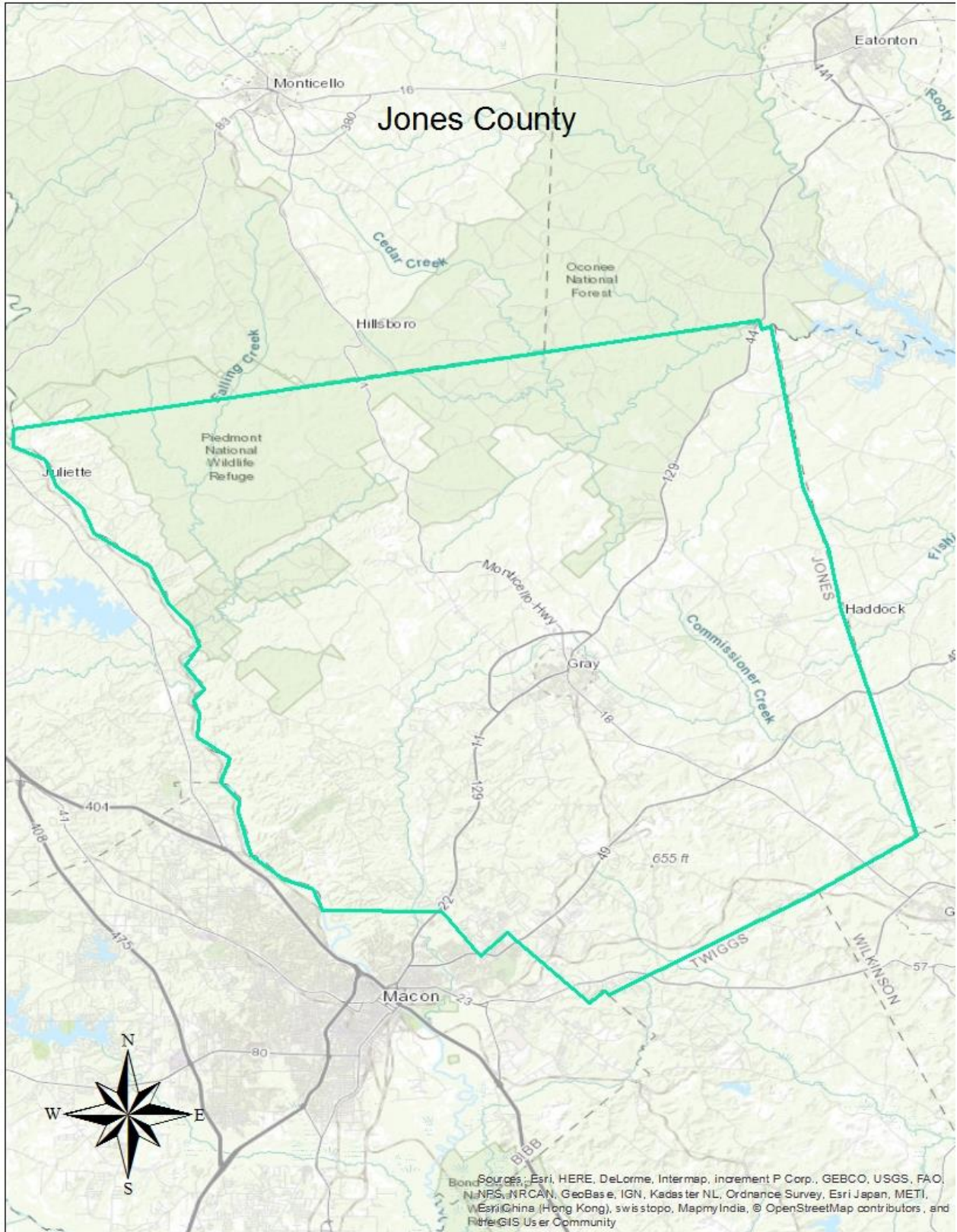
# Fire Occurrence Map for Jones County for Fiscal Year 2007-2011



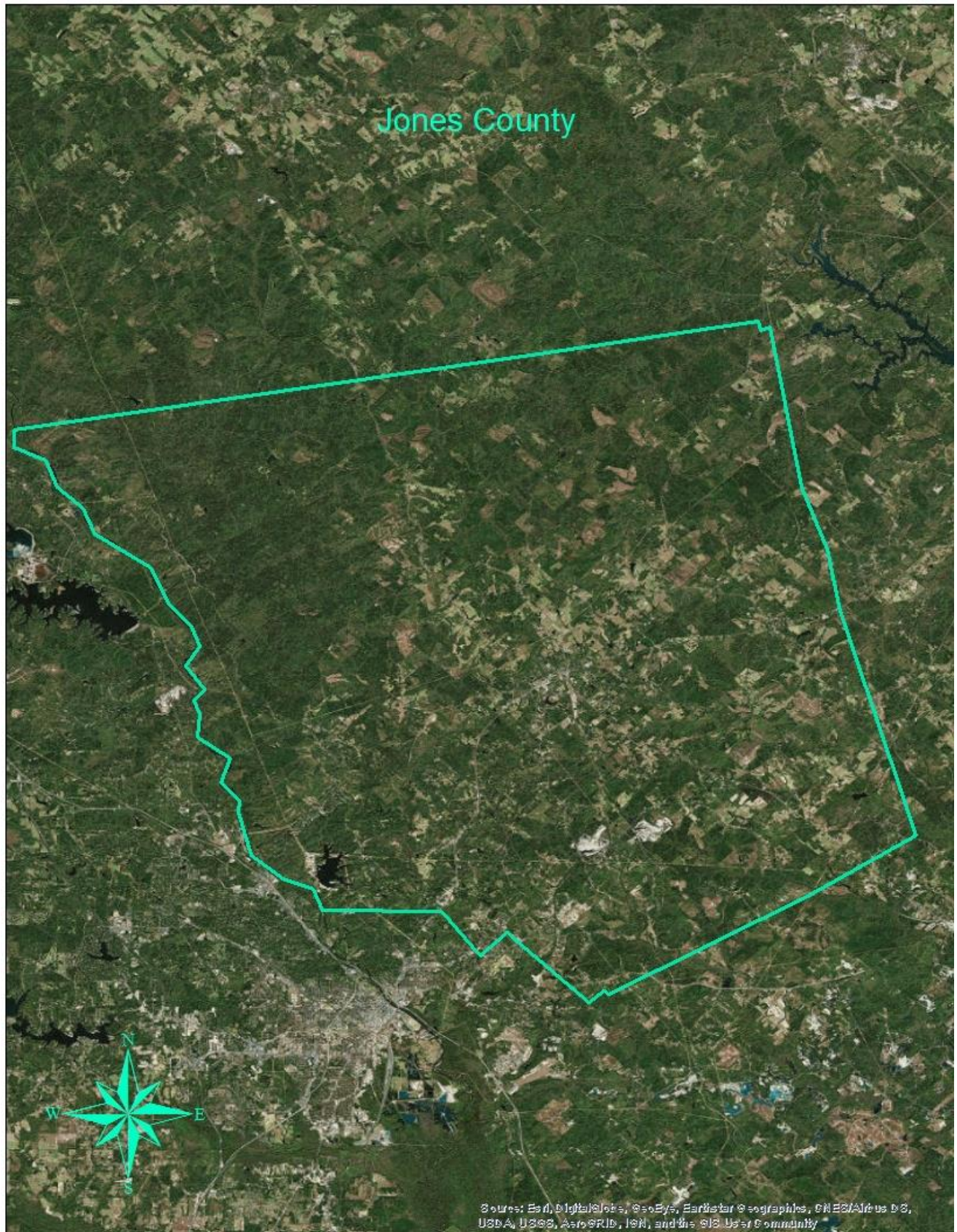
# Fire Occurrence Map for Jones County for Fiscal Year 2012-2016



### III. COUNTY BASE MAPS

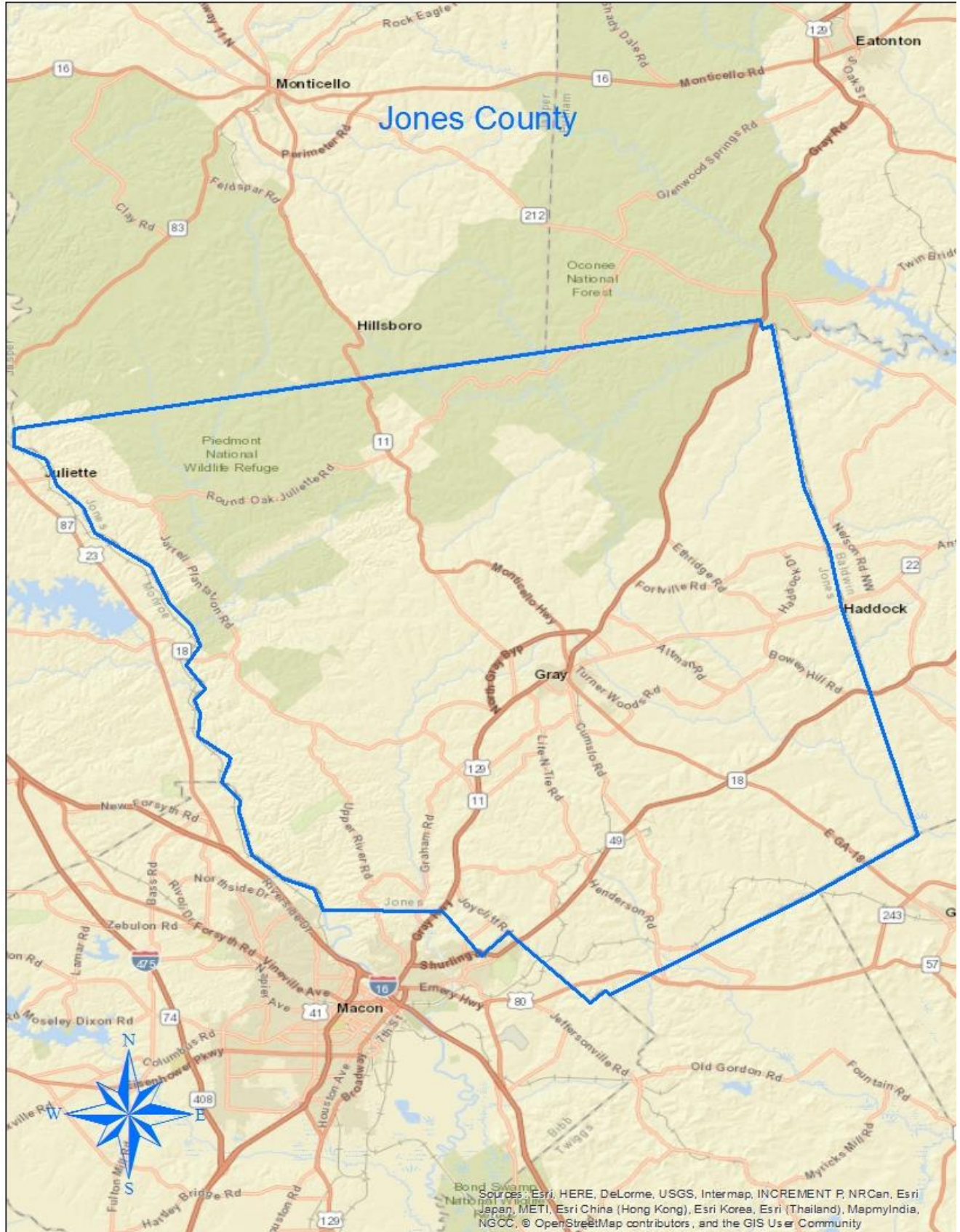








# WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN: AN ACTION PLAN FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION



## IV. 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)*

Jones County is typical of a county that is undergoing transition from a rural county to a county showing the influence of an expanding metropolitan area (Macon). It contains mixtures of both boundary and intermix interface.

### **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.

- **Hazardous Materials**  
Common chemicals used around the home may be a direct hazard to firefighters from flammability, explosion potential and/or vapors or off-gassing. Such chemicals include paint, varnish and other flammable liquids; fertilizer; pesticides; cleansers; aerosol cans, fireworks, batteries and ammunition. In addition, some common household products such as plastics may give off very toxic fumes when they burn. Stay OUT of the smoke from burning structures and any unknown sources such as trash piles.
- **Illicit Activities**  
Marijuana plantations or drug production labs may be found in wildland urban interface areas. Extremely hazardous materials such as propane tanks and flammable/toxic chemicals may be encountered, as well as booby traps.
- **Propane tanks**  
Both large (household size) and small (gas grill size) liquefied propane gas (LPG) tanks can present hazards to firefighters, including explosion. See the "LPG Tank Hazards" discussion for details.
- **Utility lines**  
Utility lines may be located above and below ground and may be cut or damaged by tools or equipment. Don't spray water on utility lines or boxes.
- **Septic tanks and fields**  
Below-ground structures may not be readily apparent and may not support the weight of engines or other apparatus



- **New construction materials**  
Many new construction materials have comparatively low melting points and may "off-gas" extremely hazardous vapors. Plastic decking materials that resemble wood are becoming more common and may begin softening and losing structural strength at 180° F, though they normally do not sustain combustion once direct flame is removed. However, if they continue to burn they exhibit the characteristics of flammable liquids.
- **Pets and livestock**  
Pets and livestock may be left when residents evacuate and will likely be highly stressed, making them more inclined to bite and kick. Firefighters should not put themselves at risk to rescue pets or livestock.
- **Evacuation occurring**  
Firefighters may be taking structural protection actions while evacuations of residents are occurring. Be very cautious of people driving erratically. Distraught residents may refuse to leave their property, and firefighters may need to disengage from fighting fire to contact law enforcement officers for assistance. In most jurisdictions firefighters do not have the authority to force evacuations. Firefighters should not put themselves at risk trying to protect someone who will not evacuate!
- **Limited access**  
Narrow one-lane roads with no turn-around room, inadequate or poorly maintained bridges and culverts are frequently found in wildland urban interface areas. Access should be sized-up and an evacuation plan for all emergency personnel should be developed.



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

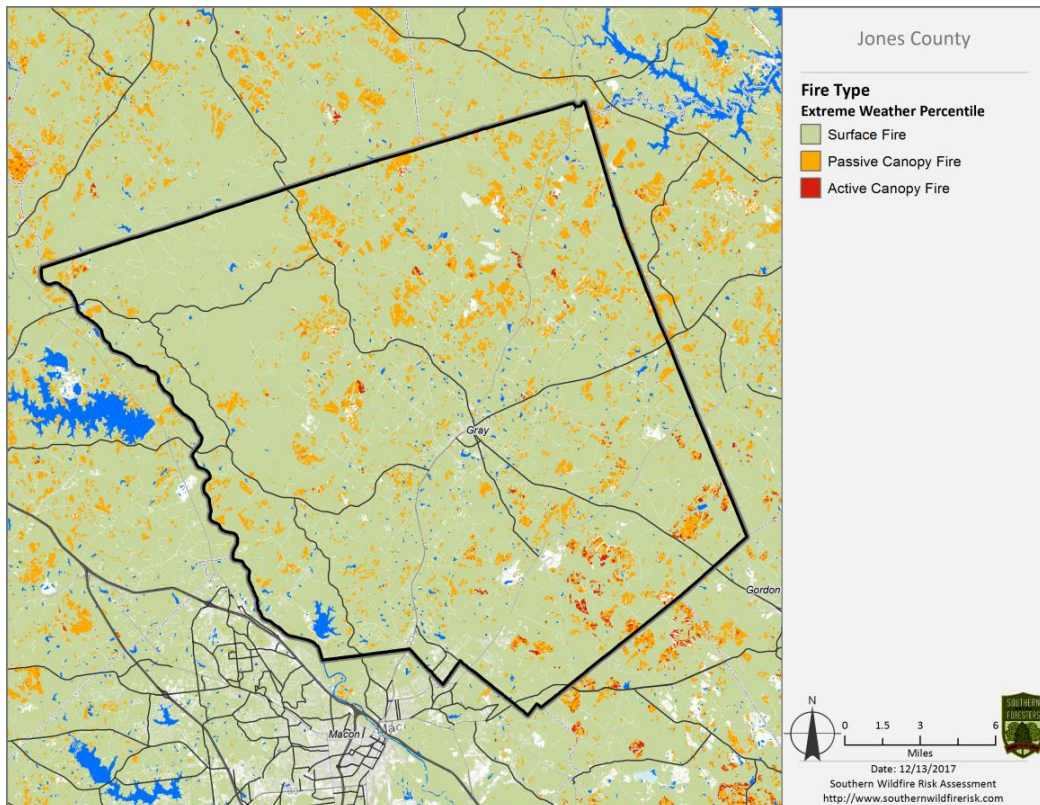


## V. JONES COUNTY RISK SUMMARY

Following an initial meeting on October 26, 2009 with Georgia Forestry Commission personnel and Don Graham, Director Jones County EMA, assessments were made of communities at risk in the county. Assessments were declared complete on October 10, 2010. The assessments were made using Georgia Forestry Commission form 140 for Woodland Community Wildfire Hazard Assessment. This form ranks woodland communities or interface areas based on a numerical score. Subdivision design, site hazard, building construction and additional factors are rated to provide an overall rating. Communities are rated as being at extreme, high, moderate, or at low risk.

Eighteen (18) communities were assessed. There was one (1) community rated as at Extreme risk, seven (7) were designated as high, eight (8) were rated moderate risk, and two (2) were classified as low. The appendix contains pertinent information from the assessments in the form of a spreadsheet. This spreadsheet contains the community name or location where the assessment took place, the map number which corresponds to the symbol for the community on the maps, the latitude and longitude for the community, the number of homes in the area, the numerical score, the hazard category, and the fire department jurisdiction. The original copies of the assessments are retained by the Jasper Jones unit of the Georgia Forestry Commission.

The highest density of assessed communities lies in the southern part of the county. There are still numerous opportunities for assessment of woodland communities in Jones County.

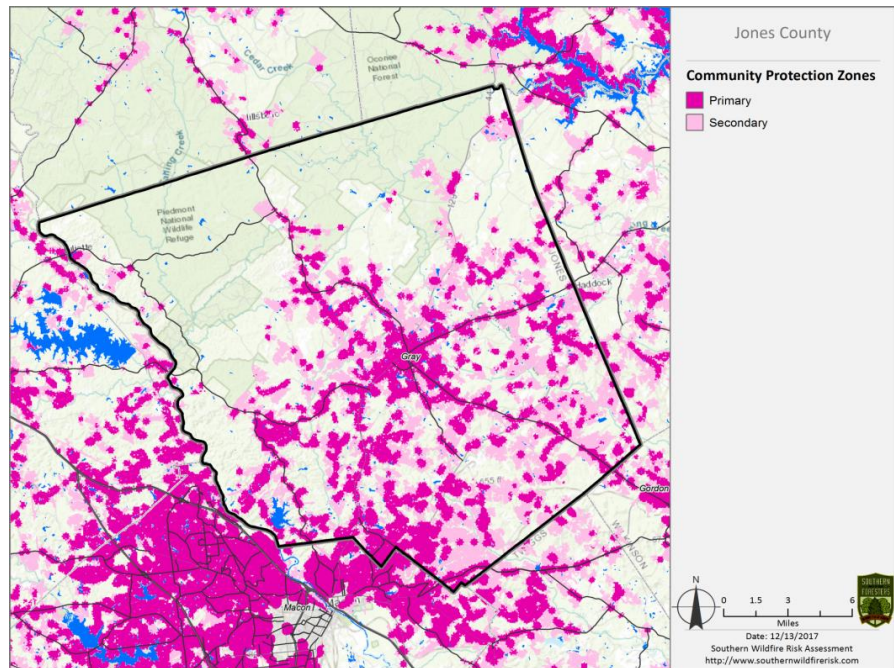


**Pictured here is a Fire Type map from the Jones County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment (SWRA). The map shows areas where potential canopy fires could easily occur.**

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

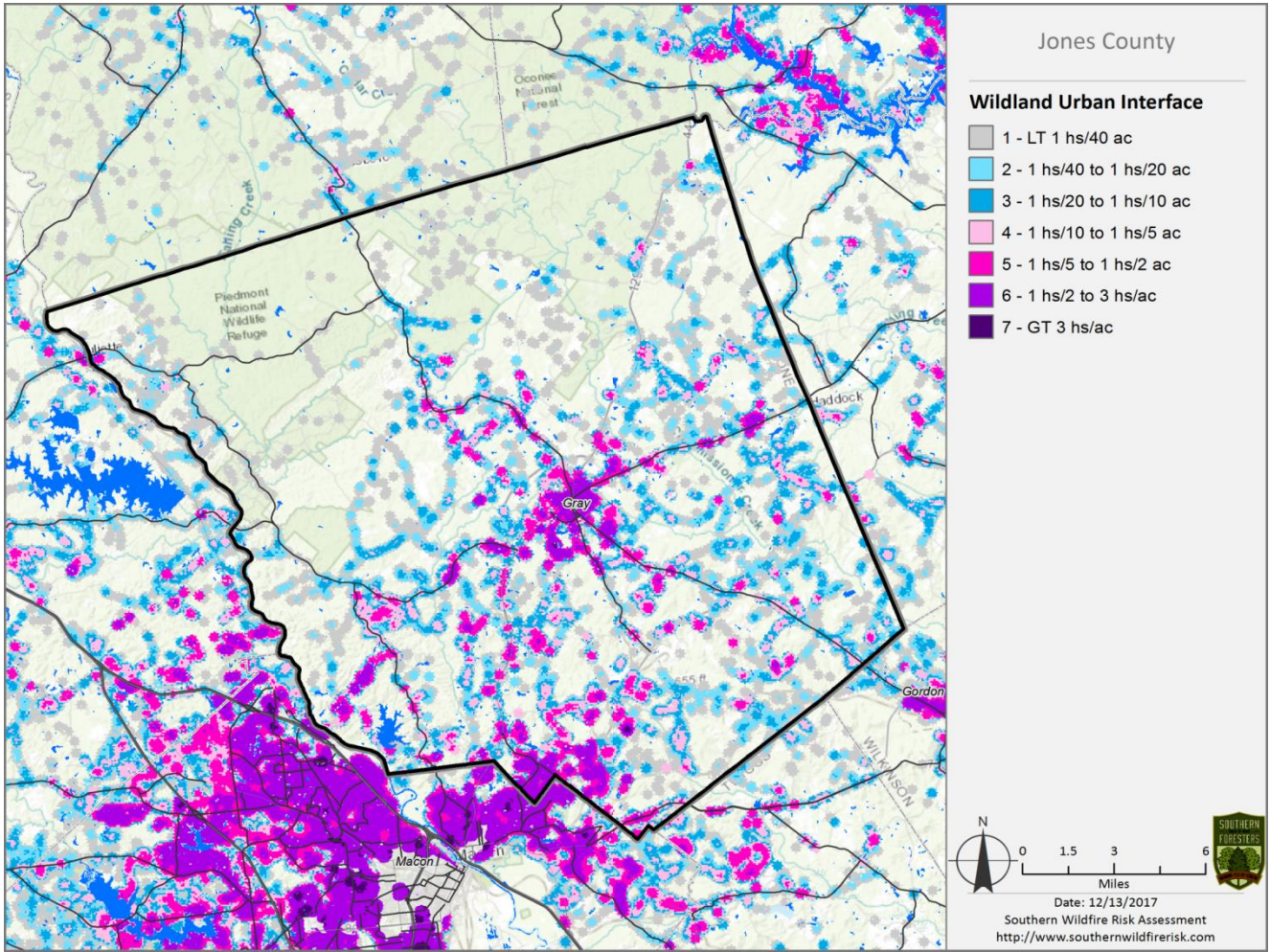
- Identify areas that are most prone to wildfire
- Identify areas that may require additional tactical planning, specifically related to mitigation projects and Community Wildfire Protection Planning
- Provide the information necessary to justify resource, budget and funding requests
- Allow agencies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



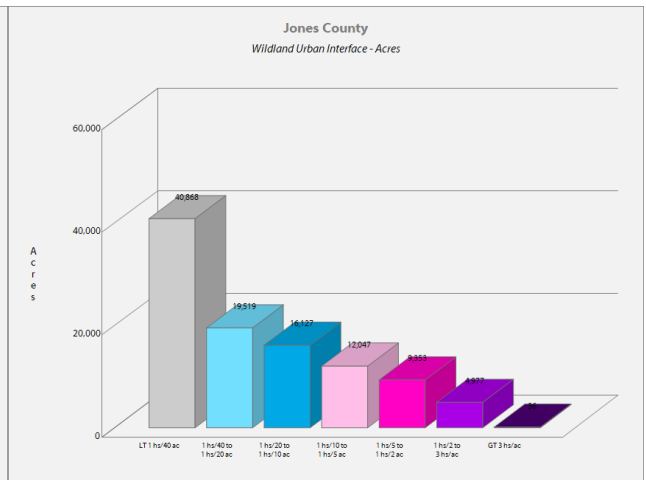
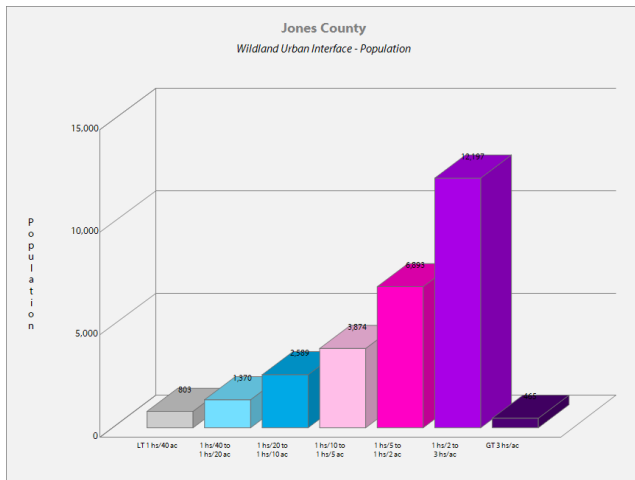
Community Protection Zones map from the Jones County SWRA



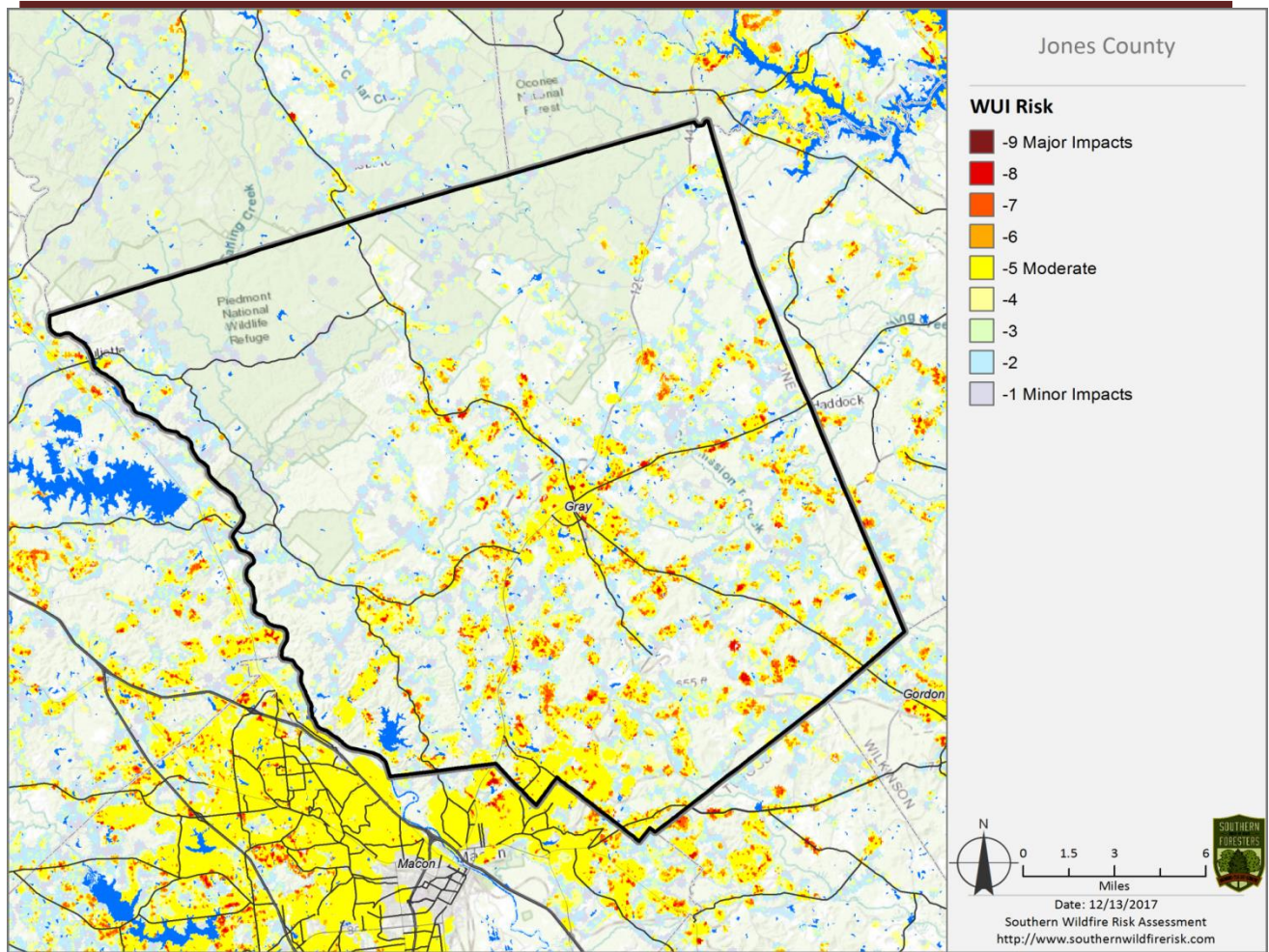
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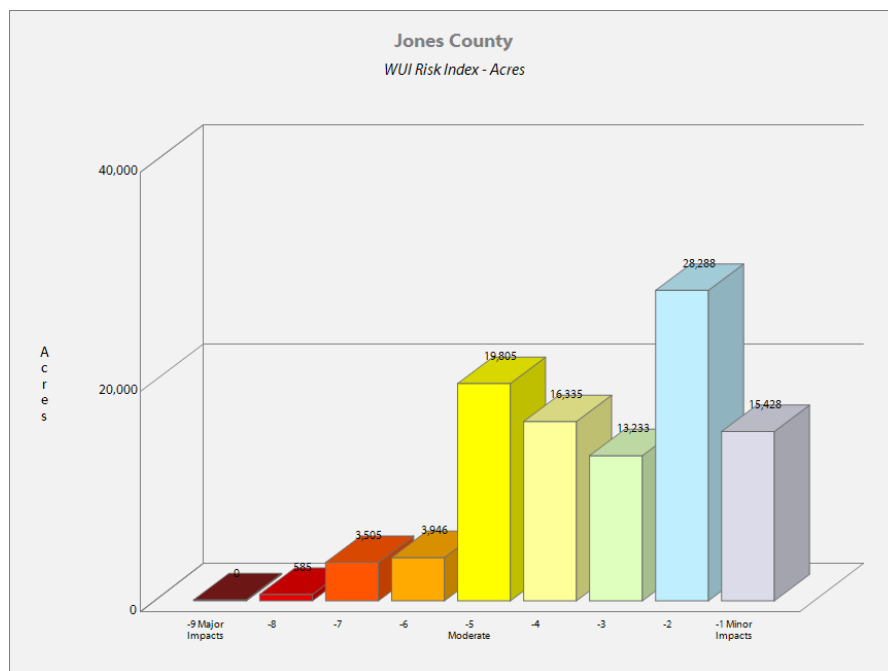
Above: Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map    Below: WUI Population (left) and WUI Acres ((right)



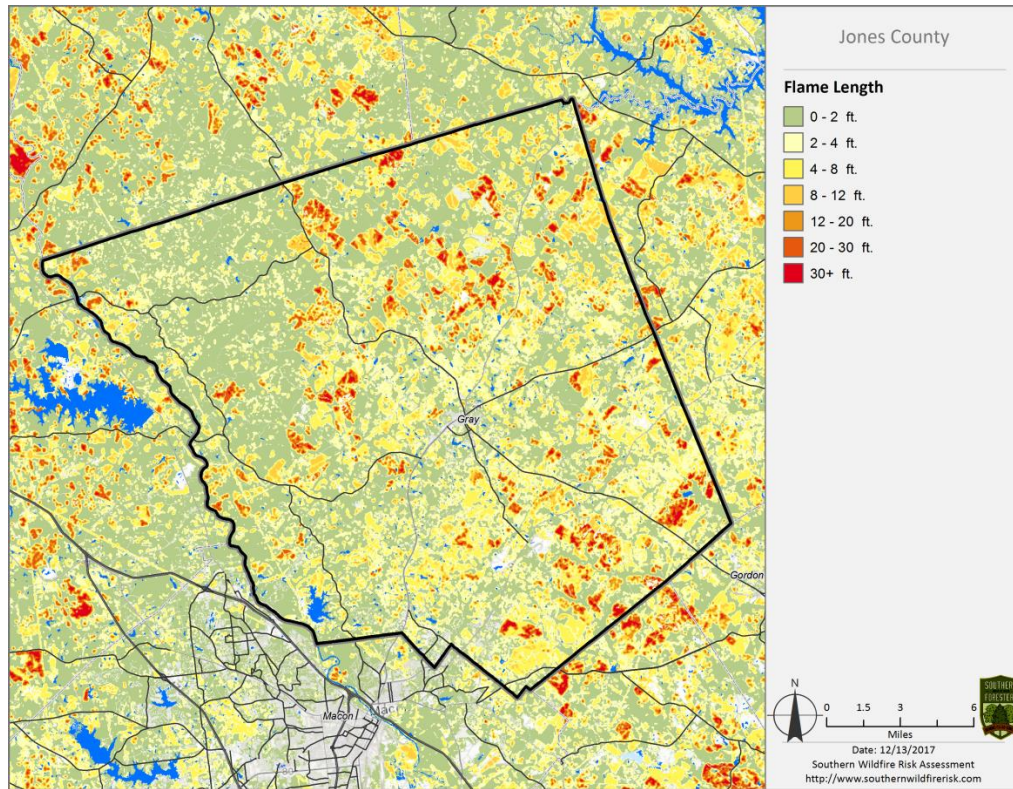
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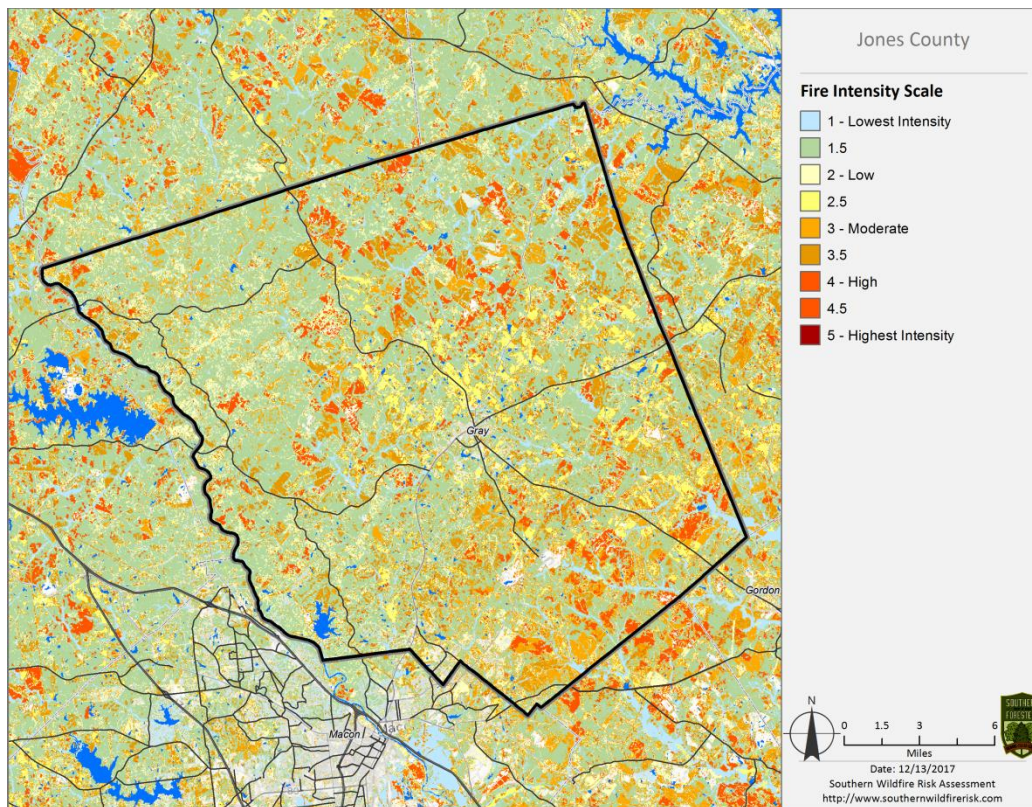
Above: Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Risk map Below: WUI Risk Index - Acres







Above: Flame Length map Below: Fire Intensity Scale map





## VII. MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed during follow-up meetings with County and State fire response agencies. A priority order was determined based on which mitigation projects would best reduce the hazard of wildland fire to communities and infrastructure. The following priorities were considered.

- 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 Hazard and Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities

Hazard	Mitigation	Method
Lack of defensible space	Improve defensible space around structures in communities at risk	All departments should examine structures in communities at risk in their response areas. Improvements to defensible space as referenced in firewise guidelines should be conveyed to residents through media or direct contact.
Access problems for initial attack	Improve access problems	All County response agencies and the Georgia Forestry Commission should closely examine access in all communities identified to be at risk. When problems are identified corrective measures should be made.
Structural Ignitability	Reduce structural ignitability	Citizens in communities at risk should be educated regarding methods to reduce structural ignitability as referenced in firewise guidelines. This can be accomplished through media or direct contact.
Local Codes and Ordinances	Improve and amend to codes and ordinances pertaining to community protection from wildland fire. Utilize the 2012 International Wildland Urban Interface Code (IWUIC). This code was adopted by Georgia Legislature in 2014 for Counties to adopt locally as needed to reduce risk.	Examine all existing codes and ordinances for problems regarding direct conflicts to wildland safety or lack of needed codes or enforcement.

**Proposed Wildland Fuel Reduction or modification Priorities**

Hazard	Mitigation	Method
Fuel Hazards near Communities at risk	Prescribed Burning and permanent firebreaks	Determine Communities at risk where Prescribed burning would be appropriate to use. Seek cooperation from adjacent landowners. Find funding to cover cost of burning. Prioritize burn compartments and execute. Install permanent presuppression breaks where desired or practical.
Fuel Hazard in public or shared spaces	Fuel Modification or reduction	Determine where hazards exist. Determine appropriate method for modification or reduction. Chipping, raking and piling, County pick-up, Organized Community Clean-up days could be beneficial.

**Proposed Improvements to capabilities of Wildland Response Agencies Priorities**

Problem or need	Improvement or solution	Details
Lack of qualification or training	Provide training opportunities	Examine training records of all wildland responders to insure training and qualifications match expected duties. Insure that all wildland responders have Basic Wildland Certification. Locate and secure funding for enhanced training from state and federal agencies. Utilize Ready Set Go training.
Equipment needs	Improve or acquire Wildland fire equipment	Determine specific equipment needs to bring all wildland response equipment to NWCG Standards. Provide appropriate PPE to all County wildland responders. Provide wildland hand tools to County departments. Investigate needs for improvements to all wildland water handing and supply (dry hydrants, brush trucks, hose, etc.)

**Proposed Public Education Priorities**

Educational Priority	Responsible party	Method
Increase public awareness concerning firewise principles and fire prevention through direct contact	County, State, and municipal governments	Conduct firewise meetings by each fire response jurisdiction assisted by Georgia Forestry Commission (state) and USDA Forest Service (federal). Conduct a door to door campaign in particularly hazardous communities
Increase public awareness concerning firewise principles and fire prevention through use of media	County, State, and municipal governments	Use PSA's in local newspapers and local radio stations. Utilize firewise displays in local post offices and banks. Seek use of local EMC newsletter for firewise message. Create poster sized notices for use in common public places (stores, post offices, etc. adjacent to high hazard areas advising residents about the hazard and how to protect themselves and their property. Distribute public notices concerning firewise through the local building permit office, and at local sporting events and other public gatherings. Utilize social media and radio to reach numerous audiences.

## VIII. ACTION PLAN

### Steps to implement Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Priorities

Hazard	Specific Action and Responsible Party
Lack of Defensible Space	Using the risk summary 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.
Access problems	Using the County Base map the Georgia Forestry Commission and Jones 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	Jones 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.
Codes and Ordinances	Jones County and municipal Fire Marshalls should closely examine all codes and ordinances for gaps and oversights which could cause problems in wildland fire suppression. Examples include proximity of propane tanks to structures, road widths in new developments, accumulations of debris, lack of proper identification pertaining address or street names etc. Utilize the International Wildland Urban Interface Code (IWUIC).

### 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. Other possibilities exist both for assessed areas and other areas not yet assessed. Aerial photos of the proposed project areas are included in the appendix. These projects are suggestions of burn projects and presuppression fuel breaks and could be expanded on. In regard to the project associated with the railroad hazard in the southern part of the county, the cooperation of the railroad will have to be obtained. Burning projects conducted on Federal Land should take fuel reduction near communities at risk into consideration.
Hazardous Wildland Fuel Accumulations	In areas where hazardous fuel accumulations exist in proximity to wildland communities and burning is undesired or impractical, permanent or semi permanent firebreaks could be installed by the Georgia Forestry Commission. The location and purpose of these breaks should be made known to all wildland response agencies (county and state). Their purpose should be made known to residents and their cooperation in protecting them should be gained.
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 Jones County Wildland firefighters	Chief Ranger Fowler, Assistant District Manager David Epps of the Georgia Forestry Commission, and the Jones County Fire Chief should examine all training records for personnel under their supervision. All personnel should be certified Georgia Basic Wildland Firefighters or higher in qualification. Additional training and qualification should be sought for personnel identified in the Jones County Fire plan who are assigned specific Incident Command System (ICS) functions. Sources for available funds for training should be sought at State and Federal levels.
Improve or acquire wildland firefighting equipment	All stations for Jones 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 Chief Ranger Fowler and the Jones County Fire Chief

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

Opportunity	Responsible Party and Specific Action
Improve Public Education through direct contact	Prior to the onset of fire season(s) Rangers of the Georgia Forestry Commission and Jones 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 or by mailbox flyers. 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 Jones County unit of the Georgia Forestry Commission and used for all firewise meetings in Jones County. Local news media should be invited to these meetings. Goals for potential Firewise certified communities in Jones 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 safety. Firewise materials or references to sources of information should be made available to the local building permit office.



Jarrell Plantation State Historic Site and surrounding Community were recognized as a National Firewise Community in 2014. Pictured above is Chief Ranger Russell Fowler performing a risk assessment with the Jarrell Plantation Site Manager. Pictured below Chief Ranger Fowler instructs Volunteer fireman and Park personnel in the Firewise assessment process. This was part of a Firewise Day event held at Jarrell plantation.



## 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 late summer of 2011. This should occur prior to the time when most citizens begin fall cleanup projects in order for recommendations regarding improvements to defensible space and reduction of structural ignitability to coincide with these seasonal actions.
- Pre-planning to examine access and suppression problems should take place prior to the onset of the fall fire season of 2011.
- Codes and Ordinances should be examined as soon as possible in order for the legal workings of changes to take place prior to the fall fire season of 2011.

### Steps to implement Fuel Reduction or Modification Priorities

- The prescribed burn project to reduce fuels near the communities identified in the action plan should take place in late winter to early spring of 2011 -12. 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 –. Any actions that do not take place during this window could be undertaken during the late winter to early spring of 2011 -12

### Steps to implement improvements to wildland response capability

- Cooperation between state and local wildland suppression forces regarding improvements to training and equipment 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 prior at the earliest opportunity as manpower and scheduling allows.
- The use of media should coincide with the above action.



## 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, news articles published, radio programs aired, etc. would be the best measure of success.

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

### Appended Documents:

Jones County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report (SWRA)  
Jones 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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