GEORGIA FORESTRY
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Community Wildfire Protection Plan
An Action Plan for Wildfire Mitigation and
Conservation of Natural Resources

Taylor County, Georgia

APRIL 2 0 1 7

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

Community Representatives:

Board of Commissioners

Chairman Randall F. Nelson — District 5

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Georgia Forestry Commission

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Appended Documents:

Taylor County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary Report

I. OBJECTIVES & COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

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, homeowners 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 Taylor County. The plan includes prioritized recommendations for the appropriate types and methods of fuel reduction and structure ignitability reduction that will protect this community and its essential infrastructure. It also includes a plan for wildfire suppression. Specifically, the plan includes community-centered actions that will:

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

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 on June 1st, 2010 to assess risks and develop the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The group is comprised of representatives from local government, local fire authorities, and the state agency responsible for forest management.

Below are the groups included in the task force:

Taylor County Government
> *County Fire Departments*
> *Emergency Management*
> *Board of County Commissioners*

Georgia Forestry Commission

It was decided to conduct community assessments on the basis of the on high risk communities and the individual fire districts in the county. Taylor County Fire Departments, the Georgia Forestry Commission Taylor County Unit, and the GFC Wildfire Protection Specialist reconvened in early 2009 for the purpose of completing the following:

Risk Assessment	Assessed wildfire hazard risks and prioritized mitigation actions. The wildfire risk assessment will help homeowners, builders, developers, and emergency personnel whether the area needs attention and will help direct wildfire risk reduction practices to the areas at highest risk.
Fuels Reduction	Identified strategies for coordinating fuels treatment projects.
Structure Ignitability	Identified strategies for reducing the ignitability of structures within the Wildland interface.
Emergency Management	Forged relationships among local government and fire districts and developed/refined a pre-suppression plan.
Education and Outreach	Developed strategies for increasing citizen awareness and action and to conduct homeowner and community leader workshops. Outreach and education programs are designed to raise awareness and improve audience knowledge of wildfire risk reduction needs and practices. In the best cases, education and outreach programs will influence attitudes and opinions and result in effective action.

II. COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND WILDFIRE HISTORY

Taylor County, encompassing 377 square miles and located in west central Georgia, was established by an act of the state legislature in 1852. Created from Macon, Marion, and Talbot counties, Taylor was the ninety-ninth county organized in the state. The northeastern portion of the county comprises lands east of the Flint River that had belonged to the Creek Nation before its expulsion from the state. Taylor County was named for U.S. president Zachary Taylor, who died in office in 1850.

The Fifty Mile Station on the Muscogee Railroad served as the county's first courthouse for elections and other county business. The legislation creating Taylor County allowed the inferior court justices to select the county seat location, purchase the land, create and sell lots, and contract for public building construction. The new seat, incorporated on February 8, 1854, was named Butler in honor of General William Orlando Butler, who Zachary Taylor, a hero of the Mexican War (1846-48).

Taylor County Courthouse

The Federal Road, originally part of the stage highway from Richmond, Virginia, to New Orleans, Louisiana, ran through Taylor County along the old Indian trails. The road became known as the Wire Road because of the telegraph wires that stretched along it. Many settlers migrating westward traveled through the county, and by 1860 the population of Taylor County totaled 5,998.

The Tuscaloosa Formation, a sand clay formation, represents the first prominent coastal plain deposits in Georgia. Although much of the land in Taylor County is hilly and sandy, it has long produced cotton, which, along with peaches, remains an important crop for the county. In 2002 Taylor County had a total of 227 farms with an average size of 328 acres each. Poultry and eggs represented the largest share of agricultural sales. Taylor is still a rural county.

Historic sites in Taylor County include Fort Lawrence and Beechwood Farm. Fort Lawrence was established by Benjamine Hawkins, who served as an Indian agent for all Native Americans west of the Ocmulgee River early in the nineteenth century. Beechwood Farm was the home of John B. Gordon, a Confederate general, U.S. senator, and Georgia Govenor.

According to the 2010 U.S. census, Taylor County's population was 8,906, a slight increase from the 2000 population 8,815. The county's two incorporated cities are Butler, which had a population of 1,972 in 2010, and Reynolds, which that same year had a population of 1,086. Annual cultural events in Taylor County include the Georgia Strawberry Festival, which is held

in Reynolds during the month of April. The local news source is the *Taylor County News*.

Community Information provided by the New Georgia Encyclopedia

Wildfire History

Recent data show that a majority of the fastest growing areas in the U.S. are in wildfire-prone environments. It is not a surprise that some of these fastest growing areas are in Georgia. In last decade of the 20th Century, Georgia's population increased substantially. Homeowners in Georgia must contend with natural hazards including wildfire, tornados, and flooding. This combination of factors – burgeoning population, abundant natural areas, development pressures, and lack of public awareness makes Georgia a perfect state for creating solutions to various hazards. Georgia is looked to throughout the southern region as a leader in comprehensive and hazard mitigation planning.

Many of Georgia's existing and new residents living in the urban interface are unaware of the vital role fire plays in our landscape and that their homes are extremely vulnerable to wildfire damage. Balancing development pressures with wildfire risk reduction and education creates a unique challenge for local governments, emergency managers, and wildfire management agencies such as the Georgia Forestry Commission.

The following table indicates the wildfire activity in Taylor County from 2006 to 2015 as compared to the statewide average. The chart on the following page indicates wildfire activity during the 2016 fiscal year (July 2015 – June 2016). There were only 21 wildfires burning less than 100 acres during the year, which was well below average due to above average rainfall. Fiscal year 2017 has started very dry with the County having 50 wildfires through March 2017. These wildfires have burned over 260 acres.

Fiscal Year	Number of Fires	Acreage	Average Size	Statewide Average size
2015	25	32.82	1.31	1.95
2014	21	38.02	1.81	3.07
2013	12	15.43	1.29	3.28
2012	24	97.86	4.08	3.98
2011	23	59.65	2.59	22.90
2010	6	10.81	1.80	1.86
2009	18	58.14	3.23	3.90
2008	26	52.10	2.00	4.56
2007	27	184.77	6.84	18.64
2006	29	72.52	2.50	3.93

| County = Taylor	Cause	Fires		Acres	Fires 5 Yr Avg	Acres 5 Yr Avg
Campfire	Campfire	0		0.00	0.80	5.20
Children	Children	1		0.20	0.40	0.09
Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	Debris: Ag Fields, Pastures, Orchards, Etc	2		0.44	2.00	18.70
Debris: Construction Land Clearing	Debris: Construction Land Clearing	0		0.00	0.20	0.82
Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	Debris: Escaped Prescribed Burn	4		83.97	4.20	51.65
Debris: Household Garbage	Debris: Household Garbage	0		0.00	0.60	2.38
Debris: Other	Debris: Other	2		1.39	1.40	2.76
Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	Debris: Residential, Leafpiles, Yard, Etc	1		0.65	3.80	20.81
Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	Debris: Site Prep - Forestry Related	0		0.00	2.00	5.57
Incendiary	Incendiary	0		0.00	2.20	44.82
Lightning	Lightning	1		0.01	3.20	6.49
Machine Use	Machine Use	2		2.25	6.20	12.34
Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous	0		0.00	0.40	0.68
Miscellaneous: Cutting/Welding/Grinding	Miscellaneous: Cutting/Welding/Grinding	1		1.38	0.20	0.28
Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	Miscellaneous: Power lines/Electric fences	0		0.00	1.00	8.05
Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	Miscellaneous: Spontaneous Heating/Combustion	0		0.00	0.40	2.79
Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	Miscellaneous: Structure/Vehicle Fires	0		0.00	0.20	0.02
Railroad	Railroad	0		0.00	0.60	0.78
Smoking	Smoking	1		0.33	1.20	2.94
Undetermined	Undetermined	6		7.89	2.20	2.59
Totals for County: Taylor Year: 2016		21		98.51	33.20	189.76
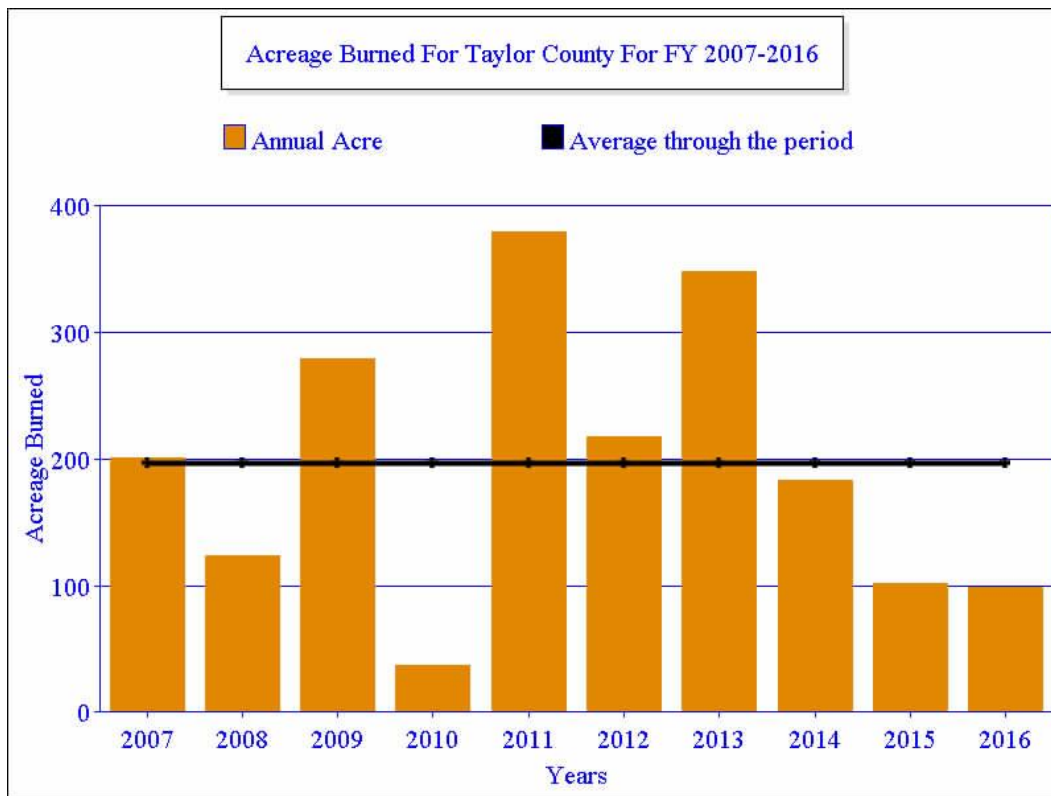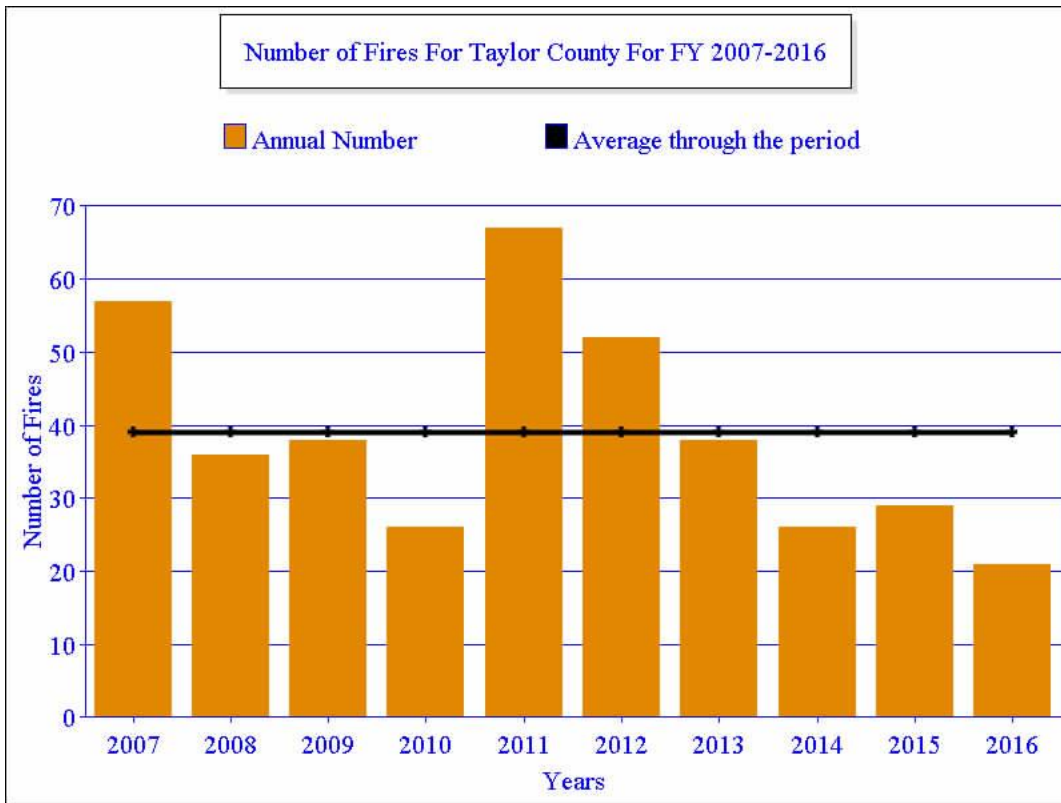
During this 10 year period the primary cause of wildfires in Taylor County was careless debris burning (39%).   The secondary cause was machine use (20%) followed by incendiary (13%). Lightning caused fires accounted for 9% of these fires.
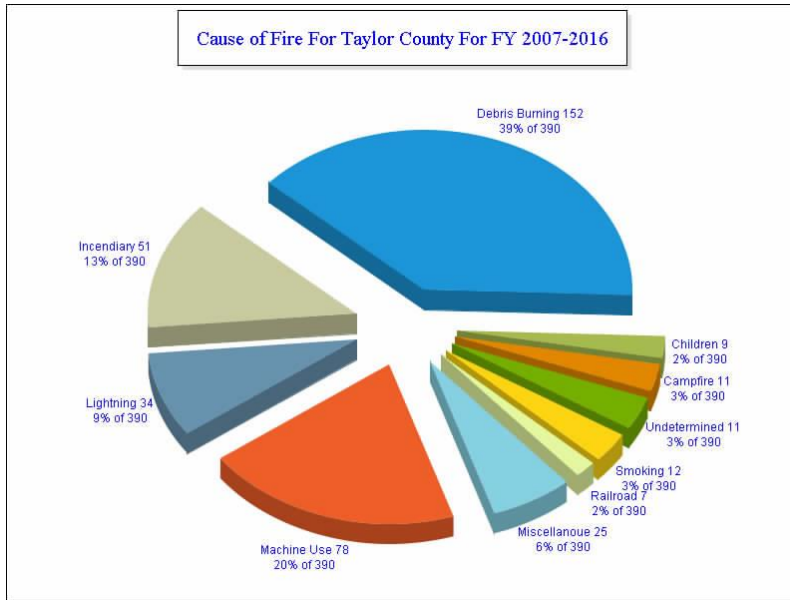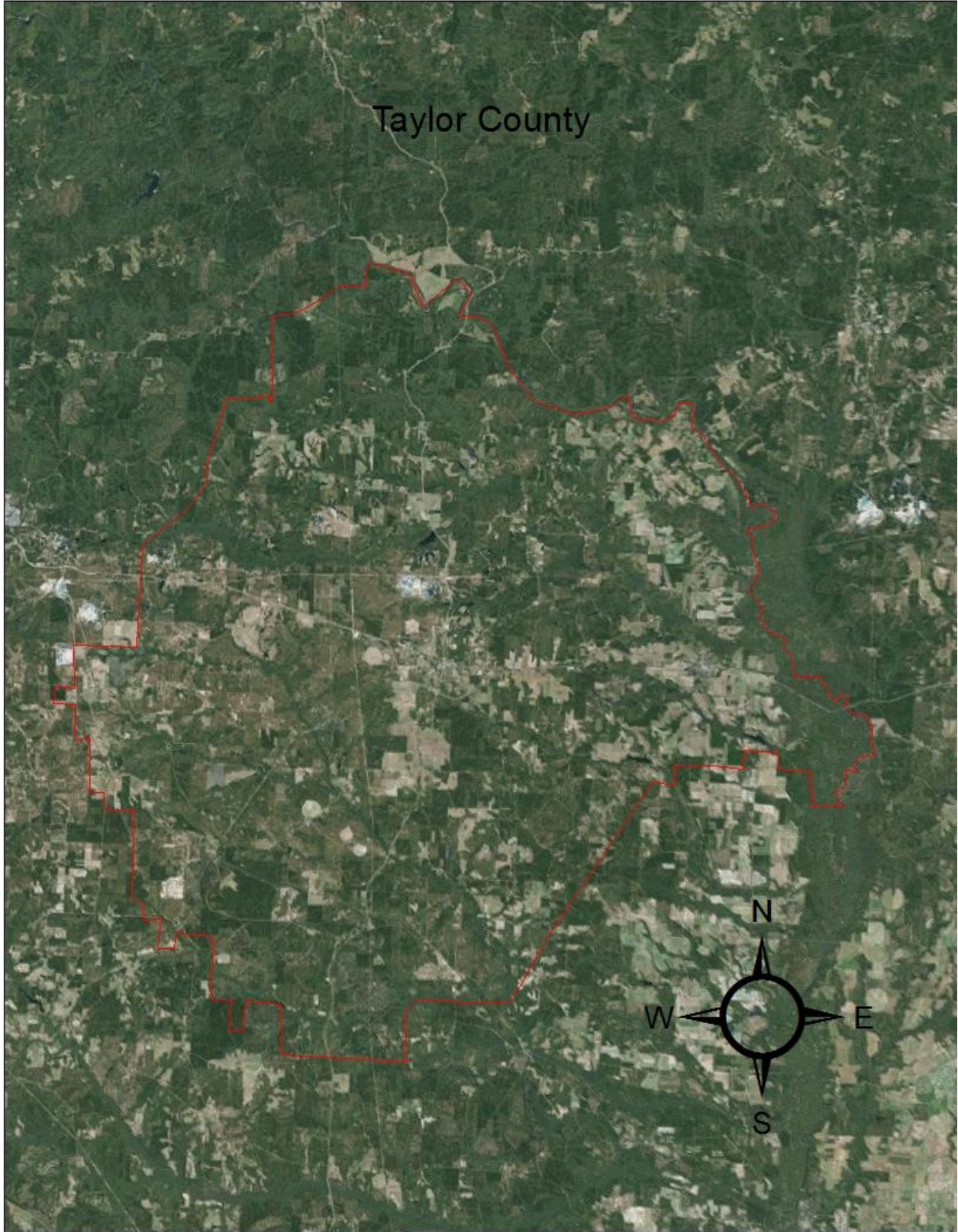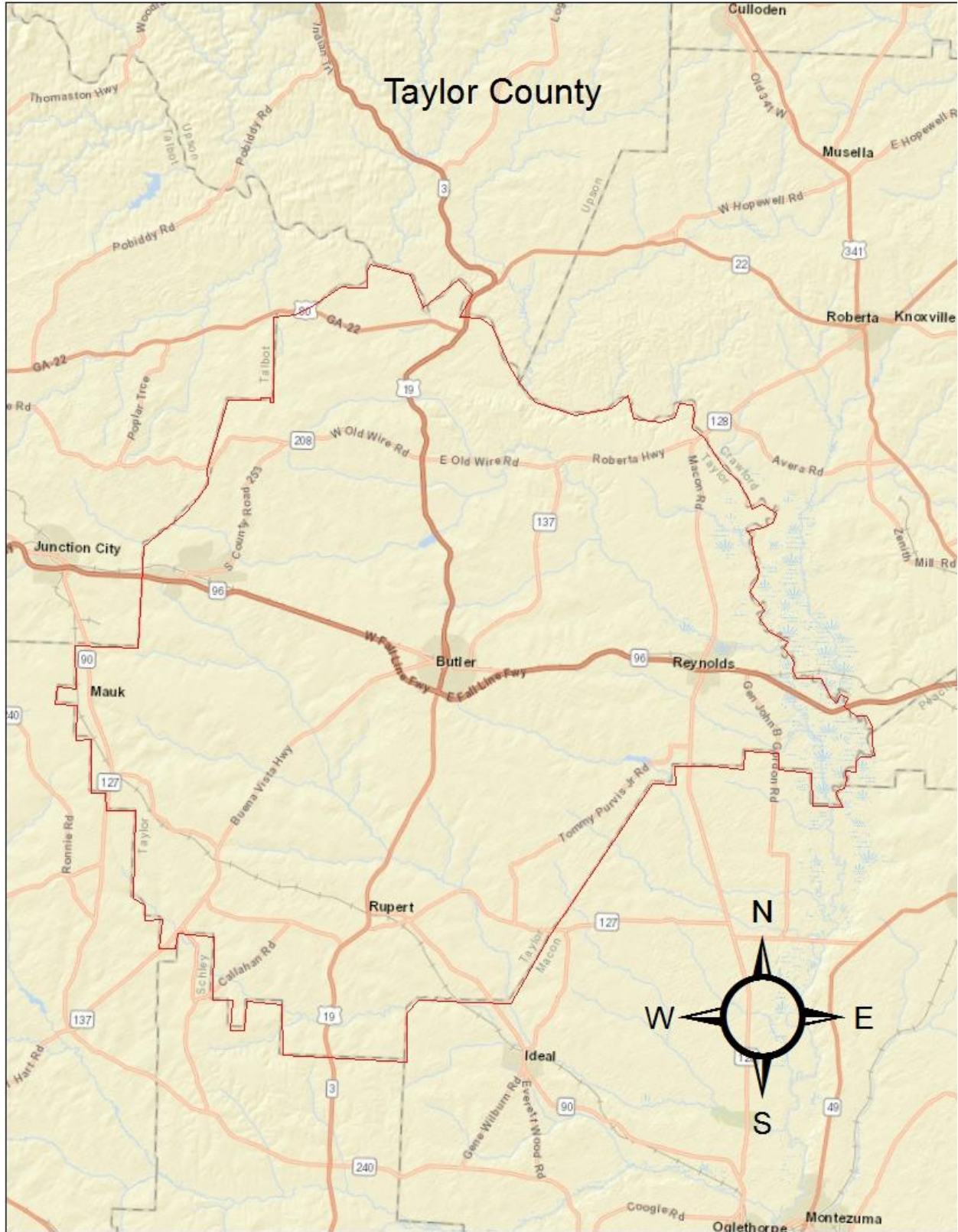

Fire Occurrence Map for
Taylor County for Fiscal Year 2012-2016
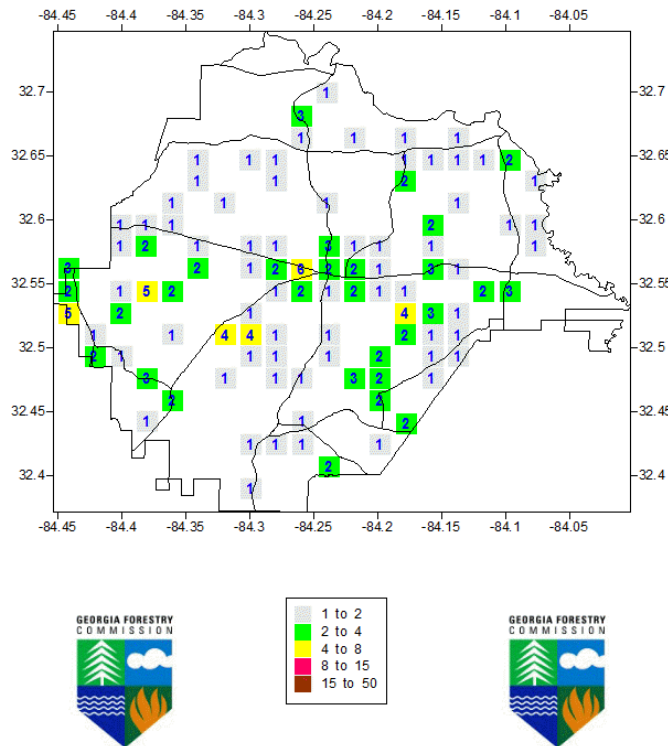
III. COUNTY BASE MAPS
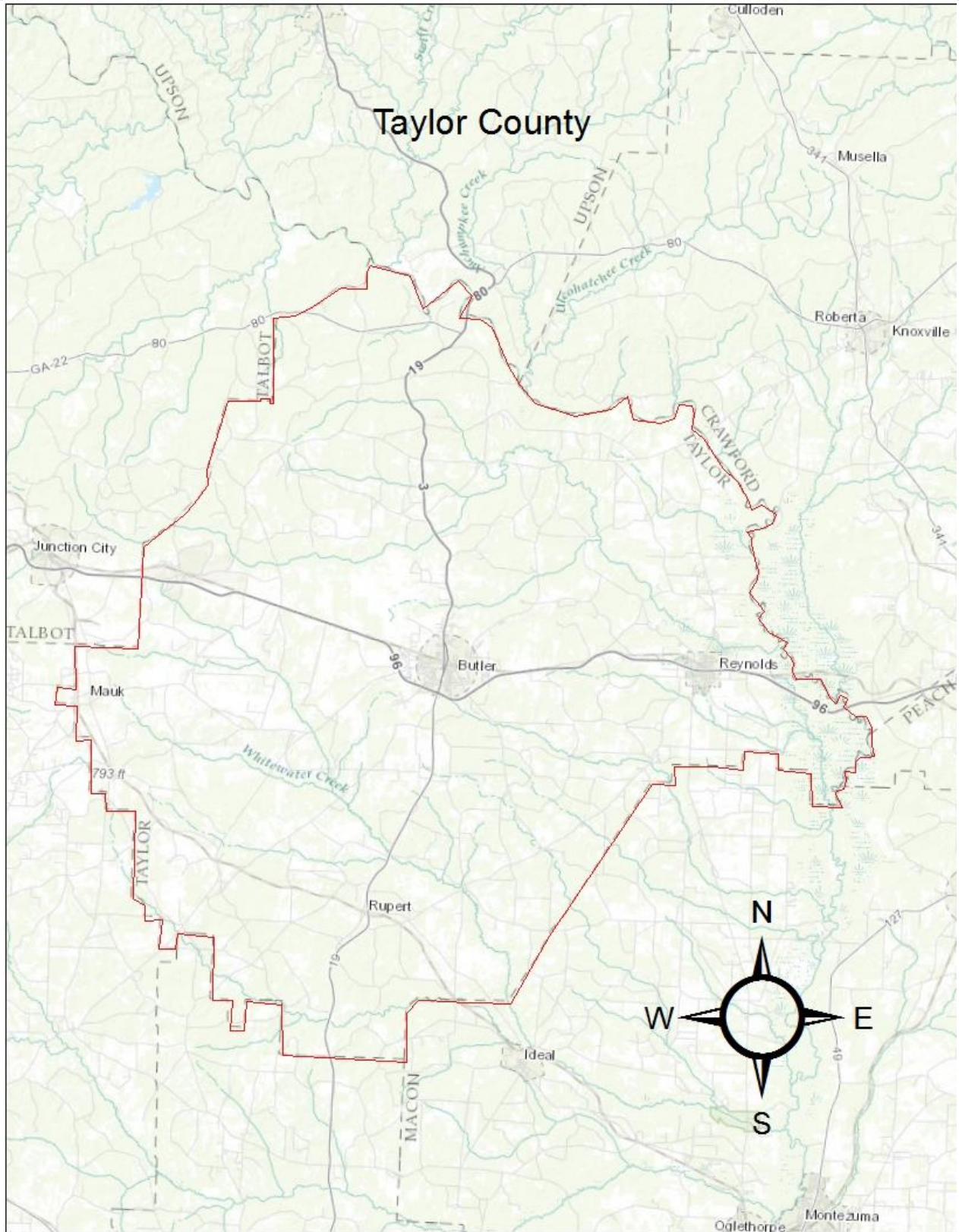
IV. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK

The Wildland-Urban Interface

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) reflects housing density depicting where humans and their structures meet or intermix with wildland fuels.

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.

V. Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary & Risk Hazard Maps & Community Risk Assessments

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 Taylor 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

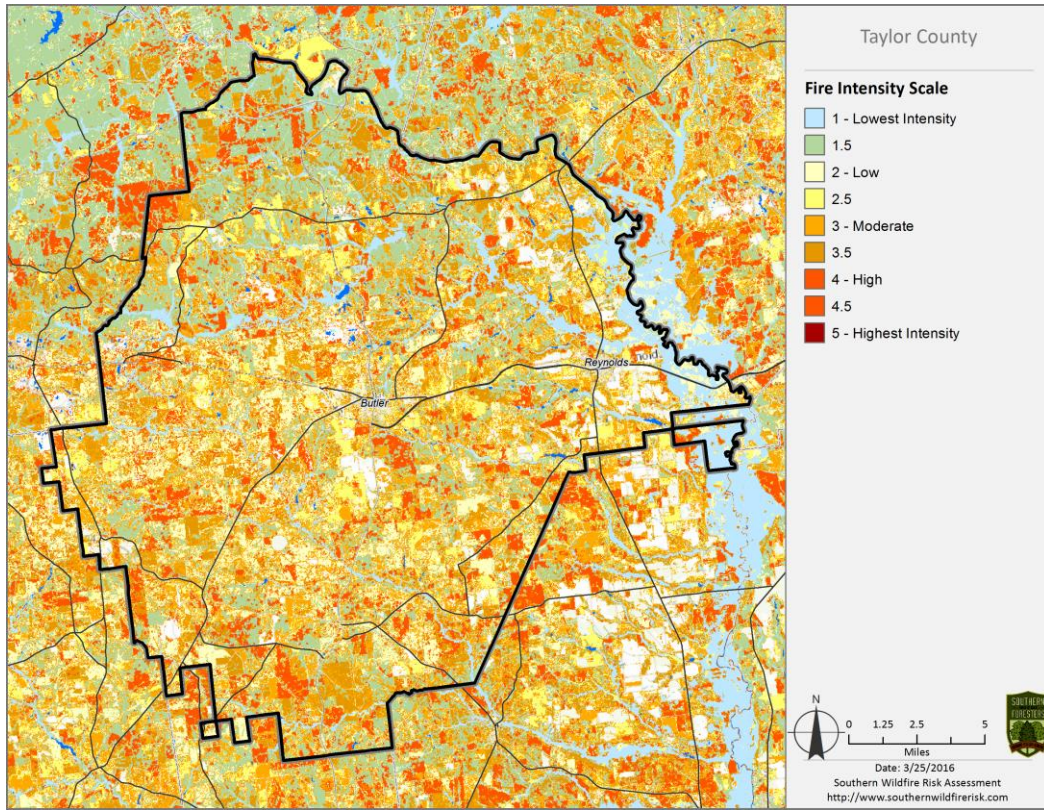- Plan and prioritize hazardous fuel treatment programs
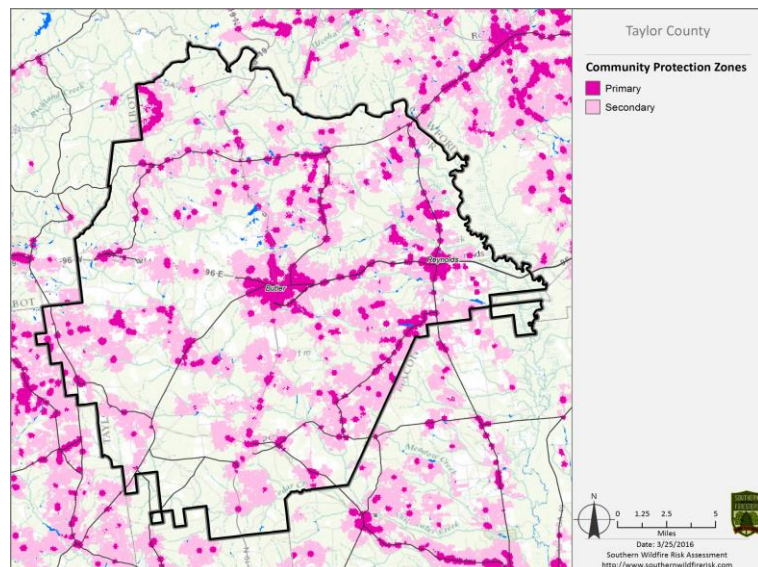
Community Protection Zone map from the Taylor County Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment Summary report (SouthWRAP)
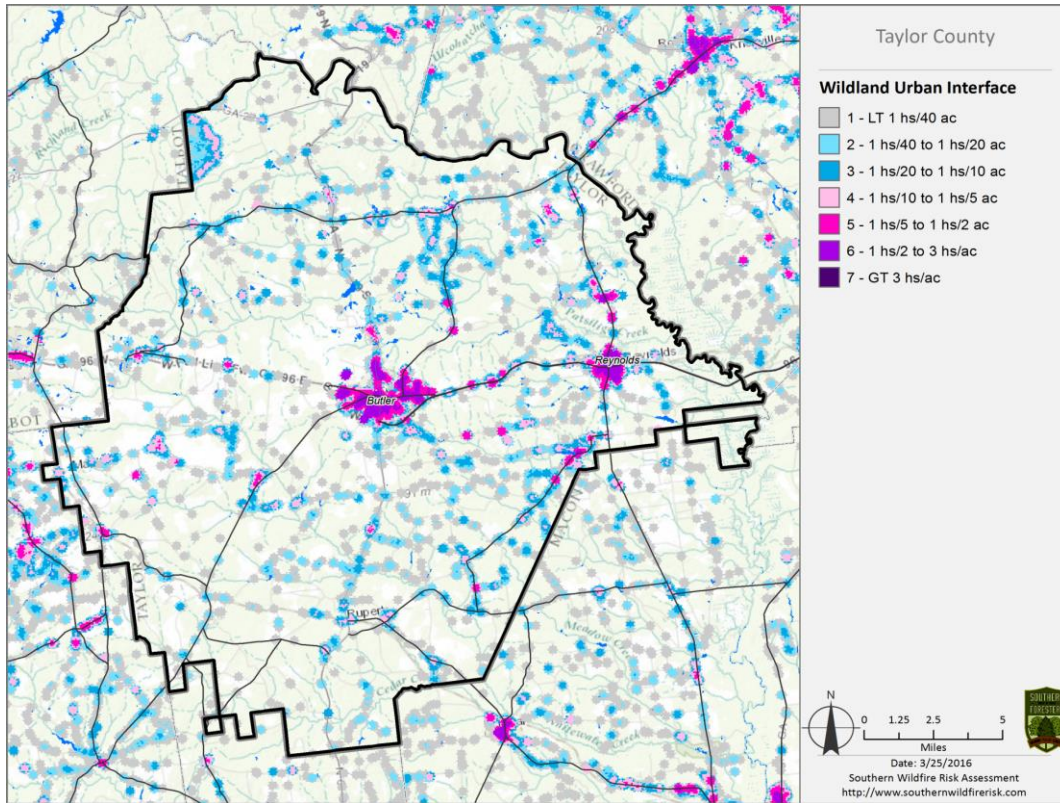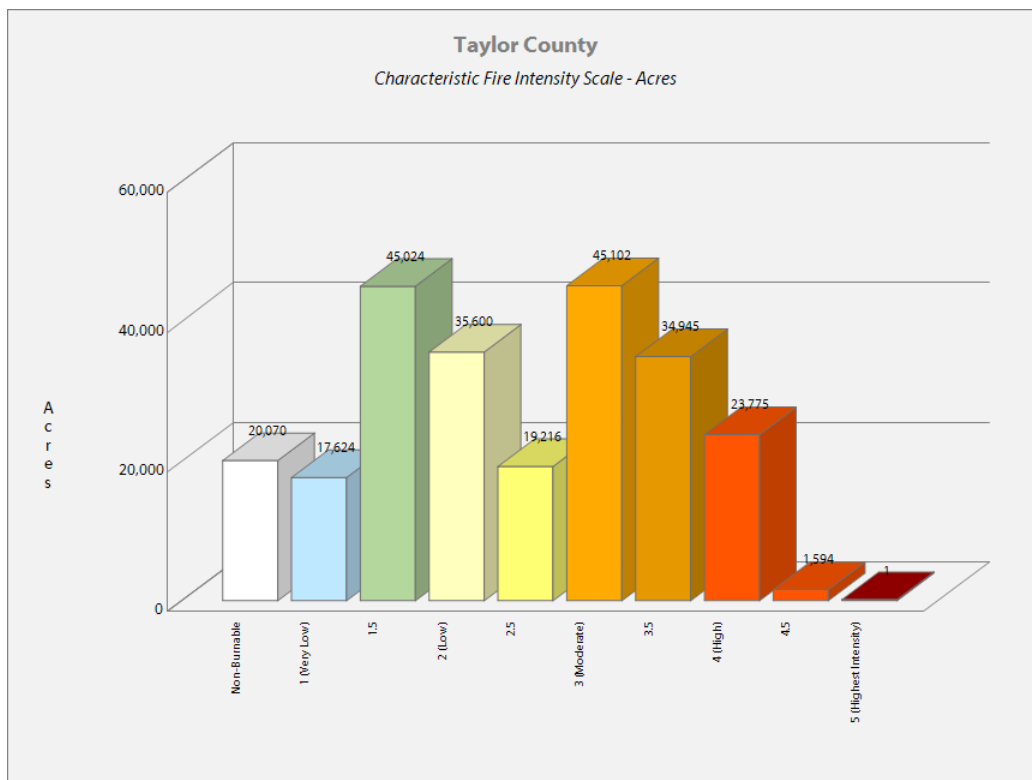
(Above)Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) map and (below) WUI risk map
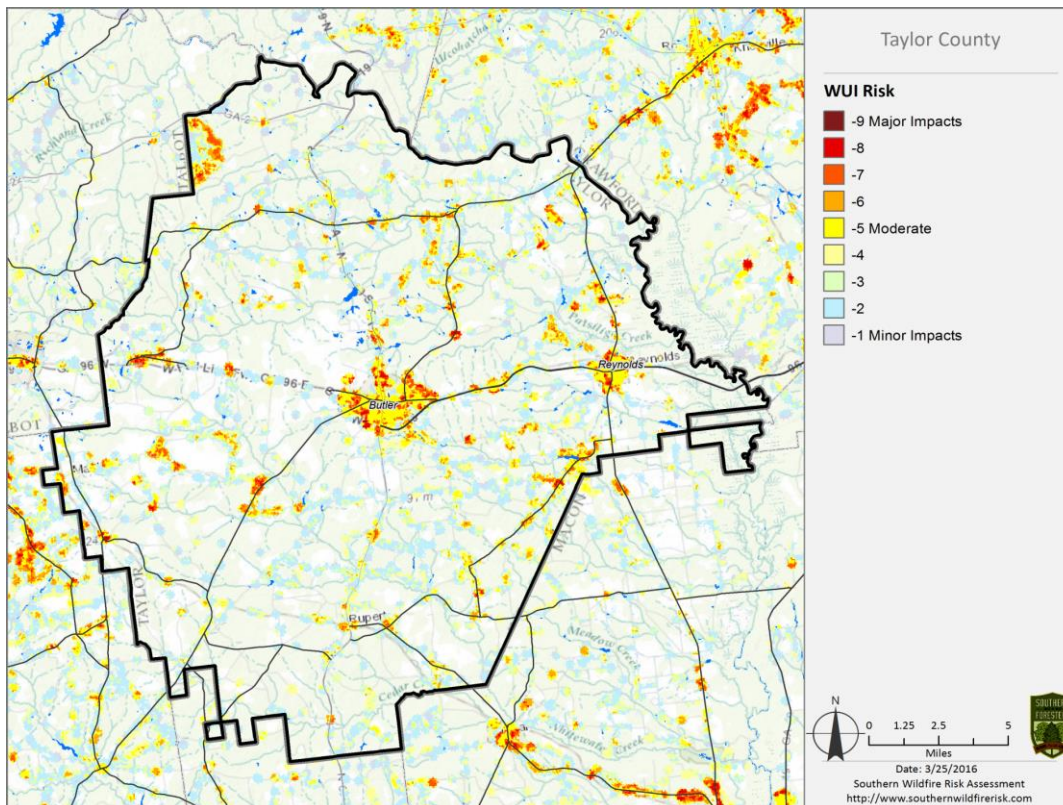
SouthWRAP Risk Maps: (Above) Fire Intensity Scale and (Below) Fire Intensity Scale - Acres

Data from the Southern Fire Risk Assessment shows that values for the level of concern are in the moderate to low range. This is in line with the low fire numbers and the rapid suppression of those that do occur. The following communities were assessed for their susceptibility to damage from wildfire using the Georgia Forestry Commission Community Assessment form. Some of the areas that were assessed are not shown as being at risk by the Southern Wildfire Risk Assessment. This document rates the hazard to communities based on four criteria. The criteria are subdivision design, site hazard, building construction, and additional factors. The assessments were completed by Taylor County Fire Departments in early 2009. Some communities were found to be outside the ranges for the levels of concern found in the Southern Fire Risk Assessment. No incorporated areas were assessed. Original copies of the assessments are located at the Taylor County office of the GA Forestry Commission.

The risk assessment instrument used to evaluate wildfire hazards to Taylor's County's WUI was the Hazard and Wildfire Risk Assessment Checklist. The instrument takes into consideration accessibility, vegetation (based on fuel models), roofing assembly, building construction, and availability of fire protection resources, placement of gas and electric utilities, and additional rating factors. The following factors contributed to the wildfire hazard score for Taylor 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 heavy 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 comprising half the total lots in many rural communities.
- High occurrence of wildfires in the several locations
- Distance from fire stations
- Lack of homeowner or community organizations

The communities listed in the following table were assessed for their susceptibility to damage from wildfire using the Georgia Forestry Commission Community Assessment form. This document rates the hazard to communities based on four criteria. The criteria are subdivision design, site hazard, building construction, and additional factors. Hazard risk scoring is low 0-75, moderate 76-130, high 130-140, extreme 140 +.
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Map Number	Community Name	Location	Size and Structural Information	Wildfire Hazard Rating	Jurisdiction
1	Parks Rd –Black Creek Trail Phelps Rd	same	22 homes	127 moderate	Mauk
2	South Oak Dr.	Off Roberta Hwy NE of Butler	20 lots	126 moderate	Reynolds
3	Wainwright Rd Johnny Wainwright Rd East Old Wire Rd	same	unknown	120 moderate	Panhandle
4	John B Gordon Rd – East Marshall Rd – Newsome Rd	same	unknown	119 moderate	Reynolds
5	Nelson Rd – Macon Rd – Park Ave	same	27 homes	119 moderate	Reynolds
6	Peeble Rd – Goose Hollow Rd- Rustin Rd	same	unknown	117 moderate	Reynolds Potterville
7	Owens Rd	N32 32.967' W84 16.244'	unknown	114 moderate	Butler
8	Orba Circle	Off Whatley Pond Rd North of Reynolds	31 homes	113 moderate	Reynolds
9	Shine-J.E. Bentley Rd-Nelson Rd	North of Reynolds	24 homes	107 moderate	Panhandle
10	Mauk	Hwy 90 West 1893	unknown	106 moderate	Mauk
11	J.W. Miller Rd- Pebble Rd- Goose Hollow Rd	same	unknown	95 moderate	Potterville
12	Ga Center for Youth Village	211 Goose Hollow Rd	unknown	93 moderate	Potterville
13	Macon Rd- Thomas Rd	N32 35.688' W84 05.522'	28 homes	92 moderate	Reynolds Taylor Co.
14	Golf Course Dr- Cabin Rd	N32 34.498' W84 05.394'	15 homes	90 moderate	Reynolds Taylor Co
15	Robinson Rd. Wainwright Rd E. Old Wire Rd	N32 39.071 W84 11.325	unknown	88 moderate	Panhandle
16	Oak Ridge	N32 34.684' W84 12.470'	15 lots 6 homes built	81 moderate	Butler
17	Miller Park	Harmon Rd J.W. Miller Rd Barrow Rd	unknown	74 low	Butler

VI. PRIORITIZED MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Summary

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

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

When new developments are built in the Wildland/Urban Interface, a number of public safety challenges may be created for the local fire services: (1) the water supply in the immediate areas may be inadequate for fire suppression; (2) if the Development is in an outlying area, there may be a longer response time for emergency services; (3) in a wildfire emergency, the access road(s) may need to simultaneously support evacuation of residents and the arrival of emergency vehicles; and (4) when wildland fire disasters strike, many structures may be involved simultaneously, quickly exceeding the capability of even the best equipped fire departments.

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

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

Proposed Community Hazard and Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities

Primary Protection for Community and Its Essential Infrastructure		
Treatment Area	Treatment Types	Treatment Method(s)
1. All Structures	Create minimum of 30-feet of defensible space**	Trim shrubs and vines to 30 feet from structures, trim overhanging limbs, replace flammable plants near homes with less flammable varieties, remove vegetation around chimneys.
2. Applicable Structures	Reduce structural ignitability**	Clean flammable vegetative material from roofs and gutters, store firewood appropriately, install skirting around raised structures, store water hoses for ready access, and replace pine straw and mulch around plantings with less flammable landscaping materials.
3. Community Clean-up Day	Cutting, mowing, pruning**	Cut, prune, and mow vegetation in shared community spaces.
4. Driveway Access	Culvert installation	See that adequate lengths of culverts are installed to allow emergency vehicle access.
5. Road Access	Identify needed road improvements	As roads are upgraded, widen to minimum standards with at least 50 foot diameter cul de sacs or turn arounds.

Proposed Community Wildland Fuel Reduction Priorities

Treatment Area	Treatment Types	Treatment Method(s)
1. Adjacent WUI Lands	Reduce hazardous fuels	Encourage prescribed burning for private landowners and industrial timberlands particularly adjacent to residential areas. County resolution to state recommending that the Ga Forestry Commission not charge for prescribed burning in WUI areas. Seek grant for WUI mitigation team.

2. Railroad Corridors	Reduce hazardous fuels	Encourage railroads to better maintain their ROW eliminating brush and grass through herbicide and mowing. Maintain firebreaks along ROW adjacent to residential areas.
3. Existing Fire Lines	Reduce hazardous fuels	Clean and re-harrow existing lines.

Proposed Improved Community Wildland Fire Response Priorities		
1. Water Sources	Dry Hydrants	Inspect, maintain and improve access to existing dry hydrants. Add signage along road to mark the hydrants. Locate additional dry hydrants as needed.
2. Fire Stations	Equipment	Wildland hand tools. Lightweight Wildland PPE Gear. Investigate need for "brush" trucks near communities at risk.
3. Water Sources	Drafting equipment	Investigate need for additional drafting pumps.
4. Personnel	Training	Obtain Wildland Fire Suppression training for fire personnel to include S130, S190, and S215. Ready Set Go Training.
**Actions to be taken by homeowners and community stakeholders		

Proposed Education and Outreach Priorities

1. Conduct "How to Have a Firewise Home" Workshop for County Residents
Set up and conduct a workshop for homeowners that teach the principles of making homes and properties safe from wildfire. Topics for discussion include defensible space, landscaping, building construction, etc. Workshop will be scheduled for evenings or weekends when most homeowners are available and advertised through local media outlets. Distribute materials promoting firewise practices and planning through local community and governmental meetings.

2. Conduct "Firewise" Workshop for Community Leaders

Arrange for GFC Firewise Coordinator to work with local community leaders and governmental officials on the importance of "Firewise Planning" in developing ordinances and codes as the county as the need arises. Identified "communities-at-risk" should be sought after for certification in the National Firewise Communities Program.

3. Spring Clean-up Event or National Wildfire Preparedness Day

Conduct clean-up event every spring involving the Georgia Forestry Commission, County Fire Departments, City Fire Department and local residence of the County. Set up information table with educational materials and refreshments. Initiate the event with a morning briefing by GFC Firewise coordinator and local fire officials detailing plans for the day and safety precautions. Activities may include the following:

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

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) held the 1st National Wildfire Preparedness Day in 2014. This event is now held annually on the 1st Saturday in May.

4. Informational Packets

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

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

5. Wildfire Protection Display

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

6. Press

Invite the local and regional news media to community "Firewise" functions for news coverage and regularly submit press releases documenting wildfire risk improvements in Taylor County.

VII. ACTION PLAN

Roles and Responsibilities

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

Role	Responsibility
Hazardous Fuels and Structural Ignitability Reduction	
Taylor County WUI Fire Council	Create this informal team or council comprised of residents, GFC officials, Taylor County Fire Department officials, a representative from the city and county government and the EMA Director for Taylor County. Meet periodically to review progress towards mitigation goals, appoint and delegate special activities, work with federal, state, and local officials to assess progress and develop future goals and action plans. Work with residents to implement projects and firewise activities.
Key Messages to focus on	1 Defensible Space and Firewise Landscaping 2 Debris Burning Safety 3 Firewise information for homeowners 4 Prescribed burning benefits 5 Fire Adapted Community
Communications objectives	1 Create public awareness for fire danger and defensible space issues 2 Identify most significant human cause fire issues 3 Enlist public support to help prevent these causes 4 Encourage residents to employ fire prevention, firewise practices, and create defensible spaces in their communities.
Target Audiences	1 Homeowners 2 Home Owner Associations 3 Forest Landowners and users 4 Civic Groups and organizations 5 School Groups 6 Timber Companies
Methods	1 News Releases 2 Personal Contacts 3 Key messages and prevention tips 4 Visuals such as signs, brochures and posters

Spring Clean-up Day (Wildfire Preparedness Day)	
Event Coordinator	Coordinate day's events and schedule, catering for cookout, guest attendance, and moderate activities the day of the event.(National Wildfire Preparedness Day annually is the first Saturday in May.
Event Treasurer	Collect funds from residents to cover food, equipment rentals, and supplies. State Farm Insurance Co. offers a grant for National Wildfire Preparedness Day events.
Publicity Coordinator	Advertise event through neighborhood newsletter, letters to officials, and public service announcements (PSAs) for local media outlets. Publicize post-event through local paper and radio PSAs.
Work Supervisor	Develop volunteer labor force of community residents; develop labor/advisory force from Georgia Forestry Commission, Taylor County Fire Departments, and Emergency Management. Procure needed equipment and supplies. In cooperation with local city and county officials, develop safety protocol. Supervise work and monitor activities for safety the day of the event.

Funding Needs

The following funding is needed to implement the action plan:

Project	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Source(s)
1. Create a minimum of 30 feet of defensible space around structures	Varies	Residents will supply labor and fund required work on their own properties.
2. Reduce structural ignitability by cleaning flammable vegetation from roofs and gutters; appropriately storing firewood, installing skirting around raised structures, storing water hoses for ready access, replacing pine needles and mulch around plantings with less flammable material.	Varies	Residents will supply labor and fund required work on their own properties.
3. Amend codes and ordinances to provide better access, building codes, firewise landscaping, and brush clearance. The National Wildland Urban Interface Code was adopted in Georgia in 2014.	No Cost	To be adopted by city and county government.
4. Spring Cleanup Day (Wildfire Preparedness Day)	Varies	Community business donations or grants.
5. Fuel Reduction Activities	$15 / acre	FEMA & USFS Grants

VIII. GRANT FUNDING AND MITIGATION ASSISTANCE

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

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

1. To provide technical and financial assistance to local governments to assist in the implementation of long term, cost effective hazard mitigation accomplishments.

2. This policy addresses wildfire mitigation for the purpose of reducing the threat to all-risk structures through creating defensible space, structural protection through the application of ignition resistant construction and limited hazardous fuel reduction to protect life and property.

3. With a completed registered plan (addendum to the State Plan) counties can apply for pre-mitigation funding. They will also be eligible for HMGP funding if the county is declared under a wildfire disaster.

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

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

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

IX. GLOSSARY

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

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

CWPP – *The Community Wildfire Protection Plan.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hazard & Wildfire Risk Assessment – *An evaluation to determine an area's (community's) potential to be impacted by an approaching wildland fire.*
Healthy Forests Initiative - *Launched in August 2002 by President Bush (following*

passage of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act by Congress) with the intent to reduce the risks severe wildfires pose to people, communities, and the environment.

Home Ignition Zone (Structure Ignition Zone) - *Treatment area for wildfire protection. The "zone" includes the structure(s) and their immediate surroundings from 0-200 ft.* Mitigation – An a*ction 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 (fire) – *The use of planned fire that is deliberately set under specific fuel and weather condition to accomplish a variety of management objectives and is under control until it burns out or is extinguished.*

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

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

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

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

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

X. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Publications/Brochures/Websites:

- FIREWISE materials can be ordered at www.firewise.org

- 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:

Taylor County Southern Risk Assessment Summary Report (SouthWRAP)

P. O. Box 819
Macon, GA 312021
800-GA-TREES
GaTrees.org

The Georgia Forestry Commission provides leadership, service, and education in the protection and conservation of Georgia's forest resources. An Equal Opportunity Employer and Service Provider

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