

Larkspur Fire Protection District Community Meeting



**Larkspur Fire Station #1
9414 Spruce Mountain RD
Larkspur, CO 80118**

**October 5, 2010
7:00 p.m.**

CWPP Core Team Members Present:

Josh Keown, Douglas County Wildfire Mitigation
Jill Alexander, Douglas County Wildfire Mitigation
Kristin Garrison, Colorado State Forest Service
Thomas Welle, Douglas County Open Space and Natural Resources
Randy Johnson, Larkspur Fire Protection District

Community Attendance:

10 attendees signed in at the meeting. More attendees were observed in the audience that did not sign in. Attendees represented the communities of Perry Park, Valley Park, Woodmoor Mountain, and Perry Park East.

Meeting Proceedings:

A presentation covering the following topics was given to the participants at the meeting: CWPP Background, Douglas County Process, Draft Hazard Map/Community Delineation, County Lands Assessment, Draft Fuel Treatments, and Next Steps.

After the presentation a general question and answer session was held. The meeting lasted until approximately 10:00 p.m.

Questions and Comments: The following summarizes the questions and comments captured during the meeting.

- **Question:** Were all of the maps on the web site prior to the meeting?
Answer: Yes, with the exception of the County Owned Lands Treatment Recommendations Map, which had only recently been completed. All draft documents and map products are posted on the web site after they receive core team approval.
- **Question:** Are municipal fire hydrant locations included in the hazard assessment?
Answer: Due to the assessment's broadness in scale and variability in type and availability of water sources and conveyance of water for wildland fire suppression they were not included.
- **Question:** Why were power lines categorized as a value and not a risk in the hazard assessment?
Answer: Power lines logically fit into both categories, but were considered a value for the purpose of this assessment. By being classified as a value they are weighted heavier as being an area of focus.
- **Comment:** There was a request to include wildland urban interface (WUI) areas and zones of influence from existing local CWPPs in the county-wide plan. The reason for this would be to help the U.S. Forest Service prioritize their treatment areas.
Response: There was some concern of the availability of this data as most local CWPPs do not have spatial data (GIS). The consultant in the audience who has been involved in some localized CWPPs said the data from his plans did not exist spatially. At this point it may not be possible to include the WUIs and zones of influence from localized CWPPs due to lack of spatial data. The CSFS is attempting to put a database such as this together and when complete could be included in future plan updates, but is not available at this time. The U.S. Forest Service is aware of the local CWPPs in the vicinity of U.S. Forest Service lands as they are part of the core team for those plans.

At a minimum, it will be possible to identify in the Douglas County CWPP which communities have existing CWPPs and their location so the U.S. Forest Service and other interested parties can reference the localized plans, which are available electronically on the CSFS website. The request will be brought to the Douglas County Core Team to discuss the best way to do this.

- **Comment:** The county should hay the grasses on their open space lands in Valley Park.
Response: If the grass is not posing a direct hazard to a structure, or if the hazard can be reasonably mitigated through defensible space, the county will retain the grass as a natural open space to provide the ecological services that open space lands are intended to provide. Additionally, with limited resources, county-owned properties

that contain heavy ladder and crown fuels that pose a hazard to structures are the county's highest priorities for treatment.

- **Comment:** A community member shared a successful project they had recently been involved with.
- **Question:** Do all funding streams for performing mitigation and other work require a CWPP and would the county CWPP make all Douglas County citizens eligible for those that require CWPPs?
Answer: A CWPP is not necessarily required for all grant opportunities, but only suggested for some. For those funding sources that require a CWPP the county plan alone will not make you eligible for grant funds as additional work has to be done by the community (see CSFS Minimum Standards for more information). The county plan will make it easier and faster for local communities to put together a localized plan that, once approved, would make those communities eligible for applying for grant funding.
- **Comment:** An audience member stated that the residents of Douglas County are fortunate that the Douglas County Wildfire Mitigation Staff and Colorado State Forest Service are available to help communities who may be at risk to wildfire.
- **Comment:** An audience member identified slash disposal as an obstacle to performing wildfire mitigation work. He suggested that more chipping sites or slash drop off locations be placed throughout the county.
Response: There was some discussion in regards to slash disposal being a complication to mitigation activities. A program called Peak to Peak wood is working on this type of issue in the southern Front Range counties. This will be addressed in the CWPP as an obstacle with possible solutions provided.
- **Question:** What type of outreach efforts were used to get the word out to people about the meeting?
Answer: An intensive effort to publicize this meeting was made both by Douglas County and Larkspur Fire. These included home owner's association contacts, news releases, local newsletter ads, website advertisements, school district communication to parents, announcements at public meetings, and advertisement signs posted within the fire protection district. A suggestion was made to make personal invitations and word of mouth.
- **Comment:** For consistency reasons all areas identified for development, but not yet built (i.e. Remuda Ranch, Sandstone, and Meribell Village) should either be included or excluded in the communities identified in the community hazard ranking map.
Response: The community boundaries for the purposes of the Douglas County CWPP Community Ranking Map were drawn around concentrations of already built address points that share similar hazard potential at a landscape scale. Due to address point location and changes in hazard level, subdivision plats were not always taken into account. Because it is a landscape (broad) scale assessment the boundaries are

less meaningful than is the general location of each community and its associated hazard. The rankings are meant to provide information to communities about the difficulty of controlling a fire in their area, ignition potential, and proximity to values. This information can then be used by local CWPP planning teams in combination with finer scale inputs such as construction materials, ingress and egress, and defensible space to determine local hazard. Exact locations of community boundaries are more meaningful at the localized CWPP level for determining stakeholders and for planning project-level activities such as vegetation treatments. Local communities should determine these exact boundaries during localized CWPP planning efforts based on topographic features (i.e. ridge tops), changes in fuel types, or political boundaries such as homeowner's associations or subdivision plats.

- **Comment:** A suggestion was made that future build out be accounted for in the hazard assessment. One resident disagreed and stated that this is a plan for now, not 2030.

Response: During development of the hazard assessment the Douglas County CWPP Core Team considered including future build out, but decided that initially the plan should focus on present hazard. Also the Core Team agreed that timing of future build out is difficult to predict. When future build out happens, it will be taken into account during periodic updates of the plan.

- **Comment:** The Douglas County CWPP should be used by Douglas County as a policy document regarding community wildfire protection.

Response: Community Wildfire Protection Plans are only plans, not policy documents and not legally binding. It will have to be determined by the County Commissioners if they would like to make any policy changes based off of recommendations from the plan after its approval.

- **Comment:** Individuals can speak with the County Commissioners to provide input to the plan.

Response: Interested parties can go through the normal methods of contacting the Commissioners, but mechanisms are in place as part of the CWPP process to solicit public comments for the plan. These mechanisms include the CWPP website comments box, community meetings, phone calls, and emails. After comments are received through these means they are brought to the CWPP Core team who will then address them and post the information on the website.

- **Question:** Will this plan be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners?

Response: Adoption and public hearing are not requirements of the minimum standards for developing CWPPs. Public hearing and adoption will be determined by the BOCC.

- **Question:** Will a second series of public meetings be held after the draft plan is released?

Response: There will not be a second series of public meetings after the release of the draft plan. Before being made final, public comments will be solicited on the

draft document. All of the information and draft products will be posted on the web site and available for the public to view. Other dissemination methods will also be sought. Additionally, the Core Team is considering an open house to solicit input on the draft plan, but at present has not committed either way.

- **Comment:** There is an issue with the consistency of color across maps, specifically having the *High* category being the same color across all maps.
Response: The maps and color schemes will be revisited to try for better consistency.
- **Comment:** We should not be spending tax money on this process. We are creating a plan with tax payer dollars to basically encourage people to clean up their own properties, something they should be doing anyway. The grants communities receive for doing wildfire mitigation work are also tax payer dollars.
- **Comment:** A county wide community wildfire protection plan is an unneeded and redundant effort for Douglas County as they have an Annual Operating Plan.
Response: These are two distinctly different documents intended for separate purposes. A CWPP is a planning document for the county and local communities to reduce the wildfire hazards in and around their community. The Douglas County Annual Fire Operating Plan is a document that outlines roles/responsibilities of the County, State, and US Forest Service in regards to wildland fire suppression, prevention, etc.
- **Question:** Who paid for the Four Mile Canyon Fire in Boulder?
Answer: Boulder County paid for a portion, the state of Colorado paid for a portion through the Emergency Fire Fund (EFF).
- **Question:** There have been times where I have gone onto open space land to mow the grass next to my property. Is there a problem with this?
Answer: This is prohibited under state statute. Additionally, grazing on county open space is done through agricultural leases on a case by case basis.
- **Question:** How does Douglas County Open Space manage weeds on their properties?
Answer: Douglas County has a weed spraying program they implement on open space lands. Because of limited resource they have to pick priorities and not every acre is sprayed every year.
- **Comment:** There is some concern about the hazard maps being used by insurance companies to determine premiums and cancel policies.
Response: This concern has been expressed in the past when different wildfire hazard assessments have been completed. It is important to realize that most insurance companies have their own assessments to determine policies and that there are a variety of wildfire hazard assessments available to the public. To our

knowledge CWPPs have not been used by the insurance industry to assess homes and policies.

Additionally, the hazard assessment and community rankings look only at general landscape scale hazard potential and not the specific hazard to each individual home in identified communities. The Douglas County CWPP will clearly state that it is not appropriate to make inferences about the hazard level of individual homes from this assessment. More, fine scale variables such as defensible space, access, construction materials, and response aspects must also be factored in. *Although not explained at the public meeting an example of this could be a home with defensible space and fire resistant construction materials that is considered having a low to moderate hazard, but resides in a high to very high rated community.*