

West Douglas Fire Protection District Community Meeting



West Douglas County Fire Station #134
4037 W. Platt Avenue
Sedalia, CO

October 26, 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
Matt Schweich, US Forest Service Pike National Forest
Fred Young (alternate for John Guthrie), West Douglas County Fire District Board of Directors.

Community Attendance

31 attendees signed in at the meeting. Additional attendees were also observed. Attendees represented the communities of Perry Pines, Jackson Creek Road, Madge Gulch, Deckers, Oak Hills, and Jarre Canyon.

Meeting Proceedings

A presentation covering the following topics was given to the participants at the meeting: CWPP Background, Douglas County CWPP 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 and attendees reviewed maps. The meeting ended at approximately 9:30 p.m.

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

- **Question:** Is there is a certifying authority or process for the hazard assessment?

Answer: There is no certifying authority for the hazard assessment. The assessment was conducted and approved by the Douglas County CWPP Core Team that is made up of local technical experts including the Douglas County Wildfire Mitigation Staff, Douglas County's 11 fire protection districts, the US Forest Service, and the Colorado State Forest Service. The assessment used a scientifically based approach. The professionals involved in the creation of the assessment have technical expertise in the areas of fire behavior, fuel treatment, and fire suppression.

- **Question:** How will insurance companies use the wildfire hazard assessment? When the plan gets published there is a concern that the insurance companies are going to use this to drop policy holders and that will have an impact on community members.

Answer: We discussed that the insurance companies have their own assessments and have been conducting those for a number of years. There are also many assessments available on the web. To our knowledge CWPPs have not been used by the insurance industry to assess homes and policies. We will include language in the plan that the hazard assessment is a landscape scale assessment and should not be used to determine hazard of individual parcels. *After the meeting, a community member who works locally for an insurance company also explained that their particular company does not use these assessments, but instead have their own data that they analyze for individual parcels to determine coverage and premiums. Additionally, they will often perform site visits.*

- **Question:** What funding sources are available to reduce fire hazards?

Answer: The Colorado State Forest Service administers several sources of funding that originate from federal dollars. FEMA often has mitigation grant programs. The Coalition for the Upper South Platte was granted an ARRA (stimulus) award and is allocating those dollars to local projects. Some funding sources require a CWPP and others do not. It is important to communicate with the Colorado State Forest Service if you are interested in grant funding and if your community is interested in working together to reduce the hazards as a good portion of the grant funding is for community efforts instead of individual homeowners.

- **Question:** Perry Pines HOA would like to do a local community wildfire protection plan. What are the next steps to start a plan?

Answer: We recommend that Perry Pines defer their planning process until the completion of the Douglas County CWPP which is projected to be this June or July. Once the county plan is complete, much of the work will be done for creating a localized plan. The next steps then would be to develop a core team, identify treatment areas and other needs, gather community input, and create an implementation plan. There are some education activities that can take place until the Douglas County Plan is done to start gaining support from the community.

- **Comment:** The West Douglas Fire Protection District offered that they gladly will perform defensible space assessments for their residents that identify mitigation measures to be taken to make homes safer from wildfire.

- **Comment:** The county-wide CWPP should include a section to reduce human caused ignitions and raise awareness when it is dry. For instance suggestions such as signage regarding keeping cigarette butts in cars and better signage for fire bans.

Response: The comment is noted and will be discussed at the Core Team meeting to determine the best way to address the issue.
- **Comment:** The Douglas County Sherriff and/or US Forest Service should ban all campfires within a specified radius of extreme hazard communities.

Response: The Douglas County Sherriff's Office uses a process for initiating fire restrictions based off of quantitative fire hazard data (fuel moistures, weather, potential fire behavior, etc.). Fire restrictions are coordinated with the US Forest Service and neighboring counties to avoid confusion on what lands/areas have restrictions and which ones do not. The comment is noted and will be brought to the Core Team.
- **Comment:** There was concern for reducing risk along Rampart Range Road and Highway 67.

Response: Through the Douglas County CWPP process, the Core Team has been working with the US Forest Service to identify priority landscape scale treatment areas. Rampart Range Road will be identified in the plan as a priority fuel treatment area.
- **Comment:** Cherokee Ranch was not identified as Open Space Lands recommended for treatment.

Response: This is because the Cherokee Ranch property did not show as property deeded to Douglas County when queried.
- **Comment:** It is important to bring large landowners forward at the time of local level plans.

Response: We agree.
- **Comment:** There was a concern from a mitigation contractor present that there are mixed messages or differing prescriptions for mitigation.

Response: There was confirmation that differing properties or different treatment designs may have differing prescriptions, but the mitigation messages should be consistent. If the properties are using grant funding from the CSFS there are CSFS standards that must be met.