

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The fire problem in Marin County resides in the wildland-urban interface, where houses and businesses meet or intermingle with wildland vegetation. This is where wildfire poses the greatest risk to human life and property. Principal County stakeholders—those people with an interest in protecting their assets from wildfire—coordinate their public education and project management through FireSafe Marin (our local Fire Safe Council).

The California Fire Plan provides a framework that is applied in Marin for defining fire hazards and ranking assets at risk to identify areas where fire threats can be mitigated. A countywide assessment of the wildland fire threat undertaken by CAL FIRE revealed that nearly 80,000 acres are ranked as having moderate to very high fire hazard ratings. Similarly, an analysis of the wildland-urban interface (WUI) by Marin County Fire Department revealed that there are 73,311 structures on 57,572 developed parcels totaling 59,498 acres in Marin County, with an assessed value of \$56.5 billion.

Marin County will reduce these hazards using an integrated approach that includes the following elements: (1) ridge top fuelbreak network, (2) fire-prone forest clearing, (3) access improvements, (4) wildfire awareness campaign, and (5) International Urban-Wildland Interface Code (with extensive Marin County amendments) implementation. Nearly 70 miles of fuel breaks will be constructed and maintained along ridge top emergency access roads, highways, and other existing barriers. About 10 percent of this fuelbreak network is already in place. Bluegum eucalyptus and Monterey pine forest within and immediately adjoining created fuelbreaks will be cleared. Overgrown roadside vegetation will be trimmed and turnouts will be improved along primary access roads in interface communities. Our wildfire awareness campaign encourages individual and community responsibility for creating fire-safe conditions. Finally, the International Urban-Wildland Interface Code is being enforced; this code combines building standards, fire apparatus access, and fire-fighting water supply requirements with landscape planning to reduce losses caused by wildfire.

Even though the Marin County Fire Department has been successful in controlling a large portion of all wildland fires within its jurisdiction, one only needs to examine our fire history to understand the risk our communities face. This fire plan will allow the Marin County Fire Department to create a more efficient fire-protection system focused on meaningful solutions to better protect the communities in Marin. Being able to identify areas where cost-effective, pre-fire management investments can be made will help minimize citizen losses and reduce costs from a major wildfire.

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