

SECTION III: VALUES

CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) prepared the document entitled California's Forests and Rangelands: 2010 Assessment¹. This document satisfies 2008 Federal Farm Bill provision that each state conduct an assessment of forest resources, which is intended to identify key issues facing each state and requires the delineation of spatial areas called Priority Landscapes. Priority Landscapes are intended to focus investments and other programs to address issues identified in the assessment. Priority Landscape data sets related to fire include an evaluation of fire risk as related to carbon, community water, ecosystem health, forest economics, human infrastructure, range economics, recreation and open space, and wildlife.

The fire/human infrastructure Priority Landscape developed by FRAP represents the convergence of areas with high wildfire threat and human infrastructure assets. Included in this assessment are communities and assets. Community areas include incorporated city boundaries and Census Designated Places for unincorporated communities while assets include residential and commercial structures, major roads, and transmission lines. Wildfire threat is the result of an analysis of fire frequency (likelihood of a given area burning) and potential fire behavior (fire hazard).

For the purposes of this Plan, San Luis Obispo County has been divided into five Planning Areas to facilitate localized pre-fire planning efforts. The following provides a brief description of each Planning Area. Priority Landscapes and Planning Areas are also delineated in Figures 7A through 7E.

Planning Area 1

Planning Area 1 encompasses approximately 300,000 acres and is situated along the Pacific Ocean from the Monterey County Boundary in the north to approximately Point Buchon in the south. Its eastern boundary runs along the ridge of the Santa Lucia Range and extends eastward to the City limits of Atascadero and southward to encompass the City of San Luis Obispo. Planning Area 1 includes the Priority Communities of Baywod Park-Los Osos, Cambria, and San Luis Obispo. Large fire history in the Planning Area includes the 1960 Weferling Fire and the 1994 Highway 41 Fire.

Planning Area 2

Planning Area 2 encompasses approximately 459,000 acres and is situated along the southern boundary of the County, adjacent the Cuyama River. Planning Area 2 stretches the entire length of the County, from Kern County in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the west. Its northern boundary runs along the ridge of the Garcia and Caliente Ranges and extends northward to the City limits of San Luis Obispo. Planning Area 2 includes the Priority Communities of Arroyo Grande and Nipomo. Large fire history in the Planning Area includes the 1985 Las Pilitas Fire and the 1997 Logan Fire.

Planning Area 3

Planning Area 3 encompasses approximately 567,000 acres and is situated along the northern edge of the County from the Kern County Boundary in the east to the ridge of the Santa Lucia Range in the west. Its southern boundary extends roughly eastward from the City of Atascadero, but excludes the Santa Lucia Range. Planning Area 3 includes the Priority Communities of Adelaida, Atascadero, Lake Nacimiento, Paso Robles, San Miguel, and Templeton. Large fire history in the Planning Area includes the 1960 Weferling Fire in the far western portion of the Planning Area.

Planning Area 4

Planning Area 4 encompasses approximately 768,000 acres and is situated in the central portion of the County between Planning Area 3 to the north and Planning Area 2 to the south. Its eastern boundary abuts Kern County, and its western extends up to the City of Atascadero. Planning Area 4 includes the Priority Community of Santa Margarita. Large fire history in the Planning Area includes an un-named fire in 1939, the 1985 Las Pilitas Fire, and the eastern portion of the 1994 Highway 41 Fire.

¹ <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/assessment2010.html>

Planning Area 5

Planning Area 5 encompasses approximately 30,000 acres and is situated in the Irish Hills along the coast between approximately Point Buchon in the northwest to the eastern-most portion of the City of Pismo Beach in the southeast. Planning Area 5 includes the Priority Communities of Avila Beach and Pismo Beach. Fire history in the Planning Area is limited primarily to a few small fires adjacent Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant.

A. ASSETS

For the purposes of this Plan, assets are those values that may be at risk from wildfire. Assets in San Luis Obispo County include power generation and transmission facilities, emergency communication facilities, transportation infrastructure, tourist and recreation areas, environmental areas, military installations, natural resource production facilities, and commercial fishing facilities. Figures 7A through 7E present the assets identified in San Luis Obispo County and Table 8 presents the assets in San Luis Obispo County, by management zone.

Table 8. Assets in San Luis Obispo County, by Planning Area

Asset	Planning Area
Trains/Rail System	All
Transportation Corridors (Highways 166, 101, 46, 41, and 58)	All
Diablo Canyon Power Lines	1, 2, 6
Communication System/Repeaters	?
ConocoPhillips Oil Refinery	?
Hearst Castle	1
Communication Sites	1
Los Padres FS Botanical Gardens	1
Bishop Peak Recreational Site	1
San Luis Mountain Recreational Site	1
Montana De Oro State Park Campground	1
Whale Rock Reservoir	1
San Simeon State Park	1
San Luis V.O.R.	1
Chorro Regional Park	1
Hearst Castle	1
Camp San Luis Obispo (California National Guard)	1
San Luis Obispo County Airport	2
Lopez Lake Recreational Area	2
PG&E High Power Line NW of Atascadero	3
Oak Shores Campground	3
Santa Margarita Lake Recreational Area	4
Upper Highway 229	4
Port San Luis Obispo/Lighthouse	5
Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant	5
Hartford Ocean Pier Complex	5

B. COMMUNITIES

Communities at Risk from potential wildfire were identified at the federal level in the 2001 National Fire Plan (66 Fed. Reg. 753, January 4, 2001), which included only communities that were in the vicinity of federal lands. Recognizing that wildfire risk was not limited to areas near federal lands, CAL FIRE developed a more inclusive list of communities at risk for the State of California, which is managed by the California Fire Alliance. The communities identified in this Plan for San Luis Obispo County were derived from the Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) database and evaluated to ensure that all Communities at Risk were accounted for. The GNIS database of communities in the County was then consolidated to represent major communities in the County and excludes historical places. For example,

the community of Cambria includes the GNIS-identified communities of Cambria, Cambria Pines, East Village, Happy Hill, Harmony, Leimert, Lodge Hill, Marine Terrace, Park Hill, Tin City, and West Village.

The communities for San Luis Obispo County are identified in Table 9. In addition, Table 9 identifies which Planning Area the community is within, if it is a Community at Risk (CAR), and if it is an incorporated city. Figures 7A through 7E present the location of communities in San Luis Obispo County.

Table 9. Communities in San Luis Obispo County

Community*	Planning Area	Community at Risk**	Incorporated City
Adelaida	3	X	No
Arroyo Grande	2	X	Yes
Atascadero	3	X	Yes
Avila Beach	5	X	No
Baywood Park-Los Osos	1	X	No
Callender	2		No
Cambria	1	X	No
Cayucos	1	X	No
Creston	4	X	No
Edna	2		No
Garden Farms	4		No
Grover Beach	2		Yes
Lake Nacimiento	3	X	No
Los Berros	2		No
Morro Bay	1	X	Yes
Nipomo	2	X	No
Oceano	2	X	No
Paso Robles	3	X	Yes
Pismo Beach	5	X	Yes
San Luis Obispo	1	X	Yes
San Miguel	3	X	No
San Simeon	1		No
Santa Margarita	4	X	No
Shandon	3		No
Templeton	3	X	No
Whitley Gardens	3		No

*Source: CalMapper 2012

**Communities listed as Communities at Risk on the California Fire Alliance website:

http://www.cafirealliance.org/communities_at_risk/communities_at_risk_list

Priority Communities

To evaluate Priority Communities in the State, FRAP analyzed the fire/human infrastructure Priority Landscape data set in combination with communities that include at least 500 people or 1,000 acres. Communities in medium- or high-ranked Priority Landscapes (for fire/human infrastructure) constitute Priority Communities. The intent of the Priority Community identification is to provide a way of identifying possible communities for outreach and further strategy development. The Priority Communities data set was utilized as a starting point for identifying and prioritizing communities in San Luis Obispo County where efforts can be focused to reduce wildfire threat. This data set was refined based on input from community stakeholders and based on an assessment of fire history, ignition history, land ownership, vegetation/fuel, or terrain.

Priority Communities for San Luis Obispo County are identified in Table 10. Priority Communities are those in which pre-fire management activities, including hazardous fuel reduction and public education, should be focused. This list of communities is based on available fire hazard planning data from FRAP, augmented with a County-scale analysis of fire hazard variables and input from community stakeholders and should be routinely evaluated and updated, as necessary.

Table 10. Priority Communities in San Luis Obispo County

Community*	Planning Area
Adelaida	3
Arroyo Grande	2
Atascadero	3
Avila Beach	5
Baywood Park-Los Osos	1
Cambria	1
Lake Nacimiento	3
Nipomo	2
Paso Robles	3
Pismo Beach	5
San Luis Obispo	1
San Miguel	3
Santa Margarita	4
Templeton	3

*Source: CalMapper 2012/FRAP 2012