

(This portion has been completed)

Event 5

Present the document to the Board of Supervisors for adoption.

(This portion has been completed)

Event 6

Implementation of the Nevada County Fire Plan.

Success Measurements

The success of this proposal will be determined when the County decides whether to adopt the framework into the planning process. It has the potential to affect each and every citizen of Nevada County either directly through wildland fire mitigations or indirectly through high governmental costs and citizen losses due to another costly and damaging fire such as the Forty-Niner fire. A number of similar programs have been developed elsewhere; however, none of them have addressed all of these issues or developed a “road map” to help the community plan for the future. This document could become a blueprint for other counties to follow.

Potential Stakeholders to participate in developing the final document

- Nevada County
- FireSafe Council of Nevada County (FSCNC)
- Nevada County Board of Realtors
- California Association of Property Owners
- Sierra Club
- Residents of Nevada County
- Nevada County Resource Conservation District (NCRCD)
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

Estimated Cost of Proposed Project Total = \$20,500

16 STAFFING OF THE NEVADA COUNTY FIRE MARSHAL'S OFFICE

Nevada County is in the process of attacking the wildland fire problem in a new and innovative manner. Whereas the Defensible Space ordinances have been on the book for

several years, their enforcement and effectiveness is somewhat haphazard due to the lack of resources implement the program. To address this Nevada County Board of Supervisors has assigned a committee to make recommendations to the Board in order to reduce the potential of costly and damaging fires in Nevada County. This committee has identified the fuels problem as the main issue and is looking at addressing the fuels problem at a “Defensible Communities” level instead of the standard “Defensible Space”.

Nevada County Fire Marshal’s Office Pre-Fire Project

Establish positions within the Nevada County Fire Marshal’s Office to implement the recommendations identified in the Fire Plan Framework. This proposal will result in a self sustaining program that will allow the County to establish and enforce a hazardous fuels reduction ordinance on improved and the unimproved properties adjacent to or surrounding improved properties within Nevada County. There is currently a chipping program available to residents to encourage defensible space. The chipping program currently serves 1200 - 1500 residences annually (*1262 residences in 2004*). This project will allow us to expand the fuels reduction program to include additional residences and unimproved properties in the area of improved properties, thus extending the defensible space concept beyond structures and into the landscape. We estimate that this program will result in approximately 2000 properties being treated annually, which will provide protection to more than 500 additional homes. The program will provide inspectors to identify properties with a fuels hazard. The inspectors will then provide the landowner with educational information to encourage fuels reduction work by the owner. In the event the landowner chooses not to comply with the fuels reduction requirements, the property will be treated by a local contractor and the cost will be added to the owner’s property taxes. Through this system, we anticipate creating a landscape that will result in less severe fire behavior around the residential properties. There are plans to implement a fee structure at the plan approval stage to generate future funds to continue this program once the grant expires. CDF and the Nevada County Fire Marshal’s Office want to develop a program that can become a model for other communities. Instead of relying on the individual defensible space around structures we are looking at creating a defensible landscape through an integrated Fire Safe program. This program will build off of the work already being completed by entities such as the Nevada County Department of Transportation, Nevada County Fire Safe Council, and Pacific Gas & Electric.

Details can be found in the attached draft of the Nevada County Fire Mitigation Framework in [Appendix 7](#).

Potential Stakeholders to participate in Cost Sharing to Fund the Project:

- Nevada County
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- California Office of Emergency Services (OES)
- Local Service Groups

- Nevada County Resource Conservation District
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Northern Sierra Air Quality District
- Nevada County Fire Chiefs

Estimated Cost of Proposed Project

Total = \$3,000,000

17 ALTA SIERRA PRE-FIRE PROJECT

The Alta Sierra area was targeted for a pre-fire project due to its high rate of ignitions and its close location to areas to the north that have high rankings for assets, fuel hazard, and the lower rated level of service. In addition, this area has a past history of enthusiastic support of fire hazard reduction programs by the homeowners, Northern Sierra Air Quality District, and Nevada County Consolidated Fire Protection District (NCCFD). The NCCFD is currently the lead on continuing this project. They have instituted an ordinance that requires the owners of vacant lots to remove the hazardous fuels prior to fire season. If the landowner does not comply the NCCFD contracts to have the work completed and bills the landowner via their property taxes. The personnel from this department have conducted 285 inspections, which, resulted in fuel treatments on over 250 properties totaling more than 350 acres within their fire district.

Alta Sierra Pre-fire Project

Event 1: An inspection program targeting the vacant properties within the local fire district has been ongoing since 1997. They have developed a schedule that inspects each vacant property at least once every five years. This program holds the individual landowner responsible for reducing the hazardous fuels on their own lands.

Event 2: An inspection program of the Alta Sierra area to enforce the Public Resources Code 4291 Fire Safe standards (LE 38 Inspection). Nevada County Planning Department estimates that there are approximately 2,900 housing units in this area. Inspection of these housing units will serve two purposes:

1. Ensure compliance with PRC 4291. This will promote a fuel condition adjacent to structures where fire suppression resources will have a better chance of protecting homes should a wildfire occur.
2. Educate the homeowners of the state law requirements regarding defensible space standards and what they should do to help the chances of their house surviving a wildfire in the area.

The Nevada Yuba Placer Unit has found, in its Nevada County LE 38 Inspection program