

A: ASSETS AT RISK

Knowledge of the types and magnitudes of assets at risk to wildfire, as well as their locations, are critical to fire protection planning. Given the limits on fire protection resources, they should be allocated, in part, based on the magnitude of the assets being protected. Knowledge of assets at risk is necessary to choose those pre-fire management projects that will provide the greatest benefit for a given amount of investment. Santa Barbara County Fire Department's primary concern is reducing the fire risk and potential loss of the various assets described here in an effort to provide for the safety and protection of life, property, and the environment while reducing suppression costs.

The primary purpose of wildfire protection in Santa Barbara County is to protect this wide range of assets. Santa Barbara County's priority Values/Assets at Risk include:

- public and firefighter safety
- structures
- vital infrastructure (power lines, gas lines, highways, roads, etc.)
- range
- recreation
- water and watershed
- air quality
- soil erosion
- cultural and historic resources
- unique scenic areas
- wildlife and habitat (including rare and endangered species)

Public and firefighter safety is paramount. As development continues and expands into the wildland urban interface, it becomes more and more difficult to provide protection against the threat of wildfire.

The *California's Forests and Rangelands: 2010 Assessment*⁶ produced a variety of GIS data layers identifying assets, threats, and priority landscapes (combinations of assets and threats into priorities). The data from the 2010 Assessment will help the County assess these values at risk and aid in the design of mitigation activities to address these risks.

⁶ <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/assessment2010.html>

B: COMMUNITIES AT RISK

To help protect people and their property from potential catastrophic wildfire, the National Fire Plan directs funding to be provided for projects designed to reduce the fire risks to communities. A fundamental step in achieving this goal was the identification of communities that are at high risk of damage from wildfire. These high risk communities identified within the wildland-urban interface, were published in the Federal Register in 2001. At the request of Congress, the Federal Register notice only listed those communities neighboring federal lands. The list represents the collaborative work of the 50 states and five federal agencies using a standardized process, whereby states were asked to submit all communities within their borders that met the criteria of a structure at high risk from wildfire. The following list contains the federally regulated (communities which adjoin federal lands) communities at risk within Santa Barbara County:

Orcutt	Santa Barbara
Tajiguas	Vandenberg Air Force Base
Vandenberg Village	Mission Hills
Carpinteria	Cuyama
Casmalia	Gaviota
Goleta	Lompoc

With California's extensive urban Wildland-Urban Interface situation, the list of communities extends beyond just those adjacent to Federal lands. After the 2000 fire season the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), working with the California Fire Alliance, developed a list of communities at risk from wildfire using 1990 Census and USGS Geographic Names Information System data to identify populated places, and CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) fuel hazard data. In addition to the already-mentioned communities, they designated the following as WUI Communities at Risk:

Buellton	Santa Maria
Santa Ynez	Sisquoc
Solvang	Summerland
Montecito	Los Olivos
Garey	Guadalupe
Isla Vista	Los Alamos
Venucopa	

Combining both lists, there are currently 25 communities on the Communities at Risk List in Santa Barbara County. The California State Forester (CAL FIRE Director) has assigned the role of managing the list to the California Fire Alliance (Alliance). The list can be found on the California Fire Alliance website: http://www.cafirealliance.org/communities_at_risk/communities_at_risk_list.

In addition to the 25 State and Federal recognized communities, there are other communities within the county that are also at risk of wildfire and need to be identified. Communities that were not captured in any state or federally recognized list, but have been identified by County Fire and other jurisdictions to be at risk include:

Cebada Canyon

Jonata Ranch/Bobcat Springs

Mission Canyon

Refugio Canyon

Toro Canyon

Hope Ranch

Rosario Park

Paradise

El Capitan

Miguelito Canyon

Painted Cave

Tepusquet Canyon

Woodstock

Trout Club

Jalama

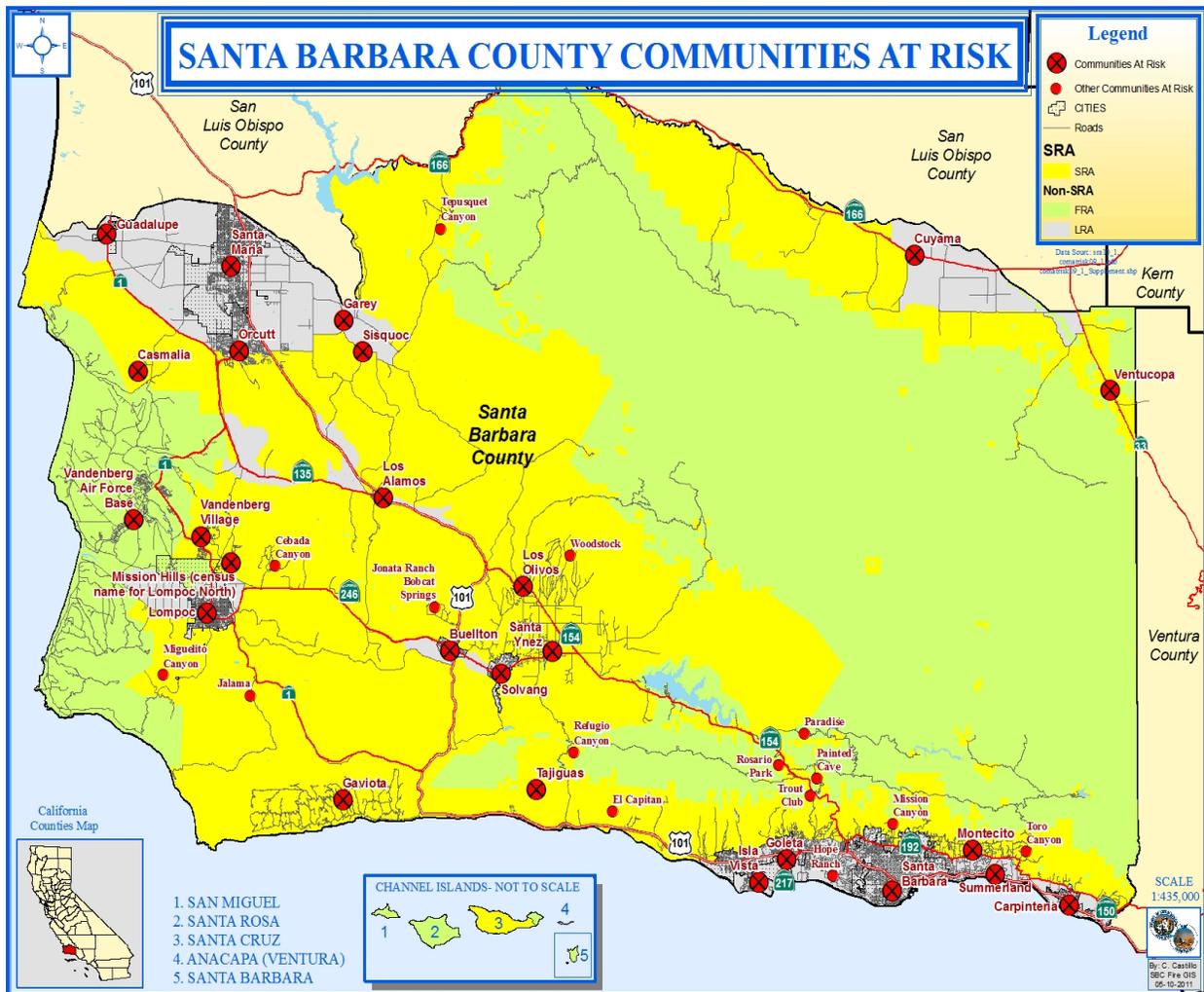


Figure 6