

McKinley County Community Wildfire Protection Plan: 2018 Update



Core Team Meeting November 20, 2017

Attendees: Robert Brown, Todd Haines, Robert Kuipers, Doug Decker, Dudley Byerley, Adam Berry, Susan Mahooty, Jason Carlisle, Rich Austin, Darryl Wilson, Wendell Damon, Charles Ortega, Jon Williams, Jeff Irving, Richard Matzke, Herman Copi, Ronald Shultz, Matt Piccarello, and Eytan Krasilovsky.

Notes: The group introduced themselves and Matt reviewed the agenda. Matt and Todd also introduced the group to the concept and importance of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Matt proposed an update timeline, reviewed the 2013 plan, reviewed the 2015 CWPP Update guidelines required by State Forestry, and reviewed the draft plan template. This initiated an important dialogue with the attendees. That dialogue is summarized in the Follow-up Actions section.

Follow-up Actions:

1. Engage Mt. Taylor Ranger District, Rio Puerco BLM, and Zuni Pueblo in this planning effort.
2. This plan update will need to be "**cross-walked**" with the McKinley Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan, Zuni Pueblo Fire/Fuels/CWPP, Navajo Nation Fire/Fuels/CWPP, McKinley SWCD's Land Use Plan, City of Gallup Drought Management Plan, and McKinley County's smart growth committee.
3. There also might be smaller scale plans that need to be reviewed to determine if they need to be "cross-walked" with the CWPP update. There are also the two Tri-Chapter plans, and smaller Chapter scale zoning plans (CLUPs, Jeff).
4. Accomplishments since the 2013 plan need to be highlighted such as:
 - a. USFS, NPS, and BLM relevant NEPA that reduces fuels or increases safety.
 - b. Private land accomplishments such as the Cottonwood Gulch-Pratt Prescribed Fires.
 - c. Guild-NMAC treatments at Timberlake Ranches
 - d. 2017 agreement with USFS for County to accept for agreement. Talk to Jeff. FR157 is not in agreement, which is largely in Cibola County.
 - e. County has new approach to stage water tenders at McGaffey throughout fire season to increase capacity at that high risk area.
 - f. Rehoboth has more ingress and egress options. This is needed in map form as well.
 - g. 2017 agreement with USFS for County to accept for agreement. Talk to Jeff. FR157 is not in agreement, which is largely in Cibola County. This is very important for fire response and safety.
 - h. 2013 plan precipitated developing a secondary road for egress for Breadsprings.
5. Changes since 2013 need to be documented and/or mapped such as:
 - a. El Seguno Mine started up (San Mateo District), Golf Mine staffed but no mining
 - b. New Verizon tower in San Mateo District at fire station

- c. New subdivision application next to Whispering Cedars, may be approved 2018. For 58 3-5 acre parcels. No municipal water, individual wells (Mesa Ridge Ranch), offered to put in a firefighting tank. May increase to 116 lots total.
 - d. Tampico Springs has new name, will be smaller due to land swap with USFS, now has Mountain Monks subdivision.
 - e. Update map to have correct USFS sections. Need to talk to Doug Decker about this.
 - f. USFS roads in San Mateo district are in very poor condition.
 - g. County Fire water sources need to be updated with Jason's input.
 - h. Matt suggests adjacent lands category (Cibola/San Juan Category) be mapped.
 - i. Matt suggests roads, transportation, critical infrastructure (powerline, wells, gas lines) be mapped.
 - j. County Fire offers to compile a map of special needs areas/citizens.
6. The Core Team requested to be able to review maps more thoroughly including:
 - a. The 2013 WUI and Fire Risk Maps (show T,S,R) and post URL.
 - b. Display maintained roads. Differentiate roads State, County, BIA roads on maps. Just ones that public agency has accepted.
 - c. A Communities at Risk (CAR) map is needed. There needs to be improved clarity around a defined community name and a designated WUI area.
 - d. Is there an existing community map recognized by the County to use as a starting point?
 - e. Jeff says there is a chapter boundary map. Does anyone know how to access this?
 - f. Trails and Trailheads (and access corridors) can be added to WUI layer.
 7. Jeff advocates for all weather accessibility to WUI risk areas to increase competitiveness when applying for road funding, broadly worded.
 8. Doug recommends that the Core Team connect with the also in process County Master Plan for efficiency and consistency. CWPP priorities and actions can also be presented to the USFS to highlight economic opportunities (MTB, Backcountry Horsemen) of development and making that development safe.
 9. Powerlines are an ignition issue. What are the ROW widths? Are they mapped? Send 2013 WUI map to Wendell Daman and Susan Mahooty for review. Does it capture utilities?
 10. McKinley County has a long term desire to have loop roads and avoid one-way in/out roads.
 11. The County is working with the BIA to fund a wildland crew in 2018.
 12. Monthly meetings with Fire Districts, can highlight WUI/CWPP issues monthly or quarterly and collect data and ideas.
 13. Public engagement:
 - a. Promote public meeting in Independent, the Gallup Journey free weekly, Radio (KGAK, AM1330, KYBA), and offer food. People want to connect, but don't have tools/knowledge of what to do.
 - b. Safety Preparedness Day (August/September) and National Night Out are other opportunities.
 - c. A feedback mechanism on website would be an asset.
 - d. Continental Divide Electric and NTUA bill flyers are another mechanism.
 - e. A 1-page flyer to Chapter Houses to promote meetings and awareness is another key public engagement mechanism.