

Leaders Guide for developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan

This Leaders Guide was created for Leaders by Leaders and is designed to work directly with “Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan – Handbook” available at: www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm

Leaders Guide General Instructions

This Leaders Guide is designed to supplement the document entitled: “Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan – Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities” available at www.safnet.org/policyandpress/cwpp.cfm or contact the Western Governors’ Association at (303)-623-9378 for a free copy. Please reference the Leaders Guide Supplement for details about each of the step instructions listed on this Fire Chiefs / Leaders Guide. www.iafc.org

Minimum CWPP requirements

As required by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act:

- 1 Collaboration*: local and state government agencies in consultation with federal agencies and other interested parties
- 2 Prioritized Fuel Reduction: identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction; recommend types of treatment; must protect one or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure
- 3 Treatment of Structural Ignitability: A CWPP must recommend measures for homeowners and communities to reduce ignitability of structures

*Collaboration:

More than asking for feedback - must plan, do and act together; three entities must mutually agree: local government, local fire department(s), and state entity responsible for forest management. In addition, must consult with local representatives from USFS/USDA and BLM/DOI and other interested parties or persons in the development of the plan.

Timeline for first CWPP

The first draft of the CWPP can be accomplished with 6 well planned meetings and will take approximately 1- 18 months to complete the CWPP process. Consider a strategy of developing a simple version of the CWPP that you can “Plan – Do – and Act” on with smaller successes. This will lead to larger outcomes as the plan is expanded in the future.

Leaders Guide Symbols:

- P** Plan symbol - vision, knowledge, network, scope and planned activities.
- D** Do symbol - activities accomplished to gain a planned outcome
- A** Act symbol numerically indexed; A planned activity that is ready for action/implementation

Phase 1: Forming and Norming

Step #1 Convene Decision-makers: Form a core team of representatives from local government, local fire, and state agency responsible for forest management

D Staff meeting review of CWPP process; brainstorm methods and who to invite to the planning process

P Fire Chief/Leader to decide the need for a CWPP; consult with neighboring fire chiefs

P Develop conceptual mission and policy direction for CWPP

D List lead planning team: local, state and federal agencies; local community leaders

P Define jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional players and match them to the wildland fire problems

P Identify core group of policy leaders, statutory authorities; those with sign off powers; granting agencies

P Review local, state and federal wildfire plans and the City/County General Plan Safety Element

D Face to face meetings with city and county executive and political leaders – check the level of support for the CWPP

P Begin defining the geographical planning area for the CWPP

Step #2 Involve Federal Agencies: Identify and engage local representative of the USFS and DOI; contact other land management agencies as appropriate. Public Releases

D Define property ownership in the CWPP planning area.

P Work with state and federal agencies for grant opportunities

P Contact local agencies that have completed a CWPP

A Assign the official CWPP planning team for the first meeting. Involve the public early and continuously

D Face to face meeting with state, federal and regional leaders that have a property interest in completing a CWPP – discuss the need to form a planning team and to access available grant funds

Step #3 Engage Interested Parties: Contact and encourage active involvement in plan development from a broad range of interested organizations and stakeholders.

D Personal invitation to property owners and a broad range of stakeholder groups to join the planning process

P Find meeting locations and convenient meeting times

D Develop the agenda for the first meeting

A Convene the first CWPP meeting: introduce planning process; describe benefits of doing a CWPP; expand planning team membership; and encourage support and involvement

P Leadership to assure CWPP process is on the right track and empower other leaders to keep process on track

P Leadership to encourage members of the planning group to stay engaged; encourage the non-participants to engage and speak out; make sure the non-fire representatives are invited

P Understand and be ready to address the “deal stopper” issues; be ready to keep planning team focused on the mission and vision of the planning process

D Refine the mission and direction of the planning process to accurately reflect the community concern.

Phase 2: Risk Assessment and Priority Setting

Step #4 Establish a Community Base Map: Work with partners to establish a baseline map of the community that defines the community WUI, inhabited areas at risk, forested areas containing critical human infrastructure, and forest areas at risk for large-scale fire disturbance.

P Start with any base map; define the CWPP planning area – use natural and recognizable boundary breaks

A Convene the second CWPP meeting and focus on defining the fuel hazards, assets at risk and confirm the planning area; make sure that the planning team understands the mission and vision of the CWPP process

Step #5 Develop a Community Risk Assessment: Work with planning partners to develop a community risk assessment that considers fuel hazards; risk of wildfire occurrence; homes, businesses, and essential infrastructure at risk; other community values at risk and local preparedness capability.

P Gather information about hazards, fuel models, risks, threats; use local, state and federal agency information and identify on the base map

A Convene the third CWPP meeting; present and build upon the risk and assessment information; fire chief to “tell it like it is”

Step #6 Establish Community Priorities and Recommendations: Use the base map and community risk assessment to facilitate a collaborative community meeting to identify priority fuel reduction, structural protection, and improved fire response project; clearly indicate relationship to reducing community wildfire risks.

P Develop a process that leads to collaboration and consensus building around the highest priority projects that prevent, mitigate and prepare for risks and hazards; consider wildland fire threat to structures as well as structure to structure fire spread.

A Convene the fourth CWPP meeting; review risk mgmt. and reduction plans; prioritize planning project

D Facilitate the meeting; capture feedback, organize and prioritize; fire chief should be present to encourage and monitor feedback making sure the planning process is staying on track.

Phase 3: Plan, Do and Evaluate

Step #7 Develop an Action Plan and Assessment Strategy: Consider developing a detailed implementation strategy to accompany the CWPP, as well as a monitoring plan that will ensure its long-term success.

A Attain buy in and commitment for the “doing”; track and measure progress; engage private property owners

A Convene the fifth CWPP meeting; fire chief to encourage outcomes and community involvement; fill the gaps and keep the process moving forward

D Set up a method for changing, updating, and revision of the plan; change to meet future demands

Step #8 Finalize Community Wildfire Protection Plan: Communicate CWPP results to the community and key partners.

D Public release and a media blitz about who, what, where, why, and how the fire safe projects are being processed; use planning team members to deliver the message.

D Planning team to develop the background, funding and staffing plans for the projects.

A Leadership team to meet with key stakeholders, property owners, and policy leaders and deliver the plan message; attain signature support from funding agencies.

A Convene the sixth CWPP meeting; celebrate the development of the plan; schedule future meeting to follow implementation, update, funding and tracking of plan; set a specific date for the next meeting.

Step #9 Track Progress and Update CWPP: A plan stays alive when it's evaluated and updated to meet the reality of the implementation days.

P Describe accomplishments to date and review the 8 Step CWPP planning process to pick up loose ends and new areas of concern.

A Convene the seventh CWPP meeting to celebrate success, upgrade existing plans and to plan for the future

P Plan future meetings to track and update the planned activities

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