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NEWS

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New web-mapping tool allows professional planners, landowners to assess wildfire risk

FORT COLLINS, Colo. – The Colorado State Forest Service has just made available an online mapping tool that will help community leaders, professional planners and interested citizens determine wildfire risk and where forest management actions can achieve the greatest impact to reduce that risk.

The Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal, or CO-WRAP, is a web-mapping tool that provides access to statewide wildfire risk assessment information. Through CO-WRAP, fire mitigation professionals, prevention planners, natural resource professionals and interested citizens can generate maps and download data and reports that describe defined project areas, such as neighborhoods or watersheds. The information in the portal is based on geographic information system (GIS) data layers that allow users to view such themes as likelihood of an acre burning, potential fire intensity, historic fire occurrence and values at risk from wildfire.

“Wildland fires continue to threaten people, property, drinking water and forest assets across Colorado, and population growth into wildland-urban interface areas presents major challenges to Colorado residents,” said Joe Duda, interim state forester. “Heightened awareness of wildfire risk and the forest management measures necessary to mitigate that risk are becoming increasingly important to ensure public safety.”

CO-WRAP features two levels of access – one for community leaders, planning professionals and forestry professionals, and one for interested citizens. The professional viewer provides access to data and tools for use in creating fire protection or forest stewardship plans, or identifying priority fuels treatment areas. It also allows users to generate detailed risk summary reports for customized land areas – such as neighborhoods, Fire Protection Districts or counties. The public viewer provides a simple-to-use tool that allows users to explore wildfire risk and generate maps for specific locations.

"Whether to increase public awareness about wildfire risk, or to put much-needed information at the fingertips of fire managers, CO-WRAP will be a tremendous asset for Colorado," said Paul Cooke, director of the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control.

The Colorado State Forest Service continues to be the lead state agency for providing forest stewardship and wildfire mitigation education to private landowners, following legislation in 2012 that transferred

responsibility for wildfire command and control from the CSFS to the newly formed Division of Fire Prevention and Control.

To access CO-WRAP, go to www.ColoradoWildfireRisk.com. For more information about protecting homes and communities from wildfire, go to <http://csfs.colostate.edu/>.

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