Wildland Urban Interface Description
Game Trail is a HOA rural mountain community accessed by heading north on Highway 24 from Buena Vista and turning west on County Road 384. Adventure Unlimited borders Game Trail to our north, County Road 365 to the south. San Isabel National Forest is our western border and County Road 361 our eastern. The community consists of 1880 acres of 440 individually owned lots of which half have been built upon. We have approximately 1,077 acres of non-forested land and 400 of these acres have been set aside as the Elk Conservation Easement that is part of the Land Trust of the Upper Arkansas in partnership with the Palmer Foundation. The remaining 803 acres are forested with Pinon, Ponderosa, Lodgepole, Aspen, Mountain Mahogany Bushes, Common Juniper and various other vegetation.

Game Trail Wildfire Preparedness
Our residents and lot owners are encouraged to provide each structure on their property with a defensible space. We consider a defensible space as being at least 30ft from the eaves of each structure. A Healthy Forest & Fire Safety Guideline and a Forestry Directory (see Appendices a & b) is given to each new lot owner to help them maintain their property in a responsible fire-wise manner. GT’s Forestry Committee compiled this guideline and directory, with input gathered from CSFS pamphlets. Our residents and lot owners are responsible for the clean up of slash on their land, laddering and thinning their trees, and mistletoe maintenance. The slash may be hauled to our slash pit located in the Game Trail meadow. When grant money is available the slash is chipped.

Though fire resistant roofs and chimney screens/spark arresters are not required on GT homes, most or all of our residents do have these. Shake roofs and outside burning of wood is not allowed in Game Trail. The Forestry Committee suggests that our residents be equipped with shovels, rakes, and chainsaws to help suppress a small fire and weed eaters to keep their grasses cut short around each structure. Game Trail allows only two structures per lot. Fire resistant construction is the burden of the homeowner and their contractor.

Signage of Game Trail’s roads is excellent and the roads themselves are wide with easy access for all emergency equipment. Upon purchasing a lot in Game Trail everyone is given a map with the roads clearly marked and a safe haven has been set to the north end of the community in the case of a wildfire. The safe haven will serve as an information gathering point. There will be one member of the Forestry Committee designated as a ‘liaison officer’ to funnel information between the emergency crews and the residents. Each road in Game Trail has a ‘block captain’ and that person will notify his or her neighbors on that block to evacuate. A reverse 911 will be implemented to notify all residents also. A member of the Board or a Forestry Committee member will notify our neighboring communities of any out-of-control fire at Game Trail.
Game Trail has a central water system with storage capacity of 140,000 gallons for fire fighting purposes and fire hydrants. Fire foam is stored at a water pump house that would safeguard approximately 50 homes. Chaffee County Fire Protection District is aware of the location and has a key, as do five of our year round residents.

The Game Trail Forestry Committee has 25 active members. We maintain a Game Trail website with updates on the latest forestry practices, articles from CSU, and where residents can get their questions answered. It is interactive, informative and well utilized. In case of a wildfire the website would be used as a warning system and provide information. The Forestry Committee spends a good deal of their time in the wooded areas of our community. We encourage our residents to provide a defensible space and perform mistletoe maintenance, thinning, laddering and slash removal. The Forestry Committee is not an enforcement group, however they do provide assistance and support to our residents in reducing their fire risk.

Community Risk Analysis
Game Trail has two forested open space areas that are in the process of being thinned and the slash removed. Trailhead Park, which is bordered by San Isabel National Forest to the West, and Adventure Unlimited to the north, is extremely steep and consists of 20 acres of Ponderosa, Douglas Fir and Aspen trees and will take several years to thin and remove the slash. The open space located at West Ridge and Main Range is easier to access and the trees not as dense; this clean up of mistletoe, laddering, thinning and slash removal should be completed in three years.

There is a popular recreation area west and south of Game Trail that offers horse and hiking trails, fishing and overnight camping with fire pits. During drought years when campfires are banned by the USFS on federal land, Game Trail volunteers patrol the camping areas looking for violators and when found would contact authorities.

Fuel Treatment Priorities Completed
(a) Many of our residents have completed a defensible space around their structures and have a fire mitigation plan for their property.

(b) Fuels reduction has begun on our open space located at West Ridge and Main Range Drive.

(c) We have requested Colorado State Forest Service to encourage property owners in close proximity to the Game Trail community to start a fuels reduction program.

(d) Game Trail residents contracted with the USFS and CSFS through the good neighbor sale to thin a 20-acre plot west of GT and south of the Westside Project. This project was completed in 2008. The final cleanup, including pile burning will be handled by the USFS.
(e) The Westside Project was enthusiastically supported by GT and our community would welcome a second pass of thinning and slash removal.

(f) Through the cooperation of the Chaffee County Road and Bridge Department, ACA, and funding from Game Trail, County Road 365 was vastly improved and now is a viable evacuation route for our residents living close to our southern border. Emergency equipment will have easier access to the San Isabel Forest to the west and south, which includes a well-used recreation area, and to the southern border of Game Trail for firefighting purposes.

(g) Chipping of Game Trail slash was offered to our residents in the years 2005, 2006, and 2008. Due to our depleting Forestry Grant monies, chipping will not be offered again unless more grant money is awarded to Game Trail.

**Future fuel reduction priorities**

**Action Item:** Game Trail's Forestry Committee will develop a plan that will address their response to a fire emergency.

**Justification:** A plan of attack, as well as established evacuation routes in place would assure a quicker response.

**Action Item:** Game Trail has two open space areas that will be thinned, ladder fuels treated, and slash removed.

**Justification:** By reducing the density of trees and removing ladder and ground fuels the residents will decrease the chance of surface and crown fires on private property.

**Action Item:** The lot owners/residents of Game Trail are encouraged to create a 30ft defensible space around each structure and remove slash on their property. When grant money is awarded a chipping program is in place to dispose of this slash.

**Justification:** The chipped slash will offer nutrients to the soil when spread on the forest floor or provide for easier disposal in the Borrow-Pit located in the Game Trail meadow.

**Action Item:** The Game Trail community along with its surrounding neighbors is supporting the building of a future fire station northwest of Buena Vista.

**Justification:** Having a Fire Station in close proximity will lessen the chances of an uncontrollable wildfire taking hold.

**Action Item:** A need for fuel reduction south of the 20-acre Federal timber sale would be beneficial.

**Justification:** To provide a fuel break buffer for the subdivision. Any action taken to provide a fuel break would be done under the auspices of the USFS and coordinated
under specific guidelines in the NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) decision and land management guidelines.

**Action Item:** Game Trail requests that CSFS encourage property owners surrounding or in close proximity to our borders to start a fuel reduction program.

**Justification:** Fuels reduction on adjacent properties would enhance the fire safety zone for the Game Trail community.

**Action Item:** The Westside Project was enthusiastically supported by the Game Trail community. A second pass of thinning and slash removal is needed.

**Justification:** Would complete the 400ft firebreak behind Game Trail, decreasing the threat of a wildfire.

**Chaffee County Fire Station #6**
The Game Trail community, along with its neighbors, are supporting the building of a Fire Station northwest of Buena Vista. Game Trail has deeded one acre of land to the Chaffee County Fire Protection District for Fire Station #6. A Fundraising Committee has been established and is comprised of representatives from both Game Trail and many of the surrounding neighborhoods. The Fire Station will be a 3-bay structure, manned by volunteer firefighters, made-up of northern Chaffee County residents. This would insure a fast response to any wildfire in the communities surrounding the new station. When this firehouse becomes a reality it will also serve as a future safe haven for the Game Trail residents and their neighbors.

This document is intended to set forth a recommended plan only and imposes obligations on the signatories. Specifically, executing this document in no way obligates Chaffee County to take any action requiring the commitment of funds in order to accomplish the Summary Recommendations.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the CWPP to the contrary, no term or condition of the CWPP shall be construed or interpreted as a waiver, express or implied, of any of the immunities, rights, benefits, protection, or other provisions of the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act § 24-20-101, et seq., C.R.S. (including future amendments) or as an acceptance by Chaffee County or any responsibility or liability with respect to the CWPP.
The Game Trail Association CWPP has been developed and agreed to by the following:

Frank F. Holman, Chairman
Chaffee County Board of Commissioners

James Wingert, Fire Chief/Deputy County Fire Warden
Chaffee County Fire Protection District

Damon Lange, District Forester
Colorado State Forest Service

Kenneth C. Siefken, President
Game Trail Association Inc
HEALTHY FOREST & FIRE SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Thin trees and brush
  (Any tree over 3 inches in diameter, you must get permission from the Forestry Committee to take down)

- Ladder trees (remove branches) to a height of 10 ft. above the ground, leaving enough of the branch to hang a hat.

- Remove slash from the forest floor

- Cut green limbs between October and May

- Dead limbs may be removed year round

- Spray your “trophy trees” to guard against Mountain Pine Beetle attack. (Spray May thru June)

- Other than spraying for mistletoe, remove infected branches

- It is permissible to leave 1 or 2 decaying trunks per acre on the ground, this provides nutrients for the soil and insects for the wildlife.

- A standing dead tree (1 or 2 per acre) can remain. They provide forage habitat for insect eating species and homes for cavity creatures.

- Create a defensible space surrounding your home
  (A defensible space is a 30 ft. area around a structure where trees and vegetation are cleared to reduce the spread of fire)

- Store firewood 30 ft. from any structures

- Keep roof and gutters free from debris

- Store tools such as shovels, axes, rakes or hoes for use in case of a fire
APPENDIX (b)

FORESTRY DIRECTORY

FIRE MITIGATION CONTRACTORS - A list provided by the Salida District of the CSFS can be attained at the Game Trail Office or on the Forestry Committee’s website.

SPRAYING - JETCO is the company Game Trail residents use for spraying their trees to stem the advance of Mountain Pine Beetle, IPS, and Mistletoe. The owner of JETCO is Mark Lewis and he can be reached at (719) 395-8811.

COLORADO STATE FOREST - Located in Salida at 7980 W Highway 50, (719) 539-2579. Good source of the latest information on MPB, IPS, and Mistletoe. And, they can advise you on what trees to plant that are resistant to Mistletoe. They also provide seedlings in the spring at minimal cost to anyone who has at least 2 acres of land.

HIGH ALTITUDE TREE GUIDELINES - Gary Ludwig of Pleasant Avenue Nursery located at 506 S. Pleasant Avenue, Buena Vista, (719) 395-6955. Gary can advise you on which trees would be best at our elevation.
GAME TRAIL ASSOCIATION, INC
Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)
Meeting Minutes
September 9, 2008

A public meeting to discuss Game Trail’s CWPP was attended by 16 members of Game Trail’s Forestry Committee with representatives of the Chaffee County Fire Protection District - Mark Thomas, Colorado State Forest - Damon Lange, and U.S. Forest Service John Markalunas.

The meeting was brought to order by Val Philpott, chair of the Game Trail Forestry Committee. After a brief introduction of the guests, they each commented on their respective organizations, their individual backgrounds and what resources are available to Game Trail Association to further their efforts to maintain a healthy forest and mitigate the effects of fire should one occur.

Damon Lange then discussed the Game Trail Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in detail. His assessment of the Plan was that it met the minimum requirements and should be finalized so that it could be circulated to various county, state and federal agencies for their review and approval. A signature page will be added to the CWPP for the following agencies: Chairman, Chaffee County Board of Commissioners; Chairman, Chaffee County Fire Protection District; District Forester, Colorado State Forest Service; and the U.S. Forest Service. He also suggested that the CWPP is a living document and should be updated periodically to reflect current situations. The document should be changed to indicate completed projects as well as adding new goals to the ever changing priorities of the Association. One suggestion he offered was to add more detail to the treatment priorities. The Association could develop a set of defensible space guidelines to use for individual lot assessments. A summary of this information could be prepared to determine mitigation treatment priorities and also used to obtain grants if and when they become available.

At the meeting there was an extensive discussion regarding the possibility of human caused ignition in a recreational area southwest of Game Trail and what could be done to mitigate those circumstances. There was also a discussion on what Game Trail’s response could and should be to a wildfire and how that might support Chaffee County’s fire protection plan. It was also suggested that Game Trail identify high risk zones in the subdivision to determine what could be done to lessen those risks.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Members of the Game Trail Forestry Committee documented the following action priorities within the community that would require the assistance of County, State and Federal agencies:
1. A future fuel reduction project south of the current 20 acre timber sale. Game Trail would be willing to enter into another agreement to thin this parcel subject to Forest Service guidelines.

2. It would be beneficial to Game Trail to have a second thinning in the area west of the subdivision (Westside Project) in order to complete the 400 ft firebreak.

3. In order to help mitigate wildfires from unattended camp fires, we would like to see signage for proper camp fire maintenance placed along the Cottonwood Creek corridor.

4. We would support having the County provide a chipping service for individuals and organizations to help maintain a healthy forest in Chaffee County. This would encourage residents to thin their forested property, remove ladder and ground fuels and remove slash appropriately by keeping it out of our landfills.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth C. Stiecken, President
Game Trail Association
Game Trail CWPP Map

Legend

Game Trail Fuels Reduction
- Private
- Federal
- Open Space

Fuels Reduction Corridor

Game Trail Sale

North

Legend

Game Trail Fuels Reduction
- Private
- Federal
- Open Space

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles