

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

CHEROKEE MEADOWS
Larimer County, Colorado

NOVEMBER 25, 2012

Introduction

The Cherokee Meadows *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (CWPP) was originally created in 2007, and was updated in 2009, 2010 and 2011. This is the 2012 revision/update of that document. This CWPP was developed by CHEROKEE MEADOWS ROAD ASSOCIATION (CMRA) with guidance and support from the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), Livermore Fire Protection District (LFPD), Colorado Division of Wildlife (C-DOW), Larimer County Emergency Services (LCES), and surrounding private landowners. This CWPP was created according to the guidelines of *Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, a Handbook for WUI Communities, March 2004* and supplements several Larimer County documents referenced in Appendix A. Information in this plan will be provided at a level of specificity determined by the community and appropriate agencies.

Community / Agencies / Interested Parties Involved

Representatives involved in the development of the Cherokee Meadows CWPP are included in the following table. Their name, organization, and roles and responsibilities are indicated below:

CWPP Development Team

Name	Organization	Roles / Responsibilities
Richard Norris, Kathy Orloski, Jason Gillette, Julie Schott, Mark Herrington, Elaine Gazdeck, CMRA Pres.	Cherokee Meadows Road Association, CMRA landowners, and adjacent landowner representatives	Primary development of CWPP and decision making – community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods
Mark Herrington	Livermore Fire Protection District	Primary development of CWPP and decision making from a firefighter's perspective – community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods
Boyd Lebeda, Dist. Forester, Diana Selby, Asst. District Forester, Fort Collins District	Colorado State Forest Service	Facilitation of planning process and approval of CWPP process and minimum standards. Provides input and expertise on forestry, fire and fuels, and FireWise concepts.
Tony Simons, Emergency Services Specialist, Larimer County Sherriff's Department	Larimer County Wildfire Safety Program	Provides input and expertise on hazard assessment, defensible space, and FireWise concepts.
Dick Edwards, USFS Fire/Fuels/Timber staff, Canyon Lakes Ranger Dist.	Relevant federal land management agencies (USFS, BLM, etc.)	Provides input and expertise on federal lands forestry, fire and fuels, and FireWise concepts.
Justin Foster, Wildlife Technician, Colorado DOW	Other organizations designated by the core team (Environmental groups, utilities, recreational groups, etc.)	Provides input and expertise. This could include community risk and value assessment, wildlife welfare, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.

Definition of the CMRA Wildland/Urban Interface

Using technology and local expertise, CMRA, and the CSFS, (with help of Larimer County Fuel Hazard Map), developed the following map (Figure 1) defining the boundary of the CMRA WUI boundary, and overall wildland fire hazard within this boundary.

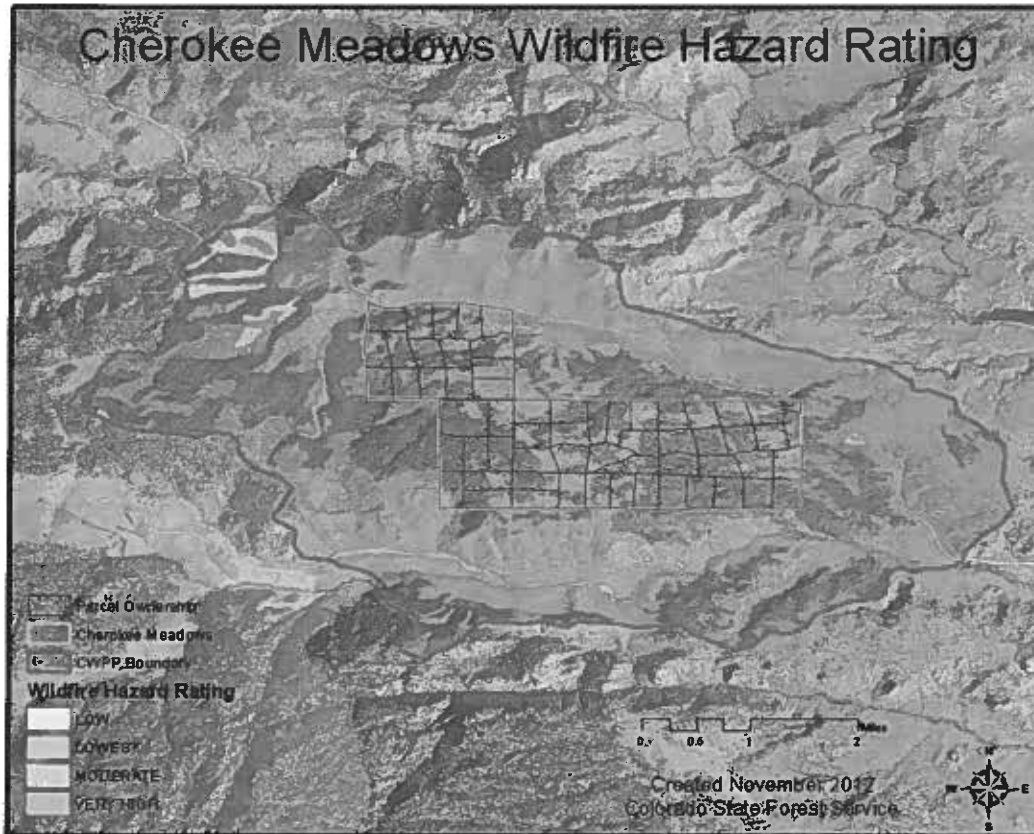


Figure 1: CMRA WUI boundary and Wildfire hazard ratings. Courtesy of the CSFS

The boundary was created using current definitions of WUI as well as fuel conditions. It is important to note that communities and areas outside of the CMRA boundary fall inside the CMRA WUI boundary emphasizing the need for collaboration between landowners. Adjacent landowners include Rabbit Creek Road, Elk Meadows subdivision, Phantom Canyon subdivision, private landowners not in subdivisions, USFS and State School Land.

Identification of Values at Risk Using input from community members and local stakeholders, a list of values that are at risk from a wildland fire has been created. The list was based on priority for protection as well as reduction of risk/hazard

High priority values at risk

- Human life and safety
- Homes and structures
- Pet and livestock life and safety
- Power & communication infrastructure
- Wildlife habitat
- In home businesses
- Cattle grazing
- Forests / Timber
- Wetland / riparian areas
- Peacefulness / Tranquility

Community Risk Assessment

Cherokee Meadows is a 2240 acre subdivision consisting of 57 lots from 35-40 acres in size, located 25 miles Northwest of Fort Collins. (Latitude 40 degrees, 51' N, Longitude -105 degrees, 25' W of the 6th pm). USFS land borders the subdivision to the West, and a section of State School Land is directly adjacent, where the C-DOW currently has a hunting lease. Cherokee Meadows elevation is between 6500' and 8500', and is a mix of upper and lower montane. Some tree diversity exists, but the majority of flora is dense, various age Ponderosa pine forested areas and grassy/brushy meadows and some riparian areas. Resident wildlife includes deer, coyote, bobcat, various raptors, rabbits, and occasional cougar and bear.

- About 50% of the CMRA lots have been developed in the past 35 years, and new homes are being built at the rate of approximately one every one to three years. Houses are between 1 and 34 years old and construction materials vary from full log to frame with wood siding to stucco/fire resistant materials. Some residents have aggressively worked to create defensible space around their homes and outbuildings, whereas, others need more guidance.
- The area that falls within the CWPP has been impacted by the recent pine beetle epidemic and drought, which has resulted in many dead and dying trees, including on the adjacent Federal and State lands. Of particular concern are the densely treed and difficult to access Northwestern and Southern forested areas of CMRA, and the properties which abut the USFS and State lands.
- Meadow Creek and tributaries are within CMRA and contribute to the watershed flowing into the North Fork of the Poudre River and Halligan Reservoir (water supply for nearby cities).
- Infrastructure includes communication lines, an REA power grid, plus many homes which are off-grid with photovoltaic power. These are all at risk, however defensible space practices are being worked on around these as well
- Agricultural cattle-grazing operations prosper on the largely un-fenced expanses of Cherokee Meadows.
- CMRA has approximately 10 miles of routinely maintained roads with no bridges. Some private driveways are gated.
- For years, CMRA has actively endeavored to reduce noxious weeds along our roads.
- CMRA has received SFA/WUI Grants for 2010, 2011, and an Emergency Supplemental Grant in 2011 for hazardous fuel reduction/wildfire mitigation activities. In all 3 of these grants, the community was required to match the grant amount, and did so 3 fold, which exemplifies the enormous commitment we have toward reducing the potential of catastrophic wildfire in our community. The forested areas in CMRA have undergone a large amount of fuel reduction and fire break work in the past 4 years by a dedicated community of committed landowners and their hired timber professionals (per CSFS "Fuel Break Guidelines" and Best Practices). Many homeowners have engaged in defensible space work, (per updated FIREWISE and CSU fact sheets), to lessen their risk. This work is sustainable, and future Grant funds will absolutely encourage the continued work, and unquestionably will be leveraged by landowner contributions of in-kind labor and payment of professional costs to lessen the quantity of hazard fuels in the community.
- CMRA landowners are proactive regarding the ever-present wildfire risk in our community. This year, CMRA began a website (cherokeemeadows.com) to enable landowner access to educational materials and resources. (see links section)

Risk of Wildfire Occurrence – An evaluation of the probability of fire ignition within the community surrounding lands.

- The CSFS Wildfire Hazard map for Cherokee Meadows indicates a range of moderate to very high risk across the community. Approximately 60% of the community falls into the high risk category (Appendix A).
- Colorado has experienced some of the most severe drought conditions in history. This combined with the unprecedented pine beetle epidemic add to the vulnerability of the area to experience a large scale fire. Over the past 10 years, numerous wildfires have occurred in Larimer County; but most notable is the increase in size and intensity of wildfires. The recent Hewlett Gulch, Picnic Rock, Stuart Hole and High Park Fires were all near the CWPP Southern border. During this same 10 year time frame, the CMRA area experienced one structure fire and several lightning-caused wildfires, along with multiple fires related to careless human activity. Fortunately, all fires were aggressively and quickly responded to by LFPD, and none of these fires exceeded 30 acres in size.

Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capability

- Initial response to all fire, medical & associated emergencies within CMRA is the responsibility of the LFPD.
 - Current LFPD capabilities include:
 - 10 active members
 - 5-NWCG FFT2's
 - 1- NWCG engine boss
 - 4- LFPD Wildland firefighters
 - 6- EMT's
 - 1-paramedic.
 - Station 1 capabilities:
Minimum response time of 25 minutes
 - 1-Type 1 engine
 - 1 -Type 4 engine
 - 1-Type 6 engine
 - 1-Ambulance.
 - Station 2 capabilities:
Minimum response time of 15 minutes
 - 1- Type 1 engine
 - 1- 2,000 gallon tender
 - 1-Type 6 engine
 - 1-Medical/support vehicle.
 - Additional apparatus:
 - 1-Support/command vehicle
 - 1-Slip-on CAFS truck.

Response to incidents by the LFPD varies based on the day of the week as well as by time of day, with lower numbers of responders during weekdays/hours.

- Wildland fire responsibilities within Cherokee Meadows fall primarily to the LFPD, with Larimer County, the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control, and USFS responding as described in the Larimer County Operating Plan. LFPD firefighters are trained, and the department has mutual aid agreements with the USFS, Poudre Fire Authority, Glacier View Fire Dept, Red Feather Lakes Fire Dept, and Wellington Fire Dept. Emergency response time to CMRA has been reduced by the addition of LFPD Station 2, which is on Cherokee Park Road about ½ mile from CMRA. Two 2500 gallon water storage cisterns have been installed in strategic locations within CMRA for firefighting. Some homes have large cisterns and/ or ponds potentially available for firefighting use.

Hazard Reduction Priorities

1. Conduct defensible space work around homes/outbuildings.
2. Improve options for emergency egress and community evacuation plan.
3. Fuel reduction needs of particular concern are the densely treed/difficult to access west and the southern forested areas of CMRA, including both the private properties and the adjacent USFS and State lands. (See attached maps A and B)
4. Encourage private landowners to continue to reduce hazard fuels on their property.
5. Assist Livermore Fire Protection District in their efforts to protect our community.
6. Continue to educate the community about wildfire related issues.
7. Seek out funding and Grant opportunities to assist in aforementioned items.
8. Keep the CMRA CWPP updated.

Action Plan for 2013

1. Defensible space work around homes/outbuildings.
 - a. Emergency Services personnel, in an advising capacity, will visit CMRA bi-annually to evaluate groups of residences regarding hazard-tree removal, thinning or trimming, brush removal, and general defensible space.
 - b. LFPD personnel, on a limited basis, can also advise landowners, as an adjunct to Emergency Services. LFPD will address safe firewood storage, safe slash-burning practices, firewise landscaping, keeping combustibles away from structures, etc.
 - c. In cooperation with the Larimer County Fire Education Group, the Larimer Fire Council and the LFPD, CMRA will continue to support and promote Firewise activities as outlined in the Larimer County Fire Plan. In addition, CMRA supports and educates its citizens in ways to reduce structure ignitibility through meeting Larimer County Building Code requirements and utilizing CSFS FireWise Construction Fact Sheets.
2. Improve options for emergency egress.
 - a. Work with the LFPD to develop a Community Evacuation Plan. Post this on CMRA website.
 - b. Improve egress on roads by trimming overhanging trees, and creating more turn-outs for vehicles to pass.
 - c. Research options for more secondary and tertiary emergency egress points through private property.
 - d. Educate and encourage residents to provide easy firefighter entrance to homes and other structures.
 - e. Contact neighboring landowners to discuss reciprocal emergency egress, and participation in our CWPP.
3. Fuel break/forest thinning activity targeted to high risk zones such as northwest area, southern border, and where CMRA borders USFS land and State land.
 - a. CMRA will encourage private landowners in the target areas to learn about effective Fuel-breaks and how to create them by tree thinning and removal.
 - b. CMRA will continue to seek out financial / Grant funding resources to assist with these projects.
4. Encourage private landowners to continue to reduce hazard fuels on their property.
 - a. Landowners will be encouraged to lessen the quantity of hazardous fuels by removing dead/dying trees on their property and chipping slash or safely burning slash in accordance with County burn permit requirements.
 - b. Gain permission from centrally located private landowners for a community slash pile that will be safely burned with the guidance of the LFPD.
5. Assist the Livermore Fire Protection District in their efforts to protect our community.
 - a. Work toward developing more of a partnership with the LFPD.
 - b. Encourage all residents to have large, reflective address numbers at driveway entrance.
 - c. Update CMRA map, indicating which properties have full time residences, versus part time cabins and those with only vacant land. This will help greatly with evacuations.
 - d. Develop cooperative agreement with landowners for emergency use-rights for water in ponds/ fire-fighting water cisterns on their property. Map the location of these items.
 - e. Research options for emergency landing pads/staging areas within CMRA.(snow-plow-able areas preferred)
 - f. Donate funds to LFPD for needed equipment, and encourage residents to volunteer.
6. Continue to educate the community about wildfire related issues.
 - a. Provide residents with an evacuation route map, and phone-tree neighbor contact information.
 - b. Encourage residents to establish individual evacuation plans, with plans for pets/livestock evacuation.
 - c. Keep the CMRA website updated with news, information and helpful links.
 - d. Invite subject- matter- experts to speak at the 2013 CMRA annual meeting.
 - e. Continue mailings to CMRA landowners with relevant CSFS and Firewise publications.
 - f. Encourage landowners to request defensible space advice from Emergency Services or LFPD.
7. Seek out funding opportunities to assist in aforementioned items.
 - a. Previously obtained grant funds had enormous positive impact on the reduction of hazard fuels in Cherokee Meadows. These funds have also been the greatest motivating force for landowners to engage in wildfire mitigation efforts, so CMRA intends to seek out and continue applying for applicable grant funding.
 - b. Encourage private landowners to donate funds or efforts to the LFPD
8. Keep the CMRA CWPP updated.
 - a. Our CWPP core team, with CMRA leadership, will meet annually to evaluate progress; agree on treatment priorities.

See attached Appendix A

This concludes the 2012 revision of the CMRA CWPP, (original CWPP in 2007). Respectfully submitted by the committee:

Cherokee Meadows CWPP Committee Members:

Richard Thomas

Julia Schott

Kathleen A. Orloski

Mark Henington

L. Ellett

November 25, 2012

Date

CHEROKEE MEADOWS CWPP (2012 REVISION OF 2007 DOCUMENT)

The following community representatives / agencies have reviewed and support this *Community Wildfire Protection Plan*.

Elaine Zuber 11-25-12
Cherokee Meadows Road Association
President

Mark Henington
Livermore Fire Protection District Representative

Jim C. Adley
Fort Collins District
Colorado State Forest Service

Kevin Atchley
United States Forest Service

Larimer County Emergency Services

Other

Appendix A

CMRA subdivision map, indicating parcels, residences, roads & primary egress

CMRA map indicating areas of past & current fuel break work

CSFS developed map: Cherokee Meadows Wildfire Hazard Rating, 11/2012 (incorporated into page 2 of this document)

The following documents were utilized to develop this plan and can be found at www.co.larimer.co.us/wildfire/

Larimer County Fire Plan a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (Larimer County 2004)

Larimer County Wildfire Mitigation Plan (CSFS 1998)

Recommendations for Improving Wildfire Safety in Larimer County (CSFS 1997)

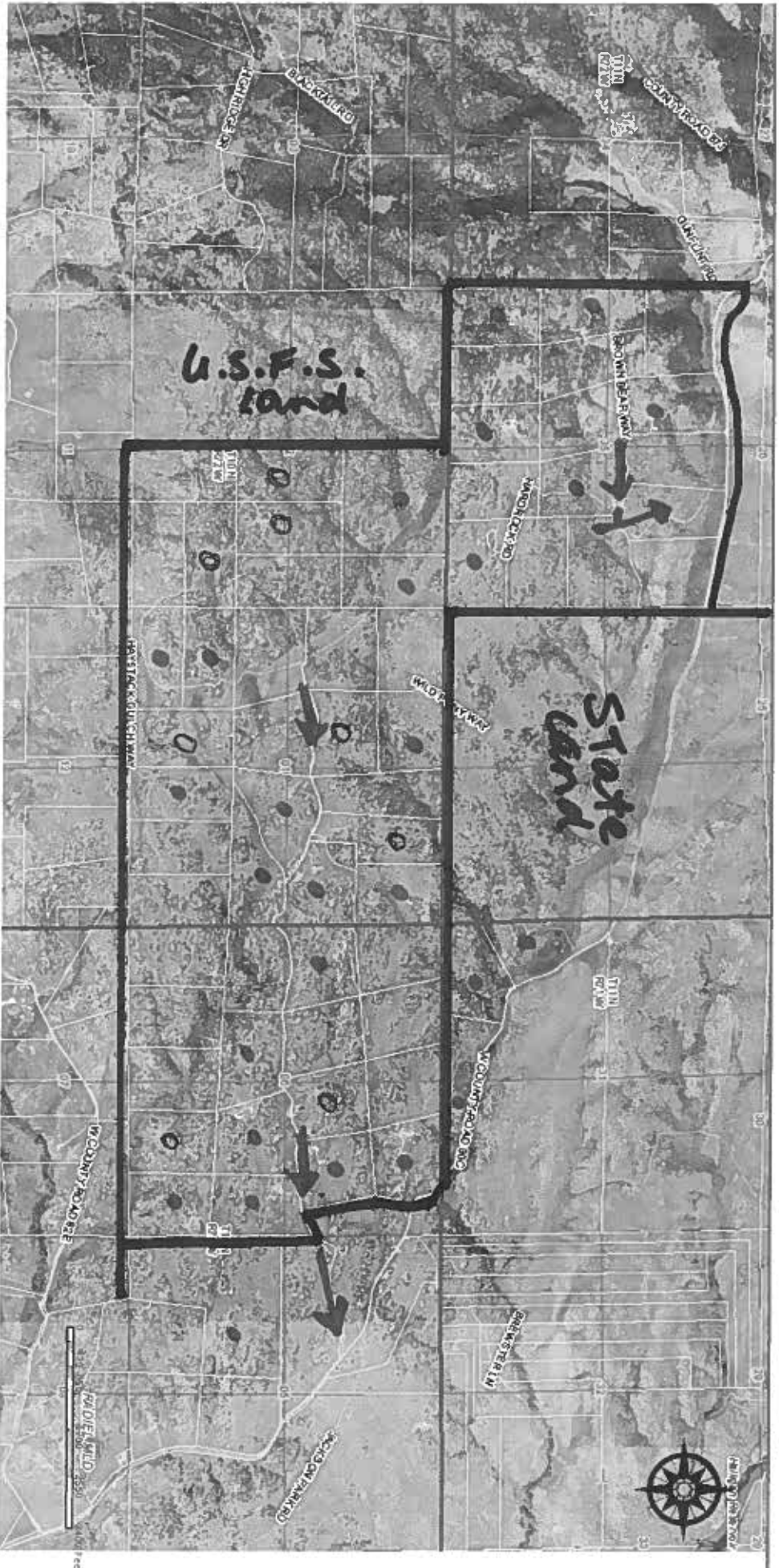
Larimer County Subdivision Wildfire Hazard Review (Larimer County/CSFS 2002)

Larimer County Annual Operating Plan (updated annually)

FEMA –Northern Colorado Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan



Charlotte Meadows



□ = CMRA Boundary

● = Full-time residents

○ = Part time residence/cabin

→ = Primary egress Route



Larimer County Land Information Locator Like



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*Shovel
meadows
wildfire Mitigation work*

Maps: Imagery: Spring/Summer 2005

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○ = work in past 3 years (2010 - 2012)

⊙ = planned work 2013 +