

# La Plata County CWPP Update

Fire Council Meeting  
January 17, 2023

# Areas of Concern

The CWPP will apply to the entire county; however, priorities or areas of concern need to be identified.

Existing resources:

- Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW) 2020 - Wildfire Hazard Map
- Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative (RMRI) - PODs prioritization process in 2020/2021 to identify top PODs for communities at risk

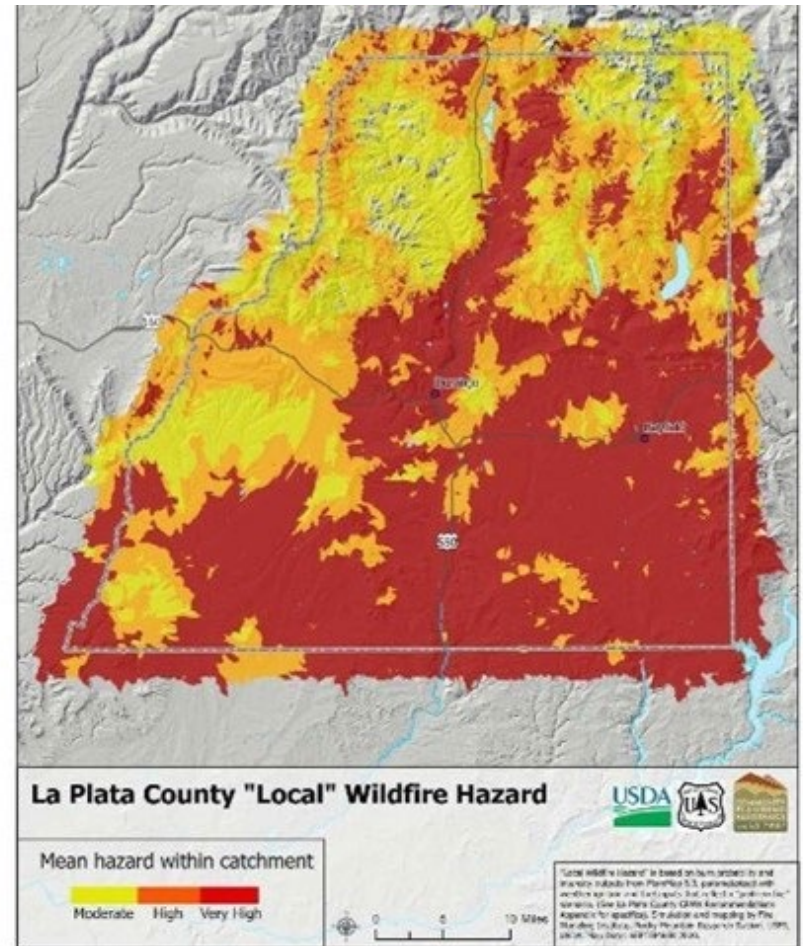
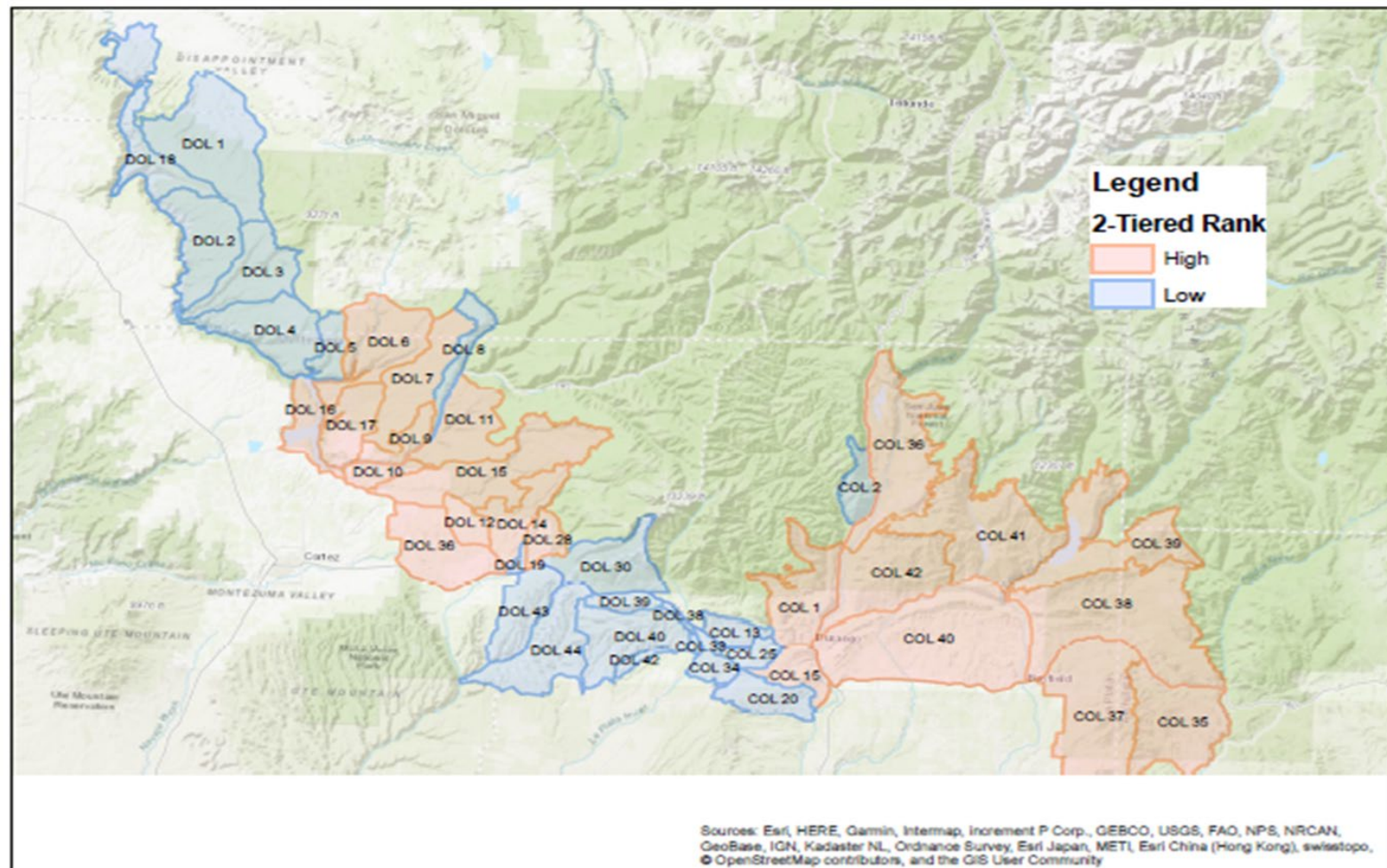
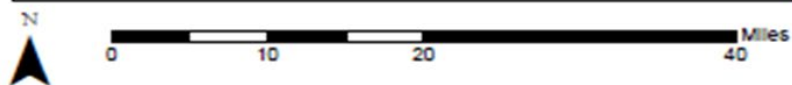


Figure 4. La Plata County Local Wildfire Hazard Map

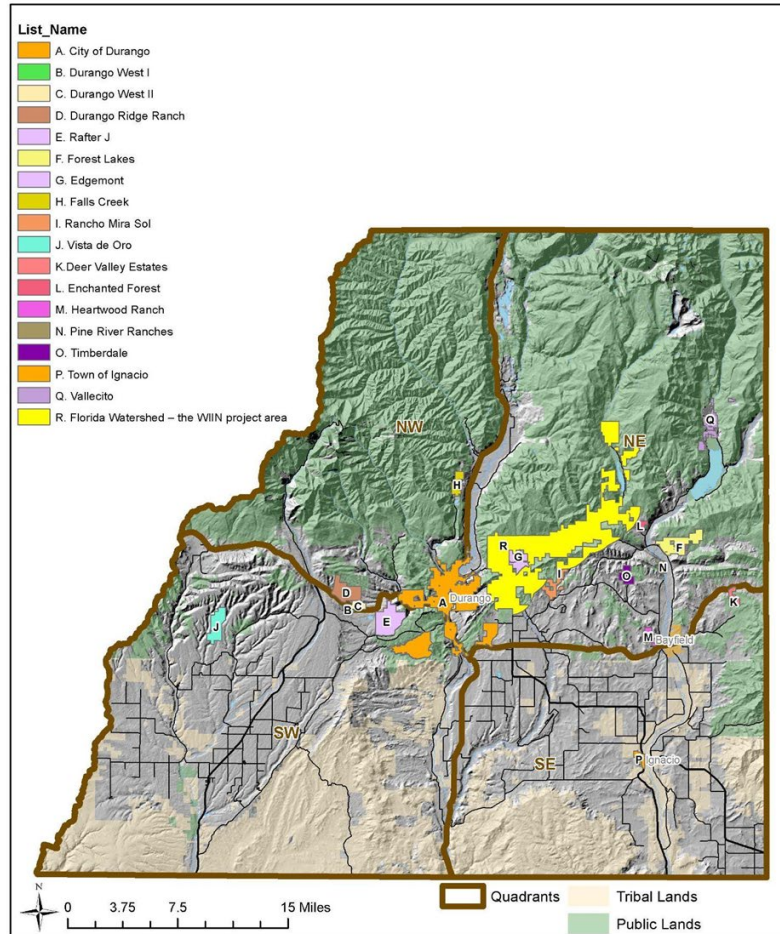


Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, USGS, FAO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Survey, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), swisstopo, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community



**RMRI SW CO Ranked PODs**  
 (created 8/17/2020)

# Areas of Concern/Priority in La Plata County



# Vision Statement

The vision of the La Plata County CWPP is to improve county-wide preparedness for wildfire by increasing the pace and scale of mitigation efforts, increasing cross boundary projects, and increasing wildfire mitigation education, ultimately creating a fire adapted community where residents can live safely with wildland fire.

# La Plata County CWPP Goals

- **Goal A:** Reduce wildfire risk in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) by reducing structure ignitability and increasing the number of fuels reduction projects on public and private lands.
- **Goal B:** Increase public involvement in wildfire prevention and education
- **Goal C:** Promote healthy watersheds, forest and range ecosystems along with wildland fire mitigation
- **Goal D:** Increase wildfire preparedness and response efforts
- **Goal E:** Increase capacity building to address workforce development and biomass utilization

# **Goal A: Reduce wildfire risk in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) by reducing structure ignitability and increasing the number of fuels reduction projects on public and private lands.**

- **Strategy #1:** Advance building codes to reduce structure ignitability.
- **Strategy #2:** Create a centralized map for mitigation/treatments, risk, and WUI.
- **Strategy #3:** Promote and expand mitigation incentive programs for private landowners through increased participation in defensible space cost share, chipper rebate, and larger community projects program. Ultimately helping to offset the expense of mitigation on private lands.
- **Strategy #4:** Increase opportunities for slash removal or biomass utilization from fuels reduction projects and ongoing maintenance of treated areas on private lands (slash depots, air curtain burners, chipper rebates, pile burning, etc.). Ultimately decreasing the amount of slash that ends up in the landfill or sits in piles on private land.
- **Strategy #5:** Increase planning and execution of cross-boundary treatments throughout the county and especially in priority areas (Forest Lakes/Grassy Mountain, Florida Watershed, City of Durango, etc.)

## **Continued: Goal A: Reduce wildfire risk in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) by reducing structure ignitability and increasing the number of fuels reduction projects on public and private lands.**

- **Strategy #6:** Create and promote utilization of centralized resource center: Help promote resources for local residents such as incentive programs, education, local mitigation contractors, and biomass utilization.
- **Strategy #7:** Explore locally generated long-term, non-grant, funding sources (i.e. tax base) for fuels mitigation projects.
- **Strategy #8:** Increase wildfire risk site assessments of private residences and communities.
- **Strategy #9:** Update local neighborhood/subdivision level CWPPs within La Plata County that are older than 10 years, promoting cross-boundary/landscape scale treatments when possible.



## Goal B: Increase public involvement in wildfire prevention and education

- **Strategy #1:** Promote targeted learning opportunities and trainings for residents and industry.
- **Strategy #2:** Develop demonstration sites and experiential opportunities.
- **Strategy #3:** Create an overarching communication plan around “Living with Wildfire”.
- **Strategy #4:** Build the capacity of Wildfire Adapted Partnership’s Neighborhood Ambassador Program through recruitment, training, and utilization of volunteers.
- **Strategy #5:** Increase education and social license of prescribed fire and mechanical treatments.
- **Strategy #6:** Promote education opportunities geared toward K-College such as “Living with Wildfire” and workforce development
- **Strategy #7:** Increase wildfire education, prevention and preparedness outreach to tourists from out of the area that may use local accommodation including short-term rental properties

## **Goal C: Promote healthy watersheds, forest and range ecosystems along with wildland fire mitigation**

- **Strategy #1:** Increase prescribed fire on landscape and limit practitioners' liability.
- **Strategy #2:** Promote strategies (utilization of resources), data sharing and overall coordination among all landscape-scale initiatives (RMRI, SWCO CFLRP, 4 Rivers, WWPF).
- **Strategy #3:** Plan and execute treatments that directly tie into watersheds, forest health, wildlife habitat, and recreation.
- **Strategy #4:** Provide ongoing support for IGAs/WWPF as an additional means to get acres treated on the ground.

## Goal D: Increase wildfire preparedness and response efforts

- **Strategy #1:** Identify, promote, and strengthen evacuation routes on county roads and highways.
- **Strategy #2:** Promote community-level preparedness/evacuation drills and community-level safe egress routes.
- **Strategy #3:** Identify vulnerable populations and targeted outreach for additional needs related to evacuation (single car homes, elderly, large animal evacuation).
- **Strategy #4:** Promote increased participation in CodeRed emergency notification system.

## **Goal E: Increase capacity building to address workforce development and biomass utilization**

- **Strategy #1:** Support and advertise the existence of private contractors who are able to complete fuels reduction projects on homeowners' properties.
- **Strategy #2:** Utilize and promote local biomass alternatives for mitigation projects, and also support southwest Colorado biomass utilization through grant funding opportunities.
- **Strategy #3:** Target college and vocation/tech students to increase workforce development for forestry careers in southwest Colorado.

## CWPP Update - Next Steps

- Circulate draft to partners for edits, additions and any other feedback
  - January 26 - Meta Group Stakeholder meeting
  - Individual discussions with partners
- Finalize draft
- Present to Board of County Commissioners
- Circulate for signatures
- Final CWPP by mid-April