

Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Cherokee Meadows CWPP
Larimer County, Colorado

8/26/2007

Introduction

This *Community Wildfire Protection Plan* (CWPP) was developed by members of the Cherokee Meadows Road Association with guidance and support from United States Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service, and Larimer County. This CWPP 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.

The process of developing a CWPP can help a community clarify and refine its priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical infrastructure in the wildland-urban interface. It can also lead community members through valuable discussions regarding management options and implications for the surrounding watershed.

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, Skip Koenig, Vern Desbian, Dave Herder, Julia Schott, Elaine Gazdech, Alan VanArsdale	Members of the Cherokee Meadows Road Association	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
Dave Herder	Livermore Volunteer Fire Department	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
Boyd Lebeda, 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 Wildfire Safety Program	Provides input and expertise on hazard assessment, defensible space, and FireWise concepts.
Dick Edwards, USFS	Relevant federal land management agencies (USFS, BLM, etc.)	Provides input and expertise on federal lands forestry, fire and fuels, and FireWise concepts.

Identification of Values at Risk

Using technology and local expertise, the community members and FPD representatives have developed a base map and narrative of the community and adjacent landscapes of interest. This map will act as a visual aid from which community and FPD members can assess and make recommendations. The base map includes, at a minimum, the following:

- Inhabited areas and values at potential risk to wildland fire
- Areas containing critical human infrastructure—such as evacuation routes, municipal water supply structures, and major power or communication lines—that are at risk from wildfire
- A preliminary designation of the community's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) zone.

Community Risk Assessment

The purpose of the community risk assessment is to help to prioritize areas for treatment and identify the highest priority uses for available financial and human resources. This section is divided into five areas of concern:

- Fuel Hazards – An evaluation of vegetation conditions within the community and on adjacent lands. Products included are:
 - Larimer County Wildfire Safety Program – Subdivision Wildfire Hazard Review
 - Larimer County Fuel Hazard Map

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

- Risk to homes, businesses, and essential infrastructure – An evaluation of the vulnerability of structures within the community to ignition from firebrands, radiation, and convection. Also includes an evaluation of risks to essential infrastructure such as evacuation routes, water supply structures, and power and communication lines. Products may include:
 - Structure Assessment (construction materials, structure access, defensible space, etc.)
 - Infrastructure Assessment (utilities, water, community roads, power lines, etc.)

- Risk to Other Community Values – An evaluation of risk to other community values such as wildlife habitat, recreation and scenic areas, water supplies, and landscapes of historical, economic or cultural value.

- Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capability
 - Initial response to all fire, medical and associated emergencies is the responsibility of the Poudre Canyon FPD. Wildland fire responsibilities of Larimer County, Colorado State Forest Service, United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service are described in the current *Larimer County Annual Operating Plan*. All mutual aid agreements, training, equipment, and response are the responsibility of the local fire department and the agencies listed above.

Hazard Reduction Priorities

Please refer to the attached prioritized list of community needs regarding fuel reduction treatments within the WUI zone.

- Fuel reduction needs (Attached map identifying treatment types and ways to reduce structural ignitability.)
- Fire response needs

Action Plan

The Cherokee Meadows Road Association members have developed and attached an action plan which identifies roles and responsibilities, funding needs and timetables listed in Hazard Reduction Priorities. The core team will meet annually to evaluate progress and mutually agree on treatment priorities.

In cooperation with the Larimer County Fire Education Group, the Larimer Fire Council, and the Livermore Volunteer Fire Department, the community supports and promotes Firewise activities as outlined in the Larimer County Fire Plan. The community supports and educates its citizens in ways to reduce structure ignitability through meeting Larimer County Building Code Requirements and utilizing Colorado State Forest Service FireWise Construction Fact Sheets.

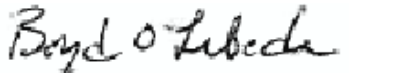
The following community representatives / agencies have reviewed and support this *Community Wildfire Protection Plan*.

 David M. Herder President

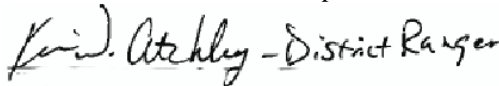
Cherokee Meadows Road Association

 Donald J. Long Asst Chief

Livermore Volunteer Fire Department

 Boyd O. Lebeda

Fort Collins District
Colorado State Forest Service

 Kevin Atchley - District Ranger

USDA Forest Service

Appendix A

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 (2004)

Representatives from the core team for the development of the Cherokee Meadows Road Association CWPP met on August 26 to discuss community values that are potentially at risk from wildfire, as well as to create action items for mitigating wildfire risk to these values. Participants at this meeting included seven of the Road Association members and a facilitator. The Road Association played a critical role in identifying values at-risk and creating action items, and it is important to note that the community members held the decision-making authority.

Cherokee Meadows CWPP: Values At-Risk

The Road Association members listed the following community values that are at-risk from wildfire, and prioritized these values as high, medium, or low. Identifying values at-risk provided this group with a basis for determining action items, as action items specifically address values at-risk. Prioritizing these values assists the community in prioritizing mitigation projects for implementation.

Table 1. Community values at risk of wildfire, and prioritized on a scale of Low-Medium-High.	
VALUE	PRIORITY
Trees	High
Agricultural Heritage	High
Peacefulness/Tranquility	High
Recreational Opportunities	High
Access/Roads	High
Water Resources Availability	High
Investments/Homes/Property	High
Aesthetics	High
Life/Safety	High
Wildlife/Wildlife Habitat	Medium
Pets/Livestock	Medium
People With Special Needs	Medium
Power Lines/Telephone Boxes	Medium
Home Heating Fuel/Propane Tanks	Medium
Sense of Community	Medium

The community members referred to their list of values at-risk to create the following action items. The action items are presented in a general list according to priority level, which allows the community to implement projects in whatever order is the most efficient and effective.

Table 2: Action items to protect values at risk of wildfire, and then prioritized on a scale of low-medium-high.	
ACTION ITEM	PRIORITY
Distribute public educational information to landowners: such as FireWise, and mountain pine beetle	High
Encourage property assessments pertaining to wildfire issues, and provide landowner appropriate contacts	High
Improve access; widening roads, thinning trees, improving escape routes	High
Identify a location for a community slash pile	High
Create up to 2 community slash piles	High
Identify home addresses more clearly	High
Collectively address mountain pine beetle mitigation as a community.	High
Install an underground water holding tank and research other sources of water that could be used in an emergency	High
Develop a community evacuation plan. Components would include: emergency alert method such as a siren; developing community instructions to deal with the emergency alert system; educate community about the emergency alert system; develop a communication plan; investigate the use of hand held two-way radios as a communication tool	High
Implement ongoing defensible space projects	High
Obtain Class 8-B insurance class rank	High
Improve covenants to address issues in the CWPP	High
Institutionalize an annual review of a community monitoring plan; components would include: CWPP review; wildfire mitigation; mountain pine beetle mitigation; forest stewardship projects	High
Develop a plan to preserve agricultural heritage including rangeland wildfire restoration actions	Medium
Address tree mortality issues associated with magnesium chloride with county commissioners; includes removing dead trees, and discontinue applying to roads	Medium
Recommend to emergency responders ways to protect private property when emergency access is needed	Medium
Develop a strategy to work with absentee landowners	Medium
Use forest stewardship techniques to reduce wildfire risk; especially techniques that remove ladder fuels	Medium
19. Advocate that the forest service provide other methods than open pile burning for slash disposal	Medium
Encourage replacement of perimeter wood fence posts with fire-resistant fencing	Medium
Identify street signs more clearly, and use fire-resistant material for the signs	Low until the county takes action. Once the county takes action this would have a High priority.

Members of the Cherokee Meadows CWPP planning effort recommended that the Road Association oversee annual updates and revisions of the CWPP.

**COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN
CHEROKEE MEADOWS ROAD ASSOCIATION**

Annual Review: Conducted November 7, 2009 by the CMRA Board.

The following risk factors were initially identified for CMRA:

- 1.access
- 2.water supply
- 3.dense forestation
- 4.communication

It was agreed these are still appropriate.

Risk factors are assigned High, Medium and Low priorities. The risk factors were reviewed. The Board agreed to delete the action item of encouraging the use of fire resistant fencing. The Board added the action item of “Noxious weed mitigation plan”.

<u>Value</u>	<u>Risk Assessment</u>
1.Agricultural heritage/grazing	High
2.Woodlands	High
3.Privacy	Medium
4.Wildlife	Medium
5.Tranquility	High
6.Recreational opportunity	High
7.Access	High
8.Water resources	High
9.Home and land investment values	High
10.Pets/livestock	Medium
11.Access for people with disabilities	Medium
12.Powerlines/telephone access	Medium
13.Propane tanks	Medium
14.Woodpiles/heating sources for fuel	Medium

Action Items

Priorities are assigned high, medium and low

<u>Action</u>	<u>Priority</u>
1.Distribute information to residents-public education	High
2.Site visits for risk assessment	High
3.Improve access by widening road	High
4.Source water	High
5.Community slash pile	High
6.Clearly marked addresses	High
7.Underground water tanks for fire protection	High
8.Alternative method for slash disposal other than burning	High
9.Protection of private property from public access to forest service land	Medium
10.Pine beetle mitigation	High
11.Contact county regarding use of magnesium chloride on roads killing trees	Medium
12.Evacuation plans/communication plans	High
13.Ongoing defensible space evaluation	High
14.Obtain 8B insurance classification	High
15.Develop a strategy for working with absent landowners	Medium
16.Address and street signs (county renaming roads and new addresses)	Low
17.Improve covenants to address CWPP issues	High
18.Private land stewardship	Medium
19.Monitor defensible space along power lines	High
20.CWPP annual review	High
21.Develop a rangeland restoration plan to preserve agricultural heritage/value	Medium
22.Noxious weed mitigation plan	Medium

Status of Action Items

Action Item number followed by status:

1. Information has been disseminated to CMRA members regarding pine beetle mitigation and neighborhood watch programs. Speakers have given presentations at CMRA annual meetings on both topics.
2. Representatives of the Livermore Volunteer Fire Department have conducted site visits for risk assessment upon request.
3. The CMRA roads are graded and improved as needed every spring and fall. This has included widening. A current project is removing tree limbs and small trees near the road to provide greater clearance for emergency vehicles and large vehicles such as trailers.
4. Source water: no action
5. There is no official designated community slash pile; however several individual land owners have had slash piles available to neighbors upon request. The Board is considering approaching DOW and/or the Livermore Volunteer Fire Department to discuss a suitable location for a slash pile that can be used by CMRA as well as other residents along Cherokee Park Road.
6. CMRA owners were asked to place address signs at their driveways. Most have cooperated. An address sign was placed at each CMRA entrance. With the assignment of new addresses, a new location map has been installed at each entrance.
7. Two underground water storage tanks have been installed, one in each section of CMRA. A third is under consideration.
8. CMRA applied for a Wildfire Mitigation Grant. If received, the plan is to purchase a large capacity wood chipper. This can be used to dispose of slash as an alternative to burning in a community slash pile.
9. Individual property owners have placed fencing or obstructions such as boulders to prevent the public from crossing from public land into CMRA.
10. CMRA undertook a pine beetle mitigation plan in 2008. Most CMRA owners cooperated. A policy statement will be sent to all owners in the next 2 months advising of recommended annual mitigation tasks that all owners should practice.
11. Many contacts have been made with the county regarding the use of magnesium chloride and its adverse effects on the environment along Cherokee Park Road. Individuals have made these contacts, e.g. Richard Norris and Kathy Orloski.

12, 13, and 14: CMRA is making a donation to the Livermore Volunteer Fire Department in 2009. Along with the donation will be a request for a department representative to attend our annual meeting and provide information on emergency evacuation/communication plans, ongoing defensible space evaluation, and whether installation of a 3rd water storage tank can provide CMRA property owners a more favorable insurance classification due to better fire protection.

15 and 18. Individual residents have communicated with absent land owners to facilitate removal of infested pine beetle trees on absent owners properties.

16. The county has installed the new street signs with the new road names. CMRA has erected a locator map at both entrances with the new street names.

17. In 2008 CMRA membership voted to change the bylaws to permit changing of the covenants by a simple majority vote, i.e. 51%, rather than a 2/3 or 66% vote.

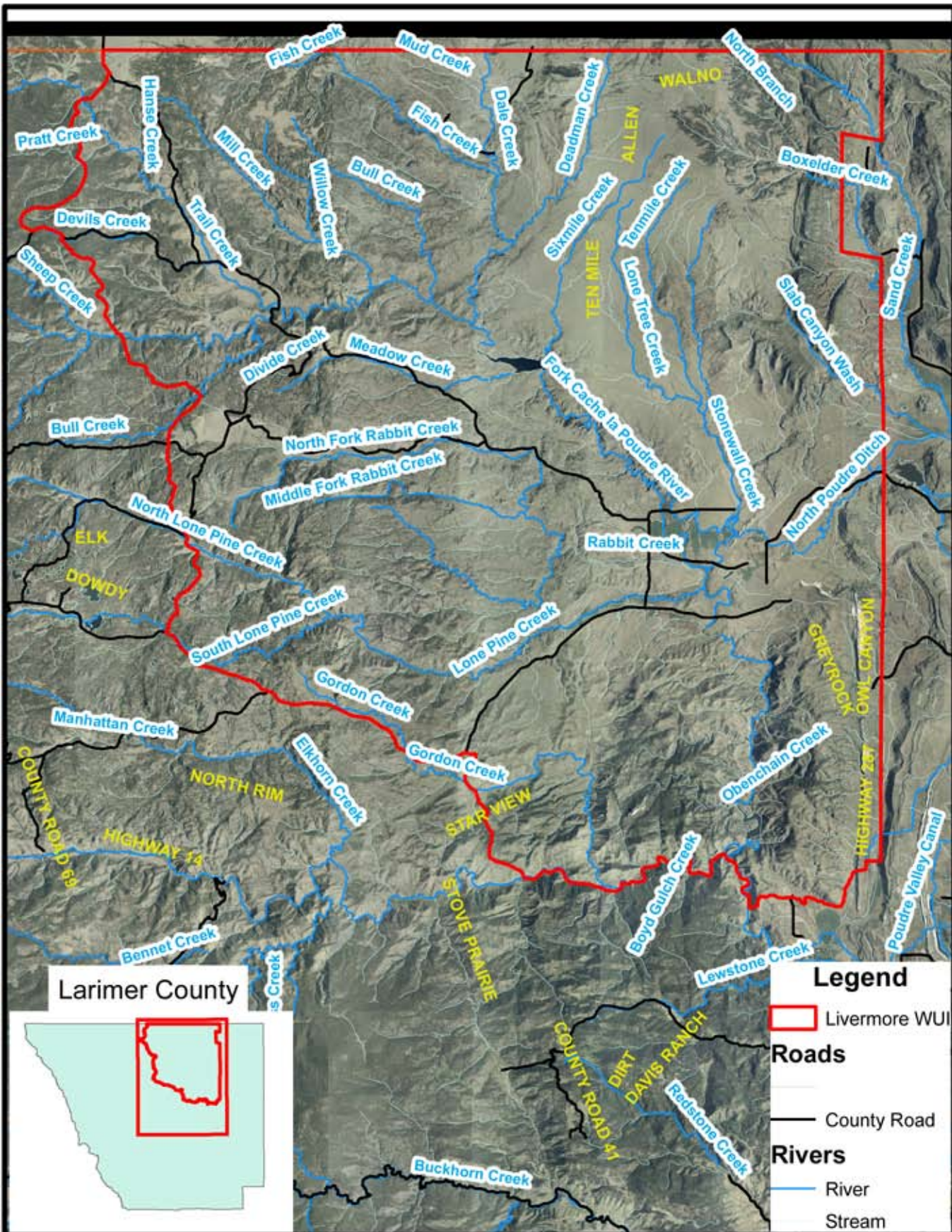
19. CMRA has cooperated with REA to request removal of pine beetle trees near power lines.

20. The CWPP was initiated in August 2007. The first annual review of the plan was held November 7, 2009.

21. At the 2009 annual meeting, membership was made aware that NRCS can evaluate our grasses for forage quality which would promote good long term management of the grasses for maintaining the cattle grazing lease. Evaluation by NRCS will be pursued in 2010.

22. Lloyd Schott volunteered to spray thistle and this was done in the summer of 2009. The Board will look into having a speaker at the annual meeting discuss control of noxious weeds.

Livermore CWPP



Legend

- Livermore WUI
- Roads**
- County Road
- Rivers**
- River
- Stream

0 2 4 8 12 16 Miles