

**Grizzly Creek Area  
Community Wildfire Protection Plan**

**November 2006**

# Grizzly Creek Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan

## Introduction

Members of the Grizzly Creek community, in consultation with local, state and federal agencies and other interested parties have collaboratively developed the Grizzly Creek Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). This CWPP was created according to the guidelines of *Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities*, March 2004, Communities Committee, National Association of Counties, National Association of State Foresters, Society of American Foresters, Western Governors' Association. The handbook was designed to lead the community through a process that includes eight steps to completion of a CWPP. Several public meetings were held to guide the community through the eight steps. Debbie Alpe, Jackson County Extension Agent, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension facilitated the CWPP meetings. Technical assistance was provided by Curran Trick, Jackson County GIS Department. The *Jackson County Fire Plan* and the *Jackson County Firefighters Response Guide* were both completed in 2003. The Grizzly Creek Area CWPP supplements and enhances the information presented in these county documents. All resource materials used are listed in the Appendix.

The Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) directs the federal agencies to collaborate with communities in developing hazardous fuel reduction projects, and in the prioritization of treatment areas as defined by a community's CWPP. It identifies strategies for reducing wildfire fuels while improving forest health, supporting local industry and economy, and improving fire fighting response capabilities.

## Objectives of the Grizzly Creek Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan

- Engage in comprehensive forest planning and prioritization.
- Provide mechanism for federal agencies to give meaningful considerations to community priorities.
- Facilitate open community discussion regarding management options.
- Provide maximum flexibility for communities to determine the substance and detail of their plans.
- Merge the goals and objectives of the landowners with the needs and expectations of the community regarding fire risk reduction.
- Coordinate fire protection strategies across property boundaries.
- Coordinate the grant funding and federal program budgets to achieve the most effective results with limited funding.

## Development of the Plan

The CWPP Handbook specifically outlines eight steps community members should take to complete a viable CWPP. The Grizzly Creek community elected to utilize this eight step approach to guide their CWPP process. By following this facilitated approach, the community and agency partners engaged in focused discussion related to all critical CWPP topics and succeeded in developing a plan that genuinely reflects the concerns and recommendations of the Grizzly Creek Area. The entire collaborative process was completed within a six month period between February and July 2006. The eight steps to completion are outlined in the following sections.

### Step 1- Decision Makers Convened

The decision makers for this CWPP are listed below. These officials were notified on February 7, 2006 and invited to participate in the development of this plan.

- Local Government: Jackson County Board of County Commissioners
- North Park Fire and Rescue Chief: Jeff Benson
- Colorado State Forest Service District Forester: John Twitchell

### Step 2 – Federal Agencies Involved

The representatives of the federal agencies managing land in the vicinity of the Grizzly Creek Area Wildland Urban Interface are listed below. Most of these people attended a widely advertised initial community meeting inclusive of all interested landowners, businesses, and agency people in Jackson County. This meeting was held the morning of Saturday, March 18, 2006 at the North Park High School. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the CWPP process and to encourage residents of Jackson County to work with key agency representatives to initiate completion of their individual community CWPPs. Federal agency representatives initially invited and subsequently involved include the following people:

Agency	Representative	Date Invited to Participate
Routt-Medicine Bow National Forest	Ann Kiser, Parks District District Ranger	February 7, 2006
Routt-Medicine Bow National Forest	Randy Lownes, Parks District Fire Management Officer	February 7, 2006
Routt-Medicine Bow National Forest	Mark Westfahl, Parks District Forester	February 7, 2006
Routt-Medicine Bow National Forest	Carl Maass, Forester	May 16, 2006
Bureau of Land Management	Lynn Barclay, Fire Mitigation Education Specialist	February 7, 2006
Bureau of Land Management Kremmling Field Office	Bill Wyatt, Fuels Staff, Fire Archaeologist	February 7, 2006
Bureau of Land Management Kremmling Field Office	John Ruhs, Field Manager	February 7, 2006

### Step 3a – State and Local Agencies Involved

The representatives of the state/local agencies that have jurisdictional responsibilities in the vicinity of the Grizzly Creek Area Wildland Urban Interface area are listed below. Most of these people attended the meeting described above held the morning of Saturday, March 18, 2006 at the North Park High School.

Agency	Representative	Date Invited to Participate
Colorado State Forest Service	John Twitchell, Forester	February 7, 2006
Colorado State Forest Service	Brook Lee, Forester	February 7, 2006
Colorado State Forest State Parks	Tim Metzger, Park Ranger	February 7, 2006
CSU Cooperative Extension	Debbie Alpe, Extension Agent	February 7, 2006
Jackson County Commissioner	John Rich	February 7, 2006
Jackson County Commissioner	Naida Crowner	February 7, 2006
Jackson County Commissioner	Mike Blanton	February 7, 2006

Director, Jackson County Emergency Management	Kent Crowder, Jackson County Administrator	February 7, 2006
Jackson County GIS	Curran Trick	May 23, 2006
North Park Fire and Rescue	Jeff Benson, Fire Chief	February 7, 2006
Jackson County Sheriff	Rick Rizor	February 7, 2006

### Step 3b – Interested Parties Engaged

The residents from the Grizzly Creek Area WUI that took leadership roles on the core CWPP planning team are listed below. These people met to organize a strategy for convening their community to complete the CWPP on June 15, 2006. These people and other landowners who participated in the process by attending one or more meetings, received meeting announcements, agendas, and notes, and/or communicated via telephone or e-mail are listed in the Appendix.

Grizzly Creek Area CWPP Core Team Members
Burt McGregor
Oscar Jones
Steve Orange

### Step 4 –Community Base Map Established

After considering the location of the inhabited areas, the critical human infrastructure and the risk of wildfire, the Grizzly Creek Area community identified a base map representing a WUI zone around their community assets. Generally, the map forms a large polygon including an area approximately 46 square miles. Colorado State Highway 14 traverses the WUI heading east from approximately mile marker 0 to mile marker 13. The WUI includes primarily private lands with several USFS, BLM and State lands interspersed between private lands. Natural and man-made barriers used to define the WUI boundary include Van Valkenburg Ranches on the northeast end, following Hwy 14 southwest to Indian Creek, following Indian Creek to the Continental Divide, then traversing the divide to Muddy Pass. At this point the WUI boundary cuts across USFS property to include the Rabbit Ears landmark and then essentially follows a straight line northeast across Cloverleaf Valley and Mexican Ridge to connect back to the Van Valkenburg Ranches. The base map of the Grizzly Creek Area WUI and the adjacent landscapes of interest as well as a detailed map of the Grizzly Creek Subdivision is included on the following pages. The boundaries of the WUI map include the following values at risk.

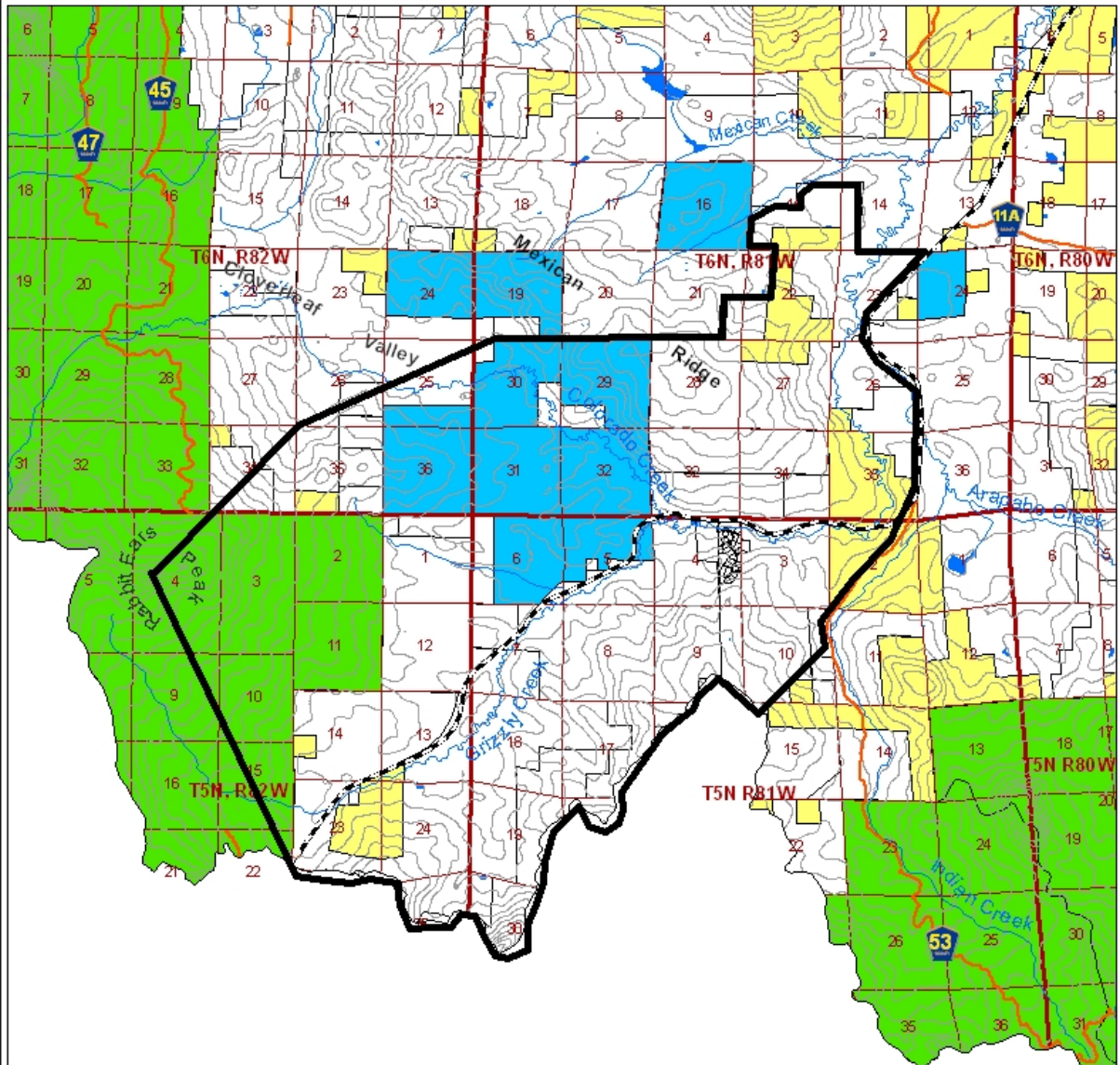
Inhabited areas at potential risk to wildland fire:

- Grizzly Creek Subdivision.
- Dispersed private properties with/without cabins, homes and other structures.

Areas containing critical human infrastructure and values: escape routes, watersheds and municipal water supplies, viewsheds and power or communication structures. These include:

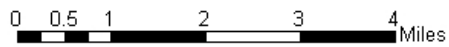
- Colorado State Highway 14 between mile marker 0 to 13.
- Jackson County Roads 1B and 53
- USFS, BLM, State and private roads
- Mountain Parks Electric, Inc.(MPEI) has various electric lines situated in the WUI. Maps provided by MPEI are included in the Appendix.

# Grizzly Creek Vicinity CWPP



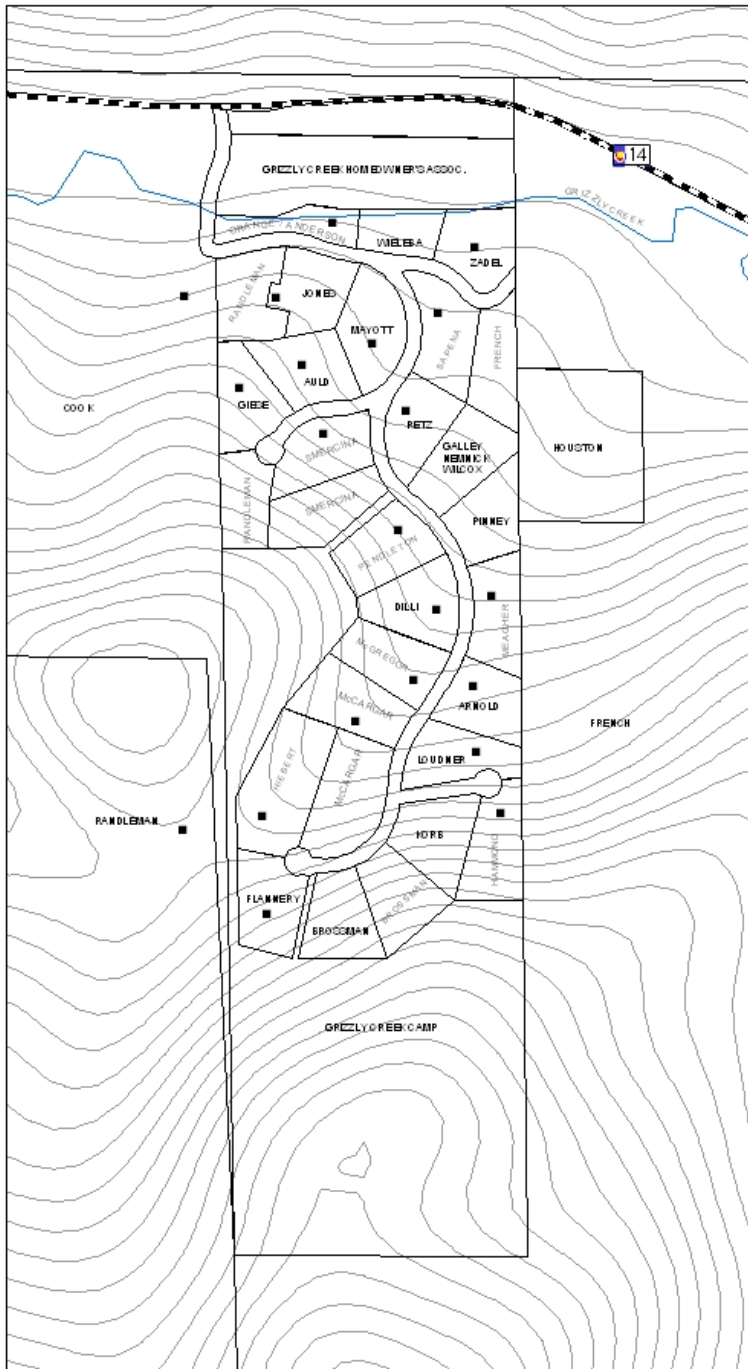
## Legend

- |         |                |
|---------|----------------|
| Private | Township/Range |
| BLM     | CO HWY 14      |
| USFS    | County Road    |
| State   | Rivers         |
| Section | 100' Contour   |
|         | WUI Boundary   |








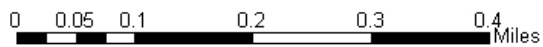
The GIS Data which is published herein has been developed solely for internal use only by Jackson County. The County makes no warranties, representations or guarantees, all for expressed or implied, as to the completeness, accuracy or timeliness of the Data, nor accepts or assumes any liability, responsibility or any other responsibility for the Data. The County is not responsible for indirect, consequential, or special damages arising from the use of the Data published herein.

# Grizzly Creek Subdivision



## Legend

-  Landowner Polygon
-  Structures
-  CO HWY 14
-  Grizzly Creek
-  20' Contours



## **Step 5 –Community Risk Assessment**

Inserted in this section is the Grizzly Creek Area CWPP Risk Assessment completed during a community meeting Saturday, July 1, 2006 attended by 12 residents (listed in Appendix).

Community protection is the responsibility of everyone involved. CWPPs will facilitate agency decision-making and prioritization of projects. Fire can come from within or without the Grizzly Creek Area WUI. To follow are some of the hazards and values at risk identified by the community.

### Fuel Hazards and Risk of Wildfire Occurrence

- Beetle infestation data and on-the-ground observations by foresters indicate significant Mountain Pine and Spruce Bark Beetle activity resulting in many acres of dead and dying trees in the forests surrounding the Grizzly Creek area. Tree mortality from beetle activity is continuously expanding.
- There is a great deal of brush on the ground that has accumulated during defensible space and fuel hazard reduction work to remove dead and dying trees.
- Water in Grizzly Creek was readily available in spring and early summer, but the waterline drops rapidly as summer progresses.
- In the Grizzly Creek Subdivision, prevailing winds may not be as critical as potential for a fire to burn up or down a draw.
- The Indian Creek drainage is situated in a draw with many brush fuels present.
- Within the Grizzly Creek Subdivision fits the Fuels Model 10 category as described in the Jackson County Fire Plan of 2003.
- Fire Chief, Jeff Benson has recently completed an extensive subdivision assessment with specific recommendations provided to individual property owners. Generally, he notes some landowners have completed extensive FireWise work on their properties. Other property owners have done nothing and have dead trees creating a crown fire potential. These properties pose a serious fire threat to the rest of the homeowners in the subdivision. Residents expressed concerns regarding how to encourage neighbors to complete fuel reduction work on such properties (Chief's report is included in the Appendix.)
- Overall, because of the FireWise work completed, the Grizzly Creek Subdivision averages a medium fire risk rating at the time of this assessment. Fire Chief report notes that properties with structures are at medium fire risk and those properties without structures are all at extreme risk.
- If roads become blocked by a downed tree, emergency trucks cannot respond.
- There are many piles of burnable slash along the roads that cannot be burned until winter.
- Summer storms with lightening pose a fire threat in and around the Grizzly Creek area.
- Concerns exist regarding how to properly handle fuels after FireWise work is completed on properties.
- This community wishes to explore proper slash disposal ideas.
- Several ideas were discussed regarding slash removal and handling.

## Homes, Businesses, and Essential Infrastructure at Risk

### *Homes and Businesses*

- To estimate the number of living structures in the Grizzly Creek Area WUI, meeting notices were sent to a mailing list including approximately 38 landowners.
- All homes are log or wood frame construction.
- Most homes have decks, but most decks are not constructed with wood but with composite decking material.
- Most roofing is fire safe with no wood or asphalt shingles being used.
- Visibility of homes from the main road is limited but is increasing with the recent timber cutting going on in the area.
- Businesses in the WUI include guide and outfitter businesses, ranching, and possibly a home based stock brokerage business.

### *Roads, Driveways and Structures*

- No road signs are present in this WUI with the exception of State Highway 14, Jackson County Roads and a USFS sign for Indian Creek.
- Hwy 14 is the only paved road in the WUI. Most other road surfaces are gravel, and some USFS and BLM roads are dirt.
- Most roads will support fire emergency equipment.
- Within Grizzly Creek Subdivision, most roads are one way in/out cul-de-sac roads.
- There are dead end county and private roads and most have adequate turn around space for emergency vehicles.
- Most driveways are accessible to fire trucks.
- Few homes and vacant properties have addresses posted. Need standard signage system similar to what Douglas County Fire Dept in Castle Rock uses.
- There is no 911 reverse system in place.

### *Bridges, Cattle Guards, Culverts, and Gates*

- All bridges and cattle guard would support fire equipment.
- Some gates may be locked, but could be cut with bolt cutters carried in fire trucks.

### *Utilities*

- All telephone lines are underground.
- Some cell phone service is available in the area. Cell phones could use 5 watt boosters with antennae to improve service.
- Most electrical lines are above ground, but some lines are buried.
- Propane tanks are used, most are above ground with only a few below ground, including Auld's and Zadel's.
- No natural gas is available in the area.

### *Water*

- Wells are primary water source.
- Other possible water sources include Grizzly Creek, Arapaho Lake, Muddy Lake, and private ponds on French and VanValkenburg properties.

### Other Community Values at Risk

- Power line Main—69 KW, plus power station at US 40 and CO HWY 14.
- Historical ranches including VanValkenburg and Randleman ranches.
- Shepherd carvings on private properties.
- Rabbit Ears landmark.
- CO DOW State Wildlife Areas.
- North Platte River Headwaters Grizzly Creek Watershed.

### Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capability

- Response time to the Grizzly Creek WUI is 20-30 minutes from Walden. (Question was raised as to whether collaboration could occur across the county line into Grand or Routt County with the nearby Rabbit Ears Village on Muddy Pass.)
- The community could benefit from the multi-county inter-agency fire support partnership that North Park Fire and Rescue participant in.
- This community does not have a community evacuation plan. Some individuals have created evacuation plans.
- Some residents have small generators
- Hand powered walkie-talkie type radios with designated channels might assist with communication.
- Question discussed whether ingress/egress routes should be defined as exits to use in case of emergency, possibly work with French, Randleman, or Zadel to develop such emergency exits.

### **Step 6 – Community Fire Hazard Reduction Priorities and Recommendations**

Inserted in this section are the Grizzly Creek Area CWPP Priorities and Recommendations endorsed by the community during a meeting Saturday, July 22, 2006 attended by 10 residents and agency representatives (listed in Appendix).

### Fuel Treatment Projects

#### *High Priorities*

- There are areas three to four miles beyond the Grizzly Creek WUI defined in this CWPP that include USFS/State/BLM properties. Grizzly Creek residents support fuel reduction activities in those areas.
- Grizzly Creek supports any future hazardous fuel reduction projects on Federal/State properties within their WUI area.
- Landowners would like to see fuels management maintenance work done on right-of-ways and area roadways.
- Landowners would like to coordinate with the Colorado State Forest and MPEI to address slash problems on right-of-ways to reduce potential fire hazards.

## Reducing Structural Ignitability

### *High Priorities*

- Many private property owners have begun extensive work to reduce structural ignitability and they would like to see more of their neighbors do the same.
- Grizzly Creek area residents intend to accomplish the recommendations made by Fire Chief Benson and the CSFS District Forester to continue work in their area.
- Residents would like to schedule annual “walk-throughs” by the Fire Department and other agencies to review accomplishments and build a continual implicit liability in area landowners.
- Grizzly Creek strongly encourages neighboring landowners to complete mitigation work.
- Grizzly Creek would like to investigate how to become a FireWise community.
- Grizzly Creek intends to look into insurance/zoning requirements and issues. Lots with no structures may present a problem, especially from an insurance perspective.
- Fire official inspections will take place prior to the annual homeowner’s meeting, and it will be an annual priority to re-evaluate the CWPP at said meeting. Homeowners will document progress, failings and contact non-conforming loan owners.
- Common Area issues: There is a common area in Grizzly Creek Subdivision that needs to be addressed. How is ownership viewed in the common area? Grizzly Creek residents plan to address fire hazards/fuel loads in said area, and possibly use it as a demonstration project. (It was noted that before and after pictures should be taken in order to demonstrate the positive change in aesthetics and financial value of a Lot after thinning is completed).

## Emergency Preparedness

### *High Priorities*

- Grizzly Creek Area residents would like to see a fire sub-station in close proximity to increase emergency preparedness capability in the area.
- Tim Meagher has created a rough draft of a water storage plan to serve the Grizzly Creek subdivision. Area residents would like to explore funding opportunities to complete this work.
- Explore funding opportunities and grants for fire suppression projects and other water storage projects.
- Grizzly Creek has designated 2-Way radio Channel 5 to be the community band in case of an emergency and/or if the phones go out. Question was raised as to whether there is a communications tower in the area that could be used in an emergency situation
- Grizzly Creek would like community and individual evacuation plans to be completed.
- Evacuation routes, especially through neighboring properties (i.e. French, Randleman, or Zadel) need to be designated.
- Owners are responsible for the evacuation of their own animals/pets.
- Standardized signage needs to be addressed.

The tables below outline Grizzly Creek Area WUI projects, responsible parties and level of priority for implementation.

### **Fuel Treatment Projects**

<b>Project or Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Priority Level</b>
Complete fuel hazard reduction work where needed in areas within 3-4 miles of the Grizzly Creek Area WUI	USFS and contractors	High
Complete fuel hazard reduction projects on Federal and State lands within the Grizzly Creek Area WUI	USFS, BLM, and CSFS	High
Complete fuels management work and create fuel break systems along road right-of-ways in WUI	USFS, BLM, CSFS, CDOT, Jackson County	High
Trim trees along power lines and properly handle slash in WUI	USFS, BLM, CSFS and MPEI	High

### **Projects to Reduce Structural Ignitability**

<b>Project or Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Priority Level</b>
Create defensible space and reduce fire hazards on private property	CSFS, NP Fire and Rescue and Private landowners	High
Complete recommendations made by NP Fire and Rescue and CSFS	Private landowners	High
Schedule annual defensibility assessments of private property prior to annual homeowner's meeting to review progress	CSFS, NP Fire and Rescue and Private landowners	High
Investigate becoming a FireWise community	CSFS, NP Fire and Rescue and Private landowners	High
Investigate insurance and zoning requirements	Private landowners	High
Review CWPP during annual homeowner's meeting	Private landowners and invited agency partners	High

### **Projects to Increase Emergency Preparedness**

<b>Project or Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Priority Level</b>
Explore possibility of building a fire sub-station in area	Private landowners, NP Fire and Rescue, Jackson County	High
Explore feasibility and funding opportunities to complete fire suppression and water storage projects	Private landowners, NP Fire and Rescue, Jackson County	High

Designate 2-Way radio Channel 5 to use as an emergency community communication band	Private landowners	High
Complete individual and community evacuation plans including possible evacuation routes through private properties	Private landowners, NP Fire and Rescue and Jackson County	High
Post standardized address signs	Private landowners, Jackson County	High

### Step 7 –Action Plan and Assessment Strategy

- The Grizzly Creek Area community recommends all above stated priorities be considered for projects to accomplish in this WUI. All projects listed are considered valuable and important to the residents of this WUI. Private residents, Jackson County, North Park Fire and Rescue, Colorado State Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Routt-Medicine Bow National Forest will be responsible for initiating projects based on land ownership and/or jurisdiction.
- The community recognizes that all private individuals, Jackson County, and partnering agencies experience budget constraints. However, the projects listed in this CWPP are considered critical and important in the effort to protect life and property in the Grizzly Creek Area and therefore deserve immediate attention.
- The Grizzly Creek Area community recommends that projects listed above as *Highest Priorities* be completed immediately in 2006-2007.
- The Grizzly Creek Area community will review and assess progress on recommended projects and update their CWPP during their annual meeting. All partnering agencies are strongly encouraged to participate by providing updates during this annual meeting.

### Step 8 – Finalizing the Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Grizzly Creek Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties and land management agencies managing land in the vicinity of Grizzly Creek have been invited to participate and provide input to the process by mail, e-mail, telephone, and face to face during CWPP meetings.
- Identified and prioritized areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment that will protect the Grizzly Creek Area.
- Recommends measures to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

Signatures

The following mutually agree with the contents of this Grizzly Creek Area Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

**Jackson County Board of County Commissioners**

Naida L. Crowner \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Michael A. Blanton \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

John C. Rich \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Fire Chief, North Park Fire and Rescue**

Jeff Benson \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**District Forester, Colorado State Forest Service**

John Twitchell \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Jackson County Administrator/Director of Emergency Management for Jackson County**

Kent Crowder \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Jackson County Sheriff**

Rick Rizor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Acting District Ranger, Parks District, Routt-Medicine Bow National Forest**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Acting Field Manager, Kremmling Field Office, Bureau of Land Management**

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Grizzly Creek Homeowners Association**

Chair/President

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# **Appendix**

## **Resource Materials Used**

- *Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003*
- *Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, A Handbook for Wildland-Urban Interface Communities*, March 2004; Communities Committee, National Association of Counties, National Association of State Foresters, Society of American Foresters, Western Governors' Association
- *Community Wildfire Protection Plans-Guidelines for Implementation*, Colorado State Forest Service, August 2005
- *Community Fire Planning Workbook*, State of Utah, Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.
- California Fire Alliance website CWPP template, [www.cafirealliance.org](http://www.cafirealliance.org).
- *Leaders Guide Supplement*, International Association of Fire Chiefs
- *Jackson County Fire Plan, 2003*
- *Jackson County Firefighters Response Guide, 2003*

**Grizzly Creek Area CWPP Organizational Meeting  
June 15, 2006 at McGregor Home  
Participant List**

Present:

1. Burt McGregor
2. Mary McGregor
3. Oscar Jones
4. Steve Orange
5. Curran Trick
6. Deb Alpe

**Grizzly Creek Area CWPP Risk Assessment  
July 8, 2006 at McGregor Home  
Participant List**

Listed in order of sign up sheet:

1. Burt McGregor
2. Mary McGregor
3. John W. Zadel
4. Mary Zadel
5. Chris VanValkenburg
6. Carla VanValkenburg
7. Dean Brossman
8. Carla Brossman
9. Carol Jones
10. Oscar Jones
11. Jim Loudner
12. Cheryl Loudner
13. Ingrid Anderson
14. Larry French
15. Deb Alpe

**Grizzly Creek Area CWPP Priorities and Recommendations  
July 22, 2006 at McGregor Home  
Participant List**

Listed in order of sign up sheet:

1. Burt McGregor
2. Mary McGregor
3. Ingrid Anderson
4. Oscar Jones
5. Carol Jones
6. Garry Auld
7. Lynn Barclay
8. Brook Lee
9. Curran Trick
10. Deb Alpe

**Grizzly Creek Area CWPP  
Mountain Parks Electric, Inc.  
Electric Line Maps**