

# **Understanding Community Wildfire Protection Plans in Colorado**

Dr. Jerry J. Vaske  
Professor

Dr. James D. Absher  
Affiliate

Katie M. Lyon  
Graduate Student

Colorado State University  
Human Dimensions of Natural Resources  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80523

Courtney L. Peterson  
Colorado State Forest Service  
3843 Laporte Ave.  
Fort Collins, Colorado 80521

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## Executive Summary

- Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) allow a community to address the challenges of living in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) by incorporating comprehensive and locally supported solutions for wildfire mitigation.
- The objectives of this report were to:
  1. Assess the overall status of CWPPs in selected counties in Colorado.
  2. Identify frequency, type, and ongoing communications among CWPP members.
  3. Determine the extent to which communities have been successful in competing for grant funds to implement their CWPPs.
  4. Assess progress toward CWPP goals and fuel treatments implemented.
  5. Identify barriers to CWPP implementation.
  6. Assess outreach and education efforts.
- Data for this project were obtained from a survey sent to all 212 CWPPs in Colorado ( $n = 133$ , response rate = 63%). Additional information was obtained from 18 semi-structured interviews with key participants in the CWPP process.
- The level at which the CWPP was developed influences the content of the plan. For example, owner associations can direct their members to take very specific actions. County plans, on the other hand, tend to focus on the broader landscape. Fire protection districts (FPDs) often focus on tactical, operations issues that are important if a fire occurs. The report compares survey responses from county ( $n = 32$ ), FPD ( $n = 30$ ) and owner association ( $n = 42$ ) CWPPs.
- The level of the plan influenced the core team and partner membership. For example, county CWPPs were more likely to include a representative from county government than the other two levels. FPDs tended to have a person from the local fire authority. All three types of CWPPs typically had a Colorado State Forest Service representative.
- Three-quarters (78%) of the owner association CWPPs were written by a member of the core team; compared to 46% (county) and 39% (FPD) where a member of the core team authored the plan. Over half (57%) of the FPD CWPPs were prepared by consultants. Only 18% of the owner association CWPPs were written by a consulting firm.
- Once the plan was finalized, 41% of the county and 46% of owner association members continued to meet; only 7% of the FPD members continued to meet.
- Over half (59%) of the county, 79% of the FPDs and 85% of the owner associations had applied for grants to assist with implementation of CWPP goals. Among those who responded, 74% reported receiving the amount they requested. The size of the grant ranged from \$136 to \$980,000.
- Over two-thirds (68% and 78%) of the FPD and county CWPPs communicate on an “as needed” basis with partners. Fourteen percent of the FPD members never talk with their partners; and 5% the owner association and 7% of the county CWPPs gave a similar response.
- All three levels of CWPPs use email as their primary type of communication (county = 87%, FPD = 80%; owner association = 93%).
- Between 81% (county) and 98% (owner association) of the respondents noted progress toward implementing their CWPP goals.

- The Colorado State Forest Service facilitated the implementation at all three CWPP levels (owner associations = 78%, county = 80%, FPD = 63%). Consulting firms were involved in the implementation of about a quarter of CWPPs (county = 28%, FPD = 25%, owner association = 24%).
- More than 80% of the three levels of CWPPs had implemented fuel treatment projects, with nearly all (98%) of the owner associations reporting such projects. Thinning (92% - 98%) and defensible space (84% - 100%) were the most common forms of fuel treatment. Hand felling (80% - 100%) and clipping (71% - 85%) were the most common treatment methods. More than 75% of the CWPPs used contractors to implement fuels treatment projects.
- The average number of acres already treated varied by the level of the CWPP. Counties reported a mean of 2,279 acres treated. FPDs had treated an average of 306 acres and the owner associations had treated an average of 168. Acres already treated ranged from 0 to 18,000.
- About a third (36%) of the county and half (53%) of the owner associations used grant reports to track fuel treatment implementation. A quarter of the county (24%) and FPD (25%) CWPPs used GIS. Only 12% of the owner association CWPPs used GIS. One third of the county CWPPs did not track fuel treatment implementation. Less than 30% of the FPDs and 15% of the owner association CWPPs did not track implementation.
- Lack of funding was the biggest obstacle to implementation for all three levels of CWPPs (county = 72%, FPD = 79%, owner association = 67%). Over half of the county (55%) and FPD (59%) CWPPs noted time as a barrier. Only 28% of the owner associations indicated time was a barrier. Between 41% (county) and 48% (FPD) of the CWPPs noted that community involvement limited their ability to achieve implementation goals.
- Email was a common form of community outreach for owner association (83%) and county (66%) CWPPs, but less so for FPD CWPPs (41%). Community meetings were used by all three levels of CWPP (county = 66%, FPD = 66%, owner association = 83%). Over half of the counties (59%) and FPDs (52%) used webpages for community outreach; about four fifths (41%) of the owner associations used webpages for this purpose. Social media (e.g., Facebook) was more common among the county (41%) and FPD (38%) CWPPs, than with the owner associations (7%). Over 15% of the county or FPD CWPPs and 5% of the owner associations admitted to not doing community outreach.
- Community events (e.g., chipping days) were used by 40% of the counties, 69% of the FPDs, and 76% of the owner associations as an education strategy. Demonstration projects were used by between 35% and 45% (FPD and owner association, respectively) of the CWPPs. Almost a quarter of the county (23%), 17% of the FPDs, and 12% of the owner association CWPPs had not done any of the community education activities listed on the survey.
- The interviewees noted a number of challenges to community involvement (e.g., knowledge of CWPPs, relevance to community members, low attendance at meetings, absentee landowners, and lack of involvement by younger generations).
- The interviewees, however, also offered a number of recommendations for planning and implementing a CWPP, and for improving community involvement. These recommendations are summarized in the lessons learned section of the report.

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## **Introduction**

Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) were authorized and defined in Title I of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) passed by Congress on Nov. 21, 2003, and signed into law by President Bush on Dec. 3, 2003. The HFRA emphasizes community planning by extending a variety of benefits to communities with a wildfire protection plan.

CWPPs represent an opportunity for a community to address the challenges of the wildland-urban interface (WUI) by incorporating comprehensive and locally supported solutions. The HFRA renewed the emphasis on community planning by extending a variety of benefits. Critical among these benefits is the option of establishing a localized definition and boundary for the wildland-urban interface, and the opportunity to help shape fuels treatment priorities for surrounding federal and non-federal lands (HFRA, 2003). The CWPP, as described in the Act, brings together diverse local interests to discuss their mutual concerns for public safety, community sustainability and natural resources.

CWPPs are developed by a community in an area at-risk from wildfire and offer a positive, solution-oriented environment in which to address challenges such as local firefighting capability, the need for defensible space around homes and subdivisions, and where and how to prioritize land management on both federal and non-federal land. CWPPs may address issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, or structure protection.

The involvement of local citizens in community wildfire preparedness also exposes wildfire managers and community planners to public opinions beyond expert knowledge and scientific inquiry. Local knowledge held by community members is a crucial component of a community's social capital. A valid CWPP must meet three minimum requirements. First, the plan must be collaboratively developed by local and state government representatives in consultation with federal agencies and other interested parties. Second, the plan must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend methods of treatments to protect at-risk communities and essential infrastructure. Third, the plan must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

### **CWPPs in Colorado**

The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) has established minimum standards for the development of CWPPs in Colorado and has promoted the development and implementation of CWPPs as a tool to help build fire adapted communities. With over 200 CWPPs now in existence in Colorado, it is essential to assess the effectiveness of these efforts and/or identify barriers that prohibit participation and implementation. In Colorado, the CWPP process must include local government, the local fire authority, local CSFS personnel and representatives of relevant federal land management agencies, as well as other appropriate non-governmental partners.

A CWPP can be developed for any level of "community," from a homeowners association or mountain town to a metropolitan city or county. Information contained in the plan should be at a level of specificity appropriate for the community. County level plans can be used as an umbrella for community plans but should not be considered a substitute for more specific plans such as a fire protection district (FPD) or a homeowners association because they will not provide the detail needed for project-level planning.

In 2009, the Colorado General Assembly passed SB 09-001 requiring counties to complete a CWPP for identified fire hazard areas within the unincorporated areas of the county. Of Colorado's 64 counties, 47 counties have completed a countywide CWPP (Note: Denver and Broomfield Counties are completely incorporated and are, therefore, excluded). A plan must have the following components:

- A description of the community's wildland-urban interface problem areas, preferably with a map and narrative.
- Information about the community's preparedness to respond to a wildfire.
- A community risk analysis narrative that considers, at a minimum, fuel hazards, risk of wildfire occurrence and community values to be protected both in the immediate vicinity and the surrounding zone where potential fire spread poses a realistic threat.
- Identification of fuels treatment priorities on the ground and methods of treatment.
- Ways to reduce structural ignitability.
- An implementation plan that identifies high priority fuels treatments and the community's plan for when a wildfire occurs.

## **Study Objectives**

The overall objectives of this CWPP assessment were to:

1. Assess the overall status of CWPPs in Colorado (e.g., level, year plan was completed, core team, partners, authors of the CWPP).
2. Identify frequency, type, and ongoing communications among CWPP members (e.g., whether community members involved in CWPP development have remained actively involved throughout implementation).
3. Determine the extent to which communities have been successful in competing for grant funds to implement their CWPPs.
4. Assess progress toward CWPP goals and fuel treatments implemented.
5. Identify barriers to CWPP implementation.
6. Assess outreach and education efforts.

## **Methods**

### **Online Surveys**

A short survey designed to gather general information across all CWPPs in the state was conducted in spring 2014 (See Appendix A). Questions focused on planning, communication and outreach, implementation, and financial assistance. As of 2014, there were 212 CWPPs completed in the state of Colorado<sup>1</sup>. Responses were obtained from 133 of the 212 CWPPs (response rate = 63%). Several open-ended questions in the survey provided additional qualitative information (See Appendix D).

### **Key Informant Interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key participants in the CWPP processes (see Appendix C for interview questions). Participants were selected to ensure representation of a variety of types of CWPPs from county-level to subdivision-level. Eighteen interviews were conducted August 2014 to January 2015. All interviews were recorded with the permission of the subjects and transcribed into text files.

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<sup>1</sup> A list of completed CWPPs can be found on the Colorado State Forest Service website at: <http://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/community-wildfire-protection-plans/>



## Results

Because the level of the CWPP matters, the following compares survey responses from counties, FPDs and owner associations. Appendix B displays the overall percentages across all CWPP surveys. Where appropriate, interviewee comments are reported.

### Objective 1: Overall Status of CWPPs

The first objective was to assess the overall status of CWPPs in Colorado (e.g., level, year plan was completed, core team, partners, authors of the CWPP). As expected, owner association (32%), county (24%), and FPD (23%) plans made up the majority of CWPPs in the state. However, there were a number of plans that fell into the "other" category and included plans conducted in portions of a county or across portions of several counties.

Table 1. Level of CWPP plan

Level of plan	Frequency	Percent
Owner association	42	32
County	32	24
Fire protection district	30	23
City or town	6	5
Other <sup>1</sup>	23	15

1. e.g., portion of county, special designated area

The plans in the sample covered years from 2003 to 2014, with the most plans approved in 2011 ( $n = 26$ , Table 2). About a third (34%) of the plans were currently being revised.

Table 2. Year plan was approved

Year plan approved	Frequency	Percent
2003*	2	2
2004	3	2
2005	5	4
2006	12	9
2007	23	17
2008	15	11
2009	16	12
2010	8	6
2011	26	20
2012	10	9
2013	10	8
2014	1	1

\* Pre-CWPP county emergency plans

As might be expected, 94% of county level CWPPs included a representative from the county government in the core team (Table 3). Only 41% of the FPD CWPPs and 52% of the owner associations CWPPs contained a county government representative on the core team. These differences were statistically significant and the effect size was substantial.

Of the 10 organizations or agencies listed in Table 3, statistical differences were observed in six of the comparisons of core team composition across the three levels of CWPPs (county, FPD, owner association).

Table 3. Core team during the development of the CWPP

	% Yes, Included on Team			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
County Government	94	41	52	24.23	< .001	.447
Colorado State Forest Service	91	86	83	0.54	.652	.089
Local Fire Authority	88	97	67	12.21	.004	.331
Local Government	81	45	21	27.89	< .001	.504
U.S. Forest Service	63	45	43	3.18	.204	.206
Owner Association	53	38	88	22.23	< .001	.446
Bureau of Land Management	53	21	24	9.28	.010	.305
Individual Homeowner(s)	47	45	60	1.88	.390	.135
Consulting Firm	31	52	17	9.88	.007	.309
National Park Service	25	10	10	3.80	.149	.130

Compared to the core team, fewer statistical differences (4 as opposed to 6) among the three levels of CWPPs were observed for the composition of partners involved in the development of the plan (Table 4). For example, 70% or more of county, FPD and owner association teams included a partner from the local fire authority.

Table 4. Partners during the development of the CWPP

	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Local Fire Authority	74	72	70	0.11	.946	.035
County Government	70	46	39	6.56	.038	.272
Colorado State Forest Service	70	62	62	0.59	.743	.081
Local Government	52	33	19	7.34	.025	.290
U.S. Forest Service	52	42	31	2.95	.228	.184
Individual Homeowner(s)	41	63	42	3.16	.206	.190
Owner Association	37	37	63	6.06	.048	.263
Bureau of Land Management	37	21	22	2.20	.333	.162
Consulting Firm	19	46	19	6.05	.049	.272
National Park Service	15	8	3	3.14	.208	.186

Over three-quarters (78%) of the owner association CWPPs were written by a member of the core team (Table 5). This compares to 46% (county) and 39% (FPD) where a member of the core team authored the plan. Over half (57%) of the FPD CWPPs were prepared by consultants. Owner associations were least likely to use a consulting firm to write the CWPP.

Table 5. Authors of the CWPP

Authors of the CWPP	% Yes			$\chi^2$	p-value	Cramer's V
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Member of the core team	46	39	78	12.31	.002	.356
Consulting firm	45	57	18	12.18	.002	.348
Other <sup>1</sup>	36	19	18	3.08	.215	.186

1. The other category included the names of specific individuals or unknown.

**Objective 2: Communications among CWPP Members**

Once the plan was finalized, less than half of the county (41%) and owner associations (46%) members continued to meet (Table 6). This compares to only 7% of the FPD members. There were no statistical differences among the three levels of CWPPs in terms of how frequently the members met, but the lack of statistical differences can be attributed to the small sample size.

Table 6. Communication among CWPP core team

	County %	FPD %	Owner Association %	$\chi^2$	p-value	Cramer's V
Does the core team continue to meet?						
No	59	93	54			
Yes	41	7	46			
If yes, how often does the core team meet?				8.24	.083	.334
Monthly	15	0	24			
Quarterly	39	100	19			
Annually	46	0	57			
Sample size <sup>1</sup>	13	3	21			

1. Given the small sample size, percents and summary statistics should be interpreted cautiously.

Between 68% (FPD) and 78% (county) of the CWPP teams communicate with partners on an “as needed” basis. Fourteen percent of the FPD members never talk with their partners. Five percent of the owner association CWPPs and 7% of the county CWPPs gave a similar response.

Table 7. Communication among partners

	County %	FPD %	Owner Association %	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
Frequency of communication with CWPP partners				6.60	.883	.184
Weekly	4	4	2			
Monthly	7	7	10			
Quarterly	4	0	7			
Twice a year	0	4	2			
Annually	0	4	5			
As needed	78	68	69			
Never	7	14	5			
Sample size <sup>1</sup>	27	28	42			

1. Given the number of cells in the table, summary statistics should be interpreted cautiously.

All three levels of CWPPs use email as their primary type of communication (County = 87%, FPD = 80%; owner association = 93%, Table 8). Several respondents wrote in that they also used “in person” communication.

Table 8. Types of communication with CWPP partners

Type of communication	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Email	87	80	93	2.20	.333	.152
Phone	60	64	70	0.78	.676	.091
Meetings	57	60	58	0.07	.967	.026
Mail	3	16	13	3.04	.219	.166

### Objective 3: Success with Grant Applications

Communities often find themselves in need of funding for wildfire mitigation projects. Although funding opportunities are not abundant, assistance does exist from sources at the federal, regional, state, county and local levels. For example, at the federal level the BLM offers a community fire assistance grant. This grant supports fire departments, local governments, community service organizations, educational institutions and non-profit organizations throughout Colorado, for any wildland fire-related projects (e.g., wildfire planning, mitigation actions, fire education/prevention). The Department of Homeland Security/FEMA administers the Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grant Program. The PDM program provides funding to states, territories, Indian tribal governments, communities and universities for hazard mitigation planning and implementation of mitigation projects prior to a disaster event. Eligible applicants include those involved with national fire plan and WUI community fire assistance.

At the state level, the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (DNR) offers the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program (see <http://dnr.state.co.us/Media/Pages/WRRG.aspx>). This program, created under Senate Bill 13-269 in 2015 by the Colorado General Assembly, is focused on projects that reduce the risk for damage to property, infrastructure, and water supplies, and those that limit the likelihood of wildfires spreading into populated areas. Funds are directed to non-federal lands within Colorado.

Some grants are location specific. For example, FireWise of Southwest Colorado has “Kickstart” grants. These grants are typically small amounts of money intended for groups who have just recently completed a CWPP to get things started while people still have enthusiasm. At the private level, grants have been available from insurance companies (e.g., Allstate) and private organizations (e.g., Anschutz Foundation).

In our sample, 59% of the county CWPPs had applied for grants to assist with implementation of CWPP goals (Table 9). The percentage increased to 79% among the FPDs and 85% for the owner associations. Among those who responded, 74% reported receiving the amount they requested. The size of the grant ranged from \$136 to \$980,000.

Projects that counties sought funding for included BLM Community Assistance, CSFS Fuels Reduction, and the Colorado DNR Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant. The FPDs sought grants from similar sources, but as noted by one Fire Chief:

“We tend to go at much higher levels for really big bucks type stuff ... generally equipment. We’ve done some pretty significant ones for communications equipment.”

The owner associations reported similar sources but also sought money from county government, owner associations, and local sources, such as FireWise of Southwest Colorado.

Table 9. Sought financial assistance

	County (%)	FPD (%)	Owner Association (%)	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer’s <i>V</i>
Has anyone applied for grants to assist with implementation of CWPP goals				6.58	.034	.258
No	41	21	15			
Yes	59	79	85			

#### Objective 4: Progress toward CWPP Goals

The mere creation of a CWPP does not ensure the implementation of plan goals, thus it is important to gauge whether CWPP goals are being implemented once the plan is complete. Between 81% (county) and 98% (owner association) of the respondents noted progress toward implementing their CWPP goals (Table 10).

Table 10. Progress toward implementing CWPP goals

	County (%)	FPD (%)	Owner Association (%)	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
Have you made progress toward implementing your CWPP goals?				7.45	.024	.248
No	19	18	2			
Yes	81	82	98			

Implementation of the CWPPs involved a diversity of organizations and agencies (Table 11). As expected, county governments were most instrumental in county level CWPPs (96%), owner associations were dominant for that level of CWPP (90%), and local fire authorities had a major influence on the implementation of FPD CWPPs (88%). The Colorado State Forest Service facilitated the implementation at all three CWPP levels (county = 80%, FPD = 63%, owner association = 80%). Individual homeowners were more likely to be involved in FPD (79%) or owner association (73%) plans, than the county plans (44%). Consulting firms were involved in the implementation of about a quarter of county (28%), FPD (25%), and owner association (24%) CWPPs.

Table 11. People and organizations involved in implementing the CWPP

	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
County Government	96	38	34	31.79	< .001	.544
Colorado State Forest Service	80	63	78	2.37	.305	.166
Local Fire Authority	80	88	51	11.68	.003	.354
Owner Association	68	42	90	17.55	< .001	.442
Local Government	56	21	5	22.95	< .001	.503
Individual Homeowner(s)	44	79	73	8.03	.016	.303
U.S. Forest Service	40	29	22	2.42	.297	.165
Consulting Firm	28	25	24	0.11	.945	.035
Bureau of Land Management	20	17	7	2.57	.277	.290
National Park Service	4	0	2	0.92	.632	.101

Eighty percent or more of the three levels of CWPPs had implemented fuel treatment projects (Table 12), with nearly all (98%) of the owner associations reporting such projects.

Table 12. Implementation of fuel treatment projects

	County (%)	FPD (%)	Owner Association (%)	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
Have fuel treatment projects been implemented?				6.79	.034	.243
No	20	14	2			
Yes	80	86	98			

Thinning (92% - 98%) and defensible space (84% - 100%) were the most common forms of fuels treatment (Table 13). Fuel breaks ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in popularity (60% - 80%) and about a fifth of the CWPPs used prescribed burning (17% - 22%).

Table 13. Types of fuel treatment projects that have been implemented

Implemented fuel treatments	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Thinning	92	96	98	1.14	.566	.112
Defensible space	92	84	100	8.30	.016	.269
Fuel breaks	60	80	75	2.69	.250	.175
Prescribed burning	22	17	18	0.16	.925	.043
Cross-boundary	17	22	26	0.67	.717	.089

Hand felling (80% - 100%) and clipping (71% - 85%) were the most common fuels treatment methods (Table 14). Between 50% (owner associations) and 60% (county) of the CWPPs used pile burning. Four percent or less used broadcast burning.

Table 14. Methods of fuels treatment

Treatment methods	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Hand felling	80	100	98	9.80	.006	.336
Clipping	71	84	85	2.03	.362	.156
Pile burning	60	58	50	0.74	.689	.092
Mastication	42	26	58	6.15	.046	.265
Machine-piling slash	29	20	32	1.14	.567	.110
Commercial timber harvest	17	21	11	1.18	.553	.118
Broadcast burning	4	4	3	0.16	.922	.044

Seventy-five percent or more of the CWPPs used contractors to implement fuels treatment projects (Table 15).

Table 15. Use of contractors for implementing fuels treatments

	County (%)	FPD (%)	Owner Association (%)	$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
Have contractors been used to implement fuel treatments?				1.53	.465	.135
No	12	21	10			
Yes	87	79	90			

The average number of acres already treated did vary by the level of the CWPP (Table 16). The counties reported a mean of 2,279 acres treated. The FPDs had treated an average of 306 acres and the owner associations had treated an average of 168. The range of acres already treated by the CWPPs, however, was large (0 – 18,000). There were no statistical differences among the levels of CWPPs in terms of the average number of acres planned for treatment.

Table 16. Average number of acres treated or planned for treatment

Acres	County ( <i>M</i> )	FPD ( <i>M</i> )	Owner Association ( <i>M</i> )	<i>F</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value	Range
Already treated	2,279	306	168	3.47	.038	0 – 18,000
Planned for treatment	536	482	238	1.02	.367	0 – 3,700

Between 36% (county) and 53% (owner association) used grant reports to track fuel treatment implementation (Table 17). About a quarter of the county (24%) and FPD (25%) CWPPs used GIS; only 12% of the owner association CWPPs used GIS. A third of the county CWPPs did not track fuel treatment implementation, although as noted by one county official: “tracking CWPP progress would be a helpful recommendation for future CWPPs, especially those carried out by consultants.” About one-third of the FPD CWPPs did not track implementation.

Table 17. Tracking fuel treatment implementation

Implementation tracking	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Grant reports	36	42	53	2.19	.339	.155
GIS	24	25	12	2.28	.320	.157
Spreadsheets	20	29	29	0.82	.664	.093
Not tracking implementation	32	29	15	3.24	.198	.190



### Objective 5: Barriers to CWPP implementation

Implementation of CWPP goals remains a challenge. Lack of funding was the biggest obstacle to implementation for all three levels of CWPP (county = 72%, FPD = 79%, owner association = 67%). Over half of the county (55%) and FPD (59%) CWPPs noted time as a barrier; 28% of the owner associations indicated time was a barrier. Between 41% (county) and 48% (FPD) of the CWPPs said community involvement limited their ability to achieve implementation goals. Lack of political support was a barrier for about a quarter of the counties (24%), a third of the FPDs (31%) and 11% of the owner associations.

Table 18. Obstacles to CWPP implementation

Obstacles to CWPP Implementation – Lack of:	% Yes			$\chi^2$	p-value	Cramer's V
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Funding	72	79	67	1.31	.521	.117
Time	55	59	28	7.86	.020	.285
Community involvement	41	48	47	0.33	.848	.059
Political support	24	31	11	4.21	.122	.207

Interviewees noted that barriers to implementation included lack of specific projects and ability to do work on private property. Interviewees felt their plans were more successful when they had specific projects outlined. Several interviewees mentioned that their plans did not outline specific enough projects, and although, having broad goals is desirable, they also noted that having specific projects outlined can help keep the momentum going once the CWPP is written.

Barriers to community involvement in implementation include misconceptions about what wildfire mitigation entails and shortsightedness. As noted by one landowner: “It’s just getting folks to get over the fear of clear-cutting and of course, digging deep into their pockets.” Another landowner said: “Nobody thinks about this stuff when there's still a little bit of snow on the mountains and things haven't greened up yet.”

## Objective 6: Outreach and Education Efforts

Some forms of community outreach are significantly different across levels. Email was a common form of community outreach for owner associations (83%) and county (66%) CWPPs, but less so for FPDs (41%, Table 19). Community meetings were used by all three levels of CWPP (county = 66%, FPD = 66%, owner association = 83%). Social media (e.g., Facebook) was more common among the county (41%) and FPD (38%) CWPPs, than with the owner associations (7%). Other methods show no statistical difference across CWPP levels. Over half of the counties (59%) and FPDs (52%) used webpages for community outreach, and less than half (41%) of the owner associations used webpages for this purpose. Among the methods that are similar, over 15% of the county or FPD CWPPs and 5% of the owner association CWPPs said they do not do community outreach.

Table 19. Community outreach methods

Community outreach	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Email	66	41	83	13.66	.001	.362
Community meetings	63	66	86	6.38	.041	.242
Webpage	59	52	41	2.69	.261	.161
Mass media (e.g., newspaper)	44	14	2	21.91	< .001	.454
Social media (e.g., Facebook)	41	38	7	15.17	.001	.361
Mailings	41	38	45	0.40	.818	.062
Newsletters	34	38	48	1.46	.483	.119
Phone	28	17	31	1.85	.397	.131
Door hangers	6	7	7	0.02	.988	.015
Have not done community outreach	16	17	5	3.66	.160	.191

The survey listed a number of community education strategies (Table 20). One was significantly different across levels: community events were used by 40% of the counties, 69% of the FPDs, and 76% of the owner associations. Other strategies were not statistically different, however, some are more commonly used than others. Demonstration projects were used by between 35% (FPD) and 45% (owner associations) of the CWPPs. Household visits were used by 48% of the FPDs. And about a quarter of the county (23%) CWPPs had not done any of the community education activities listed on the survey.

Table 20. Community education strategies

Community education	% Yes			$\chi^2$	<i>p</i> -value	Cramer's <i>V</i>
	County	FPD	Owner Association			
Community events (e.g., chipping days)	40	69	76	10.30	.006	.321
Demonstration projects	40	35	45	0.83	.659	.091
Household visits	27	48	33	3.14	.208	.177
Field trips	23	14	17	0.98	.621	.099
Youth engagement	10	7	5	0.73	.649	.086
Have not done any activities	23	17	12	1.63	.443	.127

## **Recommendations and Lessons Learned**

This section outlines some interviewee recommendations for planning and implementing a CWPP, as well as respondent thoughts about community involvement, evacuation planning, and updating plans.

### **Recommendations for CWPP Planning**

Although the "genius" of HFRA and CWPPs is that they are flexible, this can be a barrier for homeowner-driven (e.g., owner association) plans that have less expertise.

- *Get started.*  
 “The biggest single thing you have to do is get started.” – Landowner
- *Generate community interest.*  
 “Interest cannot be from some official saying you have to do this.” – Landowner  
 “The community has got to generate its own interest.” – Contractor  
 “If you’re trying to get traction and get a first CWPP done, get people to be positive and forward thinking.” – Landowner
- *Providing guidance accessible to all levels of expertise.*  
 “Try to make CWPP process as easy as possible; don’t make it over regulatory because it scares people away. Need people to do it in the first place. Things will happen from there.” – Contractor  
 “Provide a template for writing a CWPP; makes the process less daunting, allows to focus on specific projects.” – Landowner

An example template for writing CWPPs is available on the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (CO-WRAP) website: <https://www.coloradowildfirerisk.com/Help/CwppTemplate>, and all CWPPs are available on the CSFS website: <http://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/colorado-community-wildfire-protection-plans/>

### **Recommendations for CWPP Implementation**

- *Don’t be dependent on grants to get work done.*  
 “Sell people on the concept that it’s important to do [the work outlined in the CWPP] whether we have outside funding or not.” – Landowner  
 “Encourage owners to protect their investment by taking mitigation actions.” – Landowner  
 “We maintain a commitment that we have in our budget money to self-fund work.” – Landowner
- *Write specific projects into the plan.*  
 “The CWPP was probably too general in terms of not specifying enough particular projects that needed to get done.” – Fire Chief  
 “Build answers to grant application questions into your plans.” – Emergency Manager
- *Take advantage of time when wildfires are in the spotlight and maintain momentum.*  
 “Build on momentum – take advantage of time after wildfires to get public involved.” – Contractor

## Challenges to Community Involvement

One of the main goals of CWPPs is to engage the community in wildfire mitigation planning; however, it is one of the hardest components to achieve. The interviewees mentioned a number of challenges to community involvement:

- *Knowledge of the CWPP*

“There wasn’t much involvement in the planning side of it. In fact, I would say almost nobody in the community even knows it’s out there with the exception of a couple of specific neighborhoods that we have discussed the CWPP with.” – Fire Chief

- *Communicating relevance of CWPPs to community members*

“I’m not sure how much of that is this specific to this CWPP as opposed to homeowners just not understanding how they fit into CWPP’s in general.” – District Forester

- *Very few community members show up for meetings*

“When we had the interested party meeting, the only [people that showed up were CSFS], a couple county commissioners and sheriff, the fire chief and a couple of his buddies, and myself and that was it.” – Contractor

- *Lack of involvement by second / absentee landowners*

People are often frustrated by the lack of involvement by secondary and absentee homeowners.

“It’s very hard to make an impression on somebody if you only get to have a short time, maybe a few weeks, maybe a month for them to understand what their property does and how it affects their neighbors.”

“We’ve got absentee land owners with no home on the property that quite frankly just don’t care. That’s not their problem. They pay their taxes. That’s good. They may never mitigate their property even under threat of a lawsuit by their neighbors.” – Fire Chief

- *Lack of involvement by younger generations*

“It’s definitely mostly a retirement age. I’m saying anywhere from 50 to 75.” – Mitigation Specialist

## Recommendations for Successful Community Involvement

- *Use the CWPP as an educational tool.*

“Developing the CWPP was a great way to learn more about the area we protect.” – County CWPP

“It is also a great educational tool for newcomers to the wildland-urban interface.” – Landowner

“Copies [of the evacuation plan] are available for new residents. One family has made multiple copies for cabin guests.” – Landowner

- *Identify demonstration properties / sites with proper mitigation work being maintained.*

“The most effective way of educating and informing the community about the plan was using my own property as an example.” – Landowner

“Have people walk the property.” – Landowner

- *Utilize the CWPP to create a sense of community.*  
 “We build a community, and when you’re trying to establish either a wildfire protection plan or a FireWise Community, community is the key word. People need to know each other and care about each other and talk to each other.” – Landowner  
 “Building a sense of community is essential for successful implementation.” – Contractor  
 “Get younger landowners involved in mitigation work by helping their neighbors do work on their land ... if they’ve actually donated an hour or a couple of hours of their time ... then you’re probably willing to stay invested in the project over the long-term.” – Volunteer Firefighter
- *Utilize existing community groups and resources.*  
 “Utilize organized groups, events, community gathering places (e.g., fire station).” – Contractor
- *Create an action plan for community involvement within the CWPP.*  
 “Engage youth in wildfire learning opportunities.” – Fire Chief

### **Shift Focus beyond Fuels Mitigation**

- *Increase focus on preparedness and evacuation planning.*  
 “I think the new focus has got to be more on the evacuation side, and that’s what has been missed in that whole FireWise kit. ... I think if anything needed to be changed, it would be that the CWPPs need to incorporate that evacuation and the preparedness piece much more than implementation piece.” – Emergency Specialist
- *Focus on post-fire issues.*  
 Often post-fire issues are not included in CWPPs, but several interviewees noted that it’s important to start thinking about those things ahead of time. Erosion is often a major issue after wildfire, and does not often get addressed, but now that there have been several large wildfires in the state we can start to think about and compile a list of best practices for things to have ready when a wildfire does occur (e.g., dumpsters for all the debris that accumulates during a wildfire).  
 Although post-fire issues are important, some interviewees noted that these issues may be more practical to include in an update rather than in the first draft of a CWPP. For one, if you are trying to get a first CWPP completed, it might be better to focus on the positive aspects of the CWPP. As one interviewee noted:  
 “If you’re trying to get traction and get a first CWPP done ... it might almost be counterproductive to get people worried about ... the aftermath and things like that. We’re trying to get people to be positive and forward thinking.” – Landowner

### **Updating Plans**

There were mixed responses about whether CWPPs should be updated. Several interviewees noted that updates were necessary because plans were outdated.

“The CWPP is being updated because 80% of the area [has experienced fires and flooding].” – Fire Chief

Other interviewees, however, argued that most plans have already addressed the low-hanging fruit, and other projects are not as likely to get done.

Reasons to update/revise a CWPP include:

1. Community turnover – these are people-driven plans,
2. Changes in community structure,
3. Evaluation of risk has changed, and
4. Improvements in technology.

### **Conclusion**

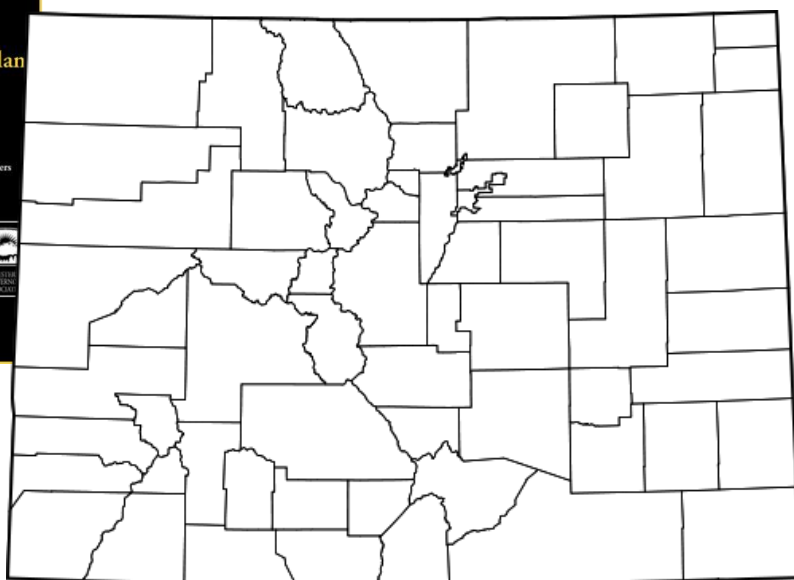
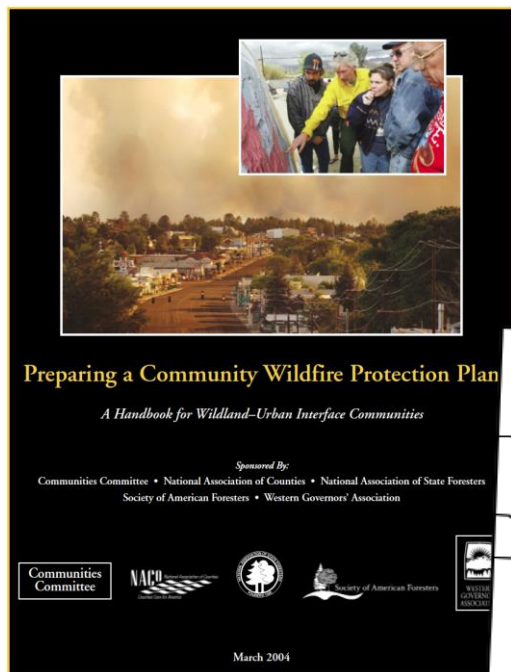
Given that CWPPs were authorized a decade ago under HFRA, it is important to take stock of the impacts of CWPPs at various levels. County plans tend to focus on landscape, cross-boundary projects. FPD led plans often focus on tactical, operations issues that are important if a fire approaches. Owner association level plans focus more on local needs and projects (e.g., signage, fuel breaks). This study gives insight about the extent to which the goals identified by CWPPs are being implemented and offers some recommendations as communities continue to develop and update CWPPs.

In particular, the results above suggest that:

- Although CWPPs are flexible, this can be a barrier for homeowner-driven (e.g., owner association) plans that have less expertise. More communication on available templates and guidance to help homeowners get started are suggested.
- Communities reported funding and time as the main barriers to CWPP implementation. Increased emphasis on specific projects can help communities focus their time and grant applications.
- Some of the main challenges to successful CWPPs relate to community involvement, communication among community members, and full participation. Communities interested in updating their CWPPs should work to increase communication among the core team and include an action plan for community involvement within the CWPP. We suggest that they incorporate youth involvement.
- Some plans would benefit from an increased focus on preparedness and evacuation planning, and others would benefit from increased attention on post-fire issues such as erosion and debris removal.
- CWPPs can quickly become outdated due to changes in community structure and may need to be updated to refocus and re-energize implementation efforts. Programs to do this would be quite useful.

Appendix A: Inventory of Colorado Community Wildfire Protection Plans – Survey

# Inventory of Colorado Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs)



Part of a study being conducted by the

**Colorado State Forest Service**

and

**Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources**

Warner College of Natural Resources

Colorado State University

### General Information

1. Name of CWPP: \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the approval date of this plan? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Is plan currently being revised / updated?       No    Yes
4. What is the level of this plan? (Check (√) one)
  - County
  - City or Town
  - Fire Protection District
  - Volunteer Fire Department
  - Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch
  - Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

### Core Team

1. Which of the following were represented on the *core team* during the development of the CWPP?  
(Check (√) all that apply)
  - Local Government
  - Local Fire Authority (e.g., Fire Protection District, Volunteer Fire Department)
  - County Government
  - Colorado State Forest Service
  - Bureau of Land Management
  - U.S. Forest Service
  - National Park Service
  - Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch
  - Individual Homeowner(s)
  - Consulting Firm
  - Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
2. Does the CWPP core team continue to meet?
  - No
  - Yes

If yes, how often does the core team meet?

  - Monthly       Quarterly       Annually
3. Who wrote the CWPP? (Check (√) all that apply)
  - Members of the core team
  - Consulting Firm
  - Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_



## Partners

1. In addition to the core team, which of the following participated in the *development* of the CWPP? (Check (√) all that apply)

- Local Government
- Local Fire Authority (e.g., Fire Protection District, Volunteer Fire Department)
- County Government
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Forest Service
- National Park Service
- Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch
- Individual Homeowner(s)
- Consulting Firm
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. About how often do you communicate with CWPP partners? (Check (√) one)

- Weekly  Annually
- Monthly  As Needed
- Quarterly  Never
- Twice a Year
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

3. How do you communicate with CWPP partners? (Check (√) all that apply)

- Email  Phone  Mailings  Meetings

## Outreach and Education

1. What methods of community outreach have been used? (Check (√) all that apply)

- Have not done community outreach  Door hangers
- Email  Mass media
- Phone  Social media
- Mailings  Webpage
- Newsletters  Community meetings
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

2. What types of education activities have resulted from the CWPP? (Check (√) all that apply)

- Have not done any community activities  Demonstration projects
- Community events (e.g., chipping days)  Household visits
- Field trips  Youth engagement
- Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Progress towards CWPP Goals**

1. Have you made any progress toward implementing your CWPP goals?  
 No (Please skip to Question 4)  
 Yes
  
2. Which of the following were involved in the *implementation* of the CWPP? (Check (√) all that apply)  
 Local Government  
 Local Fire Authority (e.g., Fire Protection District, Volunteer Fire Department)  
 County Government  
 Colorado State Forest Service  
 Bureau of Land Management  
 U.S. Forest Service  
 National Park Service  
 Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch  
 Individual Homeowner(s)  
 Forestry Consultants  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. How is implementation being tracked? (Check (√) all that apply)  
 We have not been tracking implementation  
 GIS  
 Grant reports  
 Spreadsheets  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. What obstacles related to CWPP implementation have been encountered? (Check (√) all that apply)  
 Lack of community involvement  
 Lack of funding  
 Lack of political support  
 Lack of time  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Fuels Treatments**

1. Have fuels treatment projects been implemented?  
 No (Please skip to next section – Financial Assistance)  
 Yes
  
2. What fuels treatment projects have been implemented? (Check (√) all that apply)  
 Fuelbreaks  
 Thinning  
 Defensible space  
 Prescribed burning  
 Cross-boundary treatments  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. What method(s) of treatment were used? (Check (√) all that apply)  
 Hand felling  
 Mastication  
 Chipping  
 Machine-piling slash  
 Pile burning  
 Broadcast burning  
 Commercial timber harvest  
 Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Have contractors been used to implement fuels treatment projects?  No  Yes
  
5. How many acres have been treated to date? \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. How many acres do you plan to treat? \_\_\_\_\_

**Financial Assistance**

1. Has anyone applied for grants or other funding to assist with implementation of CWPP goals?

No

Yes (Please complete the information below)

<b>Year</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount requested (\$)</b>	<b>Amount received (\$)</b>	<b>Value of cash or in kind community match (\$)</b>	<b># acres treated</b>

If any were not funded, what explanation was given? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to make any other comments about your CWPP? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you!

## Appendix B: Colorado CWPP Descriptive Results

### General Information

What is the level of this plan?

Level of plan	Frequency	Percent
Owners association	42	32
County	32	24
Fire protection district	29	22
City or town	6	5
Volunteer fire district	1	1
Other <sup>1</sup>	23	15

1. e.g., portion of county, special designated area

Year plan was approved:

Year plan approved	Frequency	Percent
2003	2	2
2004	3	2
2005	5	4
2006	12	9
2007	23	17
2008	15	11
2009	16	12
2010	8	6
2011	26	20
2012	10	9
2013	10	8
2014	1	1

Is the plan currently being revised / updated?      66% No      34% Yes

**Core Team**

Which of the following were represented on the *core team* during the development of the CWPP?

	%
Local Fire Authority (e.g., Fire Protection District, Volunteer Fire Dept.)	85
Colorado State Forest Service	84
County Government	62
Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch	58
Individual Homeowner(s)	50
U.S. Forest Service	49
Local Government	46
Consulting Firm	31
Bureau of Land Management	30
National Park Service	12
Other	20

Does the CWPP core team continue to meet?

70% No

30% Yes

If yes, how often does the core team meet?

19% Monthly      31% Quarterly      50% Annually

Who wrote the CWPP?

	%
Members of the core team	57
Consulting Firm	38
Other	23

## Partners

In addition to the core team, which of the following participated in the *development* of the CWPP?

	%
Local Fire Authority (e.g., Fire Protection District, Volunteer Fire Dept.)	80
Colorado State Forest Service	64
County Government	52
Individual Homeowner(s)	55
U.S. Forest Service	44
Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch	44
Local Government	39
Bureau of Land Management	26
Consulting Firm	23
National Park Service	7
Coalition for the Upper South Platte (CUSP)	6
Other	24

About how often do you communicate with CWPP partners?

	%
Weekly	3
Monthly	8
Quarterly	4
Twice a Year	2
Annually	2
As Needed	73
Never	7
Other	7

How do you communicate with CWPP partners?

	%
Email	87
Phone	66
Meetings	52
Mailings	13
In person	2
Other	10

## Outreach and Education

What methods of community outreach have been used?

	%
Community meetings	71
Email	64
Mailings	47
Webpage	47
Newsletters	39
Phone	26
Social media (e.g., Facebook)	26
Mass media (e.g., newspaper)	19
Door hangers	9
Other	12
Have not done community outreach	13

What types of education activities have resulted from the CWPP?

	%
Have not done any community activities	19
Community events (e.g., chipping days)	59
Demonstration projects	39
Household visits	38
Field trips	18
Youth engagement	8
Other	27



**Progress towards CWPP Goals**

Have you made any progress toward implementing your CWPP goals?

12% No

88% Yes

Which of the following were involved in the *implementation* of the CWPP?

	%
Colorado State Forest Service	74
Local Fire Authority (e.g., Fire Protection District, Volunteer Fire Department)	72
Individual Homeowner(s)	66
Owners Association: Home/Property/Ranch	66
County Government	52
U.S. Forest Service	33
Forestry Consultants	26
Local Government	24
Bureau of Land Management	14
National Park Service	2
Other	27

How is implementation being tracked?

	%
Grant reports	47
GIS	22
Spreadsheets	30
Other	36
Have not been tracking implementation	23

5. What obstacles related to CWPP implementation have been encountered?

	%
Lack of funding	72
Lack of time	51
Lack of community involvement	44
Lack of political support	22
Other	30

**Fuels Treatments**

7. Have fuels treatment projects been implemented?

12% No

88% Yes

8. What fuels treatment projects have been implemented?

Fuel treatments	%
Thinning	94
Defensible space	91
Fuel breaks	73
Cross-boundary	27
Prescribed burning	25
Other	16

9. What method(s) of treatment were used?

Treatment Method	%
Hand felling	93
Chipping	78
Pile burning	56
Mastication	44
Machine – piling	27
Commercial timber harvest	20
Broadcast burning	8
Other	7

10. Have contractors been used to implement fuels treatment projects?

16% No

84% Yes

**Financial Assistance**

Has anyone applied for grants or other funding to assist with implementation of CWPP goals?

27% No

73% Yes

## **Appendix C. CWPP Interview Questions**

### **Planning Process**

- What part(s) of the CWPP development went smoothly? What contributed to that?
- What were the challenges of CWPP development?
- Did you use the county-wide CWPP to develop your community plan? How?
- In what ways did community members participate in plan development? How engaged was the community throughout the CWPP planning process?
- Did you use a contractor? If so, did the contractor engage the community? In what ways?
- What were the most effective ways of educating / informing the public about the plan? How do you know?
- How has the CWPP process (both planning and implementation) been beneficial to the community?
- Has there been turnover in positions/landowners/management/core team? How has turnover affected the implementation of the CWPP? How has turnover been addressed?

### **CSFS Information & Assistance**

- What CSFS information (e.g. reports, brochures, website, etc.) did you use for the development of your plan?
- Did you receive any personal contact or assistance from CSFS staff during the planning process (e.g., defensible space assessment, workshops)?
- Did you use any other information source(s) or other technical assistance? If so, what?
- Were there any topics about which you could have used more information on?

### **Cross-Boundary Projects**

- Are other land management agencies doing work on lands adjacent to work being done by the local community?
- If so, what projects have been initiated or completed?
- How has the CWPP helped to prioritize these projects?
- What have been the challenges to working on these [cross-boundary] projects?

### **Grant Funding**

- How are you funding your implementation (e.g., grant funds, your own agency, volunteers, local leadership, and other agency partners)?
- Who is using the CWPP for grant purposes (e.g., homeowner, board member, CSFS district, contractors)?

### **Summary**

- Given what you know now, what would you suggest for others interested in writing a CWPP? What was the biggest lesson learned during the CWPP planning and implementation process?
- Did the time and effort you spent developing and implementing your CWPP yield the results you wanted?

## Appendix D. General Comments on the Survey

Note: these are transcribed and presented largely as written without much editing for content or style, although throughout some organizational referents have been generalized.

- A great deal of fire mitigation work was performed under this grant in the form of dead wood removal, insect control and defensive space established. Of almost equal value was the education of property owners in the importance of wildfire prevention and preparedness. That created a long lasting change in awareness and commitment that continued long after the grant had concluded.
- A very important request was made in our CWPP that a buffer zone be created and mitigated on the San Juan National Forest land that adjoins [our] subdivision boundary. We are working extremely hard to create defensible space on our lots and roads but we feel that without that additional a defensible buffer zone space around our subdivision boundary we will not obtain the defensible zones that are needed to protect our subdivision. Hopefully that goal can be obtained with co-operation from the Forest Service and applicable agencies.
- Although it is deemed an umbrella plan, our CWPP is probably as specific as most of our communities will ever get to a full CWPP. We're frustrated that our document is not enough for smaller communities to qualify for grant funding. Thus we're moving away from CWPPs to more useful plans for mitigation and looking to non-CSFS sources for grants.
- As the newer Chief of [the fire department] we have kept the CWPP posted on our department web page but due to lack of time and funds continued updates and education has been very small. We have applied for a federal grant for funding an educational program to provide a program to our public.
- Certainly a working document and dynamic - ongoing updates shorter than the planned 10-year cycle - anticipate updating in 2016 at this rate! Very beneficial for pointing at project planning for grant applications and eligibility. Want to thank Colorado State Forest Service in Woodland Park, (esp. [the Assistant District Forester]) for his support through the outreach and planning cycle. They are an excellent resource for local departments! Thank you for letting us participate in the survey as well. My thanks to [individual] in her role while she was at CUSP - through her support we organized the steering committee process and public meetings!
- Community involvement is the most troubling issue. At best only approximately 50% of the community has participated in a meaningful manner, despite having had a fire in March 2010 that burned around the community and approximately 10% of the community. Support from the CSFS District Forester and County has been outstanding!
- Could not have done it without the help from [the CSFS District Forester and a fire mitigation specialist]. We have 22 contiguous acres of ponderosas, gamble oak and steep slopes in a corner of our community. All 22 mitigated in 2007 and again in 2013. The CWPP keeps us focused and on track. [The CSFS District Forester and a fire mitigation specialist] tour the site, mark trees for removal and areas for more specialized mitigation. And even provide names of several contractors that they have worked with and who have done a god job. They tour the site when contractor is done to make sure it's done right. And they help with CWPP updates. They are awesome.
- Developing the CWPP was a great way to learn more about the area we protect. It has been hard to keep up with the projects due to time and money. If the State could have a grant program to pay for seasonal employees with projects I could see that as being a great help.

- Difficult to stimulate community involvement as there are no full time residents and minimal community funds.
- [Our community] adopted a Cohesive CWPP Strategy that leverages its 36-year fire wise history to plan a 10-year Strategic Mitigation Roadmap. Within 3 years the tactical goal was to triple its accomplishments. What would inspire this kind of commitment? The CWPP Team communicated its Team Vision: "Protecting Lives, Home & Assets" and motivated every resident to create a defensible space within his/her personal property using CSFS standards. This led to an all-time 3-year high of 3,000+ hours of volunteer labor hours. When the central slash pile tripled its size from 2010 to 2013, the Team realized the first goal had been accomplished. [Our community] received 1 of only 2 FireWise Communities USA awards in Southwest Colorado. During the annual FireWise Day meeting, the Fire Department Chief, CSFS District Forester, USFS AFMO, FireWise Director and BLM regional rep recognized [our community] for its focused Cohesive CWPP approach. The annual Fire Mitigation Day Supervisor recorded a record-breaking 45 residents spending 3 hours tackling the first of 4 monthly mitigation projects identified in the CWPP. The [local newspaper] also recognized [us] for community wildfire preparations in a front page story. The pride exuded by residents of this community is demonstrated by continued commitment to forest restoration, hazardous fuels reduction and watershed protection. The overall esprit de corps is a role model for others!
- Fuels projects recommended did not take into consideration private property ownership. Cutting on private property is difficult and some landowners are not interested no matter the education presented.
- Fuels treatment projects are just one component of our CWPP efforts. Empowering homeowners to take responsibility for preparing their homes for wildfire and conducting effective mitigation is a big part of our programs as well. Our Community Forestry sort yards and community chipping programs also contribute. To learn more about some of these programs, visit [www.WildfirePartners.org](http://www.WildfirePartners.org). Currently 412 homeowners are participating and we will sign more up in June.
- Funding is needed for small projects that realize the high cost of thinning on steep slopes.
- Funding is the number one challenge to successful implementation of this plan.
- Good plan but political leadership care more about fighting government of all levels (especially federal) and the added cost to developers than for public, health, safety and welfare.
- Grant information is lacking as I am not notified of the specific funding source. [Our] grant funding comes from various sources: Colorado State Forest Service, Coalition for the Upper South Platte and Woodland Park Healthy Forest Initiative. These programs collaborate and funding is found for prepared projects. I compile a list of homeowners interested in mitigation grants and have the required information prepared when each year's availability is announced so that I can meet the deadline. Each mitigation project is agreed to by the homeowner and their obligation for payment due is not shared with me. Almost all of our mitigation has been funded by grant support. A few homeowners have contracted with private companies, especially for defensible space around the home. This work is a very small percentage of [our] mitigation. [Our community] received FIREWISE designation in December of 2010 and has continued with this program yearly. We are also a Ready Set Go community.
- Grants cover a period of approximately June 1st of year 1 to September 30th of year 2. Prior year wildfire fuel reduction grant details are somewhat spotty due to administration changes and records availability. The table contains the best data I've been able to extract from [our community] archives.

- Have been unable to conduct prescribed burns due to pending legislation on burns. We are still awaiting defined requirements. We lack in the amount of urban interface with the majority of the area in the CWPP being rural in nature. That being said, we continue to provide the Ready Set Go program to residents and work with Fire Districts in maintaining situational awareness and implementing burn bans when necessary.
- Helpful education because we realized individual property owners were on their own to mitigate risk.
- I am new to this office as of 8/2013. I have not had time to research what was done by the previous chief who left in July 2013. I was able to find a signed copy of the CWPP in a file with very little background or tracking information. I do know that there have been several grants applied for and implemented in the district but again I cannot find any documentation of these in this office. I was involved with one in 2008 for the [HOA] as a property owner there, and have heard from [the CSFS] about another that was applied for by [a different HOA] in the last year or two. I would like to begin reviewing the current CWPP dated May 2007 as soon as I am able, right now this is a low priority on my list as I need to get this departments records up to date and other things situated. I do not anticipate any action this year but hope to have a better understanding of what is required of us by fall 2014.
- I did not have the acres treated figures available at the time I completed the survey. Sorry! Regarding our CWPP, we have implemented almost all of the goals, and have used our Forest Stewardship Plan as well. Great assistance and guidance has been provided by CSFS!
- I was also involved in development of the [County CWPP] and [Town CWPP], which I believe have seen much lower levels of accomplishment. [The community] received FireWise Community designation in 2013 and participated in the National Wildfire Preparedness Day on May 3, 2014. The #1 goal for improving response capability in the [community] CWPP was accomplished in 2010 with the opening of [the County FPD Fire Station].
- I would like to expand to other neighbors but participation is limited to [our community].
- In a Home Owner's Association, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for the Board to mandate mitigation on private lots. Our first HOA project (60 feet either side of the [road]) helped people realize that mitigation actually looked good and improved things. The CWPP made specific recommendations both for the HOA and individuals on their private lots. These recommendations, along with excellent maps, and emergency exits and preparedness, were key in getting plans implemented, and have had a major impact on the ranch and significantly raised the level of awareness of the danger of wildfire and what we can do about it.
- Individual thinning matching grants should be funded again. We know from past experience, they work!!
- It has helped guide the community and keep us on track. FireWise Community Status was more important for maintaining sustainability of the program.
- It seems like there is a huge overlap with the HMP and the resulting mitigation projects. The projects listed in this survey were a direct result of the work on the FEMA HMP and not the CWPP.
- It sure is good to have one. It provides credibility for the efforts of the FireWise Community board, for grant applications, and in relations with local fire company and the board of city commissioners. It is also a great educational tool for newcomers to the wildland-urban interface.

- It will be helpful if more grant opportunities are provided in 2014 to maintain the momentum that we have started.
- It's another 3-ring binder on the shelf. The maps are referenced for grant applications.
- Multiple FPD CWPP, few subdivision CWPP, few CWPIP. County level plan has 2011 approval date with hazard rating different than earlier Consultant performed FPD level plan hazard rating causing confusion on level of risk to communities.
- National forest property on both sides for [Forest Service road] is in critical need of mitigation. It is our community's only access/escape route. Closing of [Forest Service road] to public access is being considered by USFS. That action will help keep camp fires and smokers away from our property - especially when fire bans are commonly ignored during spring/early summer fire season. [The Assistant District Forester] has been exceptionally helpful and supportive in helping us find grant opportunities, conducting surveys to mark trees for cutting, and suggesting other mitigation actions. We are grateful to have him in our corner.
- Need to get action from one member of the community.
- Need to visit it more often. Time seems to be the biggest problem. One subdivision within the district refuses to form a home owners association which only hampers them.
- Our CWPP has been a vital tool for identifying wildfire hazards and mitigation plans to reduce such hazards. We have been very successful in organizing small homeowner groups to develop their own plans and work together with common goals. Since we have adopted our CWPP we have had two communities within our district become registered FireWise Communities.
- Our CWPP only identifies an implementation plan for County-owned properties. There are many other acres of private property undergoing hazardous fuels reduction activities with CSFS or other community projects.
- Our CWPP, originally developed in 2006 was a first for [our] County and was used as an example by the County when developing their CWPP.
- Our Fire Service is ALL volunteer in this jurisdiction. Due to no funding and limited personnel mitigation projects are slow to be accomplished. Fire Departments and Emergency Management provide a multitude of Community Educational programs both for the adult community, and in the schools.
- Our outreach of mitigation, mapping and surveys started in 2001. We developed tactical maps from this work, and also sponsored mitigation grants with funding from CSFS. Sometimes we got the money directly, sometimes the projects were handled out of the GJ District office. In 2007, I received enough encouragement to write a CWPP, since much of the work was done. We tuned up the surveys a bit, and actually resurveyed them again in 2008. The more than 10 years of effort got many people to complete projects, and we reduce risk across the board, but in particular in specific areas that seemed risky. Fire has since hit many of our projects, with good results. Of 5 homes, intense fire has went thru the properties and only one has been lost. Future updates to the CWPP have stalled, and our data is becoming stale. [A contractor] developed a county wide plan that had little use. The process seems to be all about a check-off box needed to be in compliance with some regulation or requirement for funding. Meanwhile, because most of our at-risk homes completed projects, only the most hard-core resistant folks have not worked on their home. It's also been discouraging that only the well- to-do want to do the work, but won't without a grant to induce them to start projects. Most D-space projects are inexpensive enough for these folks to just do without a grant, and we've seen a few folks just do it. As far as the benefits of CWPPs, we've gotten the most

out of it we can, but it's pretty much diminished returns from here on. If we were to hold meetings and try to revive the process, we'd get the same folks in, and very few new ones, more or less preaching to the choir. We'll continue to be helpful to anyone who asks for help, and advocate for wildfire awareness and education. I think the CWPP has made our district better.

- [Our] County has just hired a year round fire mitigation specialist. His number one priority right now is to update the CWPP and get it adopted
- Plenty of work to keep us busy for a while. We are currently in talks with a large adjacent property owner to see if we can do a shaded fuel break along our common property line. If we come to some agreement, we hope to include this in a future grant application.
- [Our] County would like to update the CWPP and would like to receive any information that is available
- Some of the info I have provided may not be accurate, I am new to this position and am playing catch up and working to implement and utilize all resources.
- The 2008 CWPP highlighted vulnerabilities and prioritized actions. It prompted the community to take action. The most important actions were not measured in acres or dollars but in many homeowners completing defensible space preparations and improving structure resistance to fire. Part of the community was burned over in the [Fire], with no loss of homes and the fire halted at the fuel break along the community access road. Our HOA has joined with the neighboring HOA to complete a revised CWPP, to be completed this spring.
- The attitude in the southern end of [this] County is that if they have to do anything or have to pay out any money, the interest goes away rapidly. This assessment covers only the [County FPD] area. I have since become [the] County Emergency Manager and have lost contact with most of the areas involved in this plan.
- The CWPP is being updated because 80% of the area was [affected by fires and floods].
- The CWPP process was hard because a single format was not in place when we started. Once a format was provided we quickly completed the plan. Of special note, while the CWPP was a complex process our community finally got behind it and completed the plan the CWPP served as a stimulus for fire mitigation in our 1200 acre subdivision.
- The CWPP was an extremely important tool for our county to complete a number of mitigation projects, especially as a funding [enabler]. The county level CWPP was not the best level of study/report as it is really too broad. The more localized, fire district level is by far more appropriate.
- The focus of this CWPP was on USFS and Denver Water lands in an area of [the] Watershed. There are scattered private lands within this CWPP area and a good portion have had defensible space work completed. I can provide more detailed acreage treated information and grant information if needed, however, it will take some time to compile due to limited access to records and scope of the project.
- The plan given to our HOA was sent to all homeowners and it has been up to them to do as they see fit on their property. Several homeowners have done clearing of dead trees and cleared close to their houses.
- [The] Community WUI is comprised of ranchers, few year round residents and seasonal residents spread out in approximate area of 145 square miles. For the most part, landowners have and are continuing to be fire wise. Perhaps the Extension Agent or the agency could send out reminders regarding the 2006 CWPP to continue reminding and educating people about mitigation.



- The staff at the Resort felt the assistance through CUSP was extremely helpful. CUSP was very helpful and eager to educate us on proper fire mitigation procedures.
- [The] Homeowners Association has actively promoted and budgeted annual Fire Mitigation projects on the subdivision. The local CSFS office has been an exceptional partner in assisting us in designing our mitigation efforts. To our knowledge there are no active programs by local government to implement the CWPP. I am Chairman of the HOA. We are also pursuing efforts to create additional emergency exits working with the BLM.
- There needs to be an organized review and updating process lead by the professionals at CSFS (every 2-3 years).
- This CWPP was established in the summer of 2007. That summer many property owners did lots of defensible space work on their own and with neighbors help. In the summer of 2008, with grant money incentive, much more defensible space and clearing of dead trees was done. In spring of 2013, the large 100+ acre [property] was cleared of most of the dead trees by a contractor. In 2009 or 2010, the forest service cleared [the] Trailhead and the Wyoming Hotshots clearcut the trail to the Wilderness boundary. Since 2009 the dead lodgepoles [pines] have been falling over at an ever-increasing rate. No one has made any real effort to maintain their property since 2008 because they are only infrequent visitors at best. Since my husband and I are the only full time residents to live up amongst the trees, we have been diligent about keeping a defensible space and spend most of our summers thinning out dead ones and making piles. Overall, the before and after differences of the initial CWPP work done is huge but as the forest ages it needs that constant care that many people are not willing or not physically able to do. As a side note, insurance companies are completely unaware of CWPPs so no brownie points for being in a CWPP.
- This is a great tool for use in forestry management, and in reducing wildfire risk. CSFS has been instrumental in all our efforts, and I cannot praise CSFS personnel highly enough. In particular [the CSFS Assistant District Forester], who has been of extraordinary service, and who can always be counted on to go the extra mile.
- Timing for implementation best when plan approved, community involved, ideas fresh. It would almost be a start over to make things happen now. Maybe a fire would do it.
- We are a 300 acre gated community divided into 97 Lots ranging in size from approx. 2 to 4 acres. There are now 44 homes within the community, most of which are occupied year round. Some Lots are owned by out-of-state property owners who have not visited their property in years....thus, out of sight, out of mind. Apathy, ignorance, and in a few cases, lack of cash, are our biggest hurdles in getting property owner involvement. Complete implementation of the CWPP will always be an uphill battle!
- We are very pleased to have the professional expertise of [the CSFS Assistant District Forester,]. [He] has been an invaluable asset to the success of [our] County's wildfire preparedness effort.
- We are working to update it this year.
- We do not have a person coordinating and tracking CWPP progress -- this would be a helpful recommendation for future CWPPs, especially those carried out by consultants. Having the CWPP in place has been very helpful for getting grants, and for specific subdivisions to make progress.
- We feel we have done a good job with our CWPP in mitigating and improving forest health on 150 acres so far. This could only have been accomplished with outside funding sources that the Colorado State Forest and that CUSP have come up with. Also our accomplishments have also been achieved due to the continued focus these two organizations have given us over the years.

- We have discovered that it is not enough to just deliver the message to each WUI that there is a County-wide CWPP that specifies the needed wildfire mitigation/protection measures for each WUI that should be taken by each community, and hope that they will follow through. But, that in order for CWPP implementation to be accomplished, each community must come together and organize an Implementation Planning Team to identify and prioritize wildfire mitigation projects, become empowered, take ownership, take measures to accomplish the needed wildfire mitigation, and follow through with the CWPP recommendations. We here in [this] County call these plans CWPIP's.
- We have updated our Evacuation Plan (Fall 2011). Copies are available for new residents. One family has made multiple copies for cabin guests.
- We made considerable progress when our CWPP was completed with the help of a CWPP Coordinator. That individual departed and we have not had a Coordinator for several years. A new [County] CWPP Coordinator position is being created, the person has been chosen and will be starting work soon.
- West Region Wildfire Council, Colorado State Forest Service and Bureau of Land management have been very helpful in implementing our CWPP. The CWPP is an informational tool that assists homeowners in better preparing their homes for catastrophic wildfire.
- When it appeared that CWPP progress was very slow in [our] county, the Emergency Manager decided to experiment with a project in his own back yard and found that the CSFS process was reasonable and that a lot could be accomplished in a short time. The problem was that it takes someone to simply pick up the ball and run with it - that energy tended to be missing in other efforts. Also, and perhaps more importantly, the public in general has been very slow to accept the very serious realities of WUI development. Many serious fires since this small plan was written are slowly soaking in and it may be that the public perception is actually becoming more aware. Our recent drought years and tragic fires certainly have the attention of those who will have to deal with wildfire problems. I believe progress will pick up as result of this knowledge. An indicator of this is a recently passed TABOR override in our fire district. The fire district increased interest in wildfire training and PPE, and [FPD] Board support for individual site surveys throughout the fire district. And some of us who should know better are finally undertaking additional mitigation efforts that are long overdue!
- Working with State and County representatives to plan and implement our fire mitigation efforts has been extremely valuable to our district. This information is done to the best of my knowledge but some records are not as detailed as I would like.
- [Our] County has experienced two major wildfires in recent years [one fire] in March of 2006 and [another fire] in 2012. Neither of these fires was man caused. What these two fires did was underscore the importance of creating defensible space in and around critical infrastructure i.e., homes, outbuildings, gas wells, substations, and wildlife areas. Cooperative efforts include the landowners installing valves on their pivots where fire truck can fill with water when necessary. In addition farmers and ranchers have organized themselves with their area Fire Departments to respond with disks to assist in fighting wildfires. Agricultural burns are reported to the Communications center and emergency management monitors the weather with the National Weather Service office. Emergency Management posts red flag warnings, high wind warnings and advisories and any other hazardous weather events on Web-EOC. [The] County's recent fires, the CWPP and our FireWise program presentations have all contributed to our wildfire prevention efforts.