

# Archuleta County Community Wildfire Protection Plan October 2019



Approvals

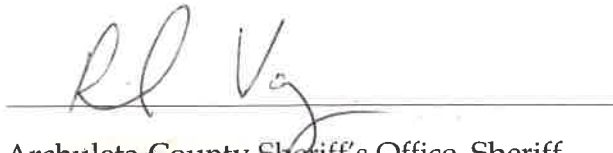
The Colorado State Forest Service has reviewed this Community Wildfire Protection Plan and approves its content and certifies that it meets or exceeds CSFS Community Wildfire Protection Plan minimum standards.



Colorado State Forest Service

2/13/2020

Date



Archuleta County Sheriff's Office, Sheriff

3/5/20

Date



Archuleta County Office of Emergency Management Date

2/16/2020



Pagosa Fire Protection District

3/5/2020

Date



Los Pinos Fire Protection District

2/27/2020

Date



Pagosa District Ranger, San Juan National Forest

2/25/2020

Date

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# Archuleta County Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan (CWPP)

## Introduction

Archuleta County, Colorado is located in southwest Colorado with the New Mexico state line forming the southern boundary. Five Colorado Counties (La Plata, Hinsdale, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Conejos) adjoin on the west, north and east boundaries. Pagosa Springs is located near the center of the county and serves as the county seat and the only incorporated town. The county encompasses 1,364 square miles (861,129 acres) from semi-arid country along the south and southwest to the alpine peaks of the Continental Divide along the east. Elevations vary from 5900' to 13,300'. The bulk of the land in Archuleta County lies between 6000' to 9000'.

Archuleta County's population is estimated at 13,315 (2017). The town of Pagosa Springs is home to 1940 residents. In addition, a significant number of summer residents have vacation homes and properties. Most of these seasonal residents come from other states. County records show that 44% of the private parcels in Archuleta County are owned by non-permanent residents. As of 2018, 7,875 single family residential parcels and 5,350 vacant parcels are found in county records. Recent development of properties and rural subdivisions throughout Archuleta County has expanded dramatically. This rapid development has occurred in areas dominated by native vegetation creating a wildland-urban interface (WUI).

Over 50% of Archuleta County is in public ownership and Indian Reservation land. The San Juan National Forest covers a large portion of the county with scattered parcels of BLM and State land intermixed. The Southern Ute Tribe is the largest landowner in the southwest portion of the county. These agency- and tribal-administered lands surround and border private lands throughout Archuleta County. Most of the rural subdivision development within Archuleta County has occurred adjacent to the agency land.

<b>Land Ownership in Acres</b>	<b>Number of Acres</b>
San Juan National Forest	418,565
Private	298,557
Southern Ute Indian Tribe	130,456
Bureau of Land Management	5,837
State of Colorado	7,714
Total	861,129

While the risk of wildland fire on public lands is generally understood by the public, much of the adjacent private lands and associated property values are equally at risk.

These areas adjoining public lands are becoming increasingly valued for their scenic beauty, solitude, and access to recreation opportunities. As development in these areas continues to increase, the risk to lives, property, and resources correspondingly increases.

The risk of wildland fire occurrence in Archuleta County is very high. Historic records of fire origins indicate starts occur every year. June through August have the highest frequency of starts, most caused by lightning. Multiple starts in 24 - 48 hour periods are common during these months. During years of low winter/spring moisture, the threat of human-caused fire starts becomes critical by June. All these factors combined cannot be ignored.

Most of the development in Archuleta County has occurred in ponderosa pine forests. Subdivisions have also been built in mixed-conifer forest and pinon/juniper. These forests types have natural fire regimes of frequent to periodic fire. The natural historic fire regime of ponderosa pine is frequent, low-severity fire. Historically, pre-1880 ponderosa pine forests burned every 3-11 years on average. Typical fires were surface fires that cleaned up the forest floor and kept forest structure open and park-like. After over a century of fire suppression, open park-like forests have filled in and are now dense closed canopy forests where crown fire is now a seasonal hazard. The same situation exists in warm-dry mixed conifer. Cool-moist mixed conifer forests do not burn as often. They have a periodic, mixed-severity fire regime. Fires occurred every 14-63 years on average. Larger scale crown fires are natural occurrences in this forest type and occur about once a century. The last large crown fires in the cool-moist mixed conifer occurred in the mid to late 1800s. Other notable fires include:

- Snow Springs #2 Fire - 406 acres (1996)
- Cabezon Fire - 796 acres (2000)
- Missionary Ridge - 71,000 acres (2002) (burned 300 acres in Archuleta County)
- Bolt Fire - 2,160 acres (2003)
- Devil Creek Fire - 234 acres (2003)
- Little Sand Fire - 22,400 acres (2012)
- West Fork Fire - 58,600 (2013) plus adjacent counties
- Eight Four Two Fire -1000 acres (2017)
- Horse Fire - 700 acres (2018)

Fires will occur every year and we must be as prepared as possible. The Archuleta County Community Wildland Fire Protection Plan was developed because of this increasing threat.

## CWPP - Authorization and Process

In response to the tragic wildland fires in 2000 and 2002, the U.S. Congress authorized the National Fire Plan in 2000 and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) in 2003. Under this legislation, local communities are encouraged to develop and implement forest management plans and hazardous fuel reduction projects. Key to the planning of preventive actions is detailed mapping and cooperative efforts by all stakeholders and land owners. U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) are directed by HFRA to give consideration to the priorities of local communities as they develop and implement these plans. HFRA defines Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) within the legislation:

*...areas extending 1½ miles from the boundary of a community-at-risk defined by the USFS and BLM inventory and which lack emergency access routes; are in poor proximity to water sources; have areas with steep slopes; have high risk vegetation types; and/or that are in close proximity to fuels on public lands.*

In Archuleta County, this process started in 2001 with numerous cooperators developing the **Community Fire Plan**. This plan, developed as a component of the National Fire Plan, identified wildland fire risk areas and developed goals and action recommendations throughout Archuleta County. Thirty-three rural subdivisions were identified with areas “at-risk”. This community-wide effort, and the wildland fires of 2002, raised awareness considerably. Five counties in Southwest Colorado, including Archuleta, unveiled Community Fire Plans (CFP), which collectively are considered national models for collaboration, and for inter-governmental planning and action around wildland fire education and emergency response. The five CFPs and our regional progress toward goal attainment can be found at the following website: [www.wildfireadapted.org](http://www.wildfireadapted.org). Thus, this CWPP is an update to the 2008 CWPP which was a product of the 2001 Community Fire Plan for Archuleta County and was revised on the principles, requirements and guidelines established through HFRA. This CWPP is intended as an overarching document for the county, with the hope that individual communities will create CWPP’s that are specific to their areas. Steps taken to complete the Community Fire Plan (CFP) and this CWPP include:

- Holding planning meetings with fire and land management agencies.
- Discussing and sharing planning information with the county residents.
- Fuels mapping of selected rural subdivisions within the WUI areas.
- Applying field information and aerial photo imagery to develop detailed mapping
- Utilizing Geographic Information System (GIS) technology.

## San Juan National Forest Fuels Reduction and Forest Management Planning

The San Juan National Forest completed a new Land Resource Management Plan in 2013. This plan identifies desired landscape conditions for forest vegetation

management and standards and guidelines for fire, fuels and timber management activities across the Pagosa and Columbine Ranger Districts of the San Juan National Forest within Archuleta County. The Pagosa and Columbine Districts each host a fire and fuels management organization. These fuels organizations were first staffed in their current form in spring of 2019. Each District fuels organization annually updates a 5 year action plan consisting of planned prescribed fire and non-commercial mechanical fuels (brush mowing, hand thinning and mastication) treatments consistent with the 2013 Forest Plan guidance. The San Juan National Forest also hosts a combined or zoned Pagosa and Columbine District timber organization. This organization is primarily responsible for planning and implementation of forest restoration contracts and commercial timber harvests across both Districts, although many contracts implemented by the timber organization involve non-commercial fuels reduction work. A separate 5 year action plan for timber management activities for the Pagosa and Columbine Districts is updated annually and compliments the work completed by the two District fuels organizations. Both fuels and timber 5 year action plans are continually evolving based upon available resources, funding, opportunities and stakeholder input. For the most current 5 year action plans contact the Pagosa and Columbine Ranger districts or the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership.

#### [Archuleta County CWPP Firefighting and Prevention Capacity](#)

The following departments and agencies are involved in fire management and fire prevention activities in Archuleta County:

- Pagosa Fire Protection District
- Los Pinos Fire Protection District
- Archuleta County Sheriff's Office
- United States Forest Service
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

These organizations work with each other and community partners to share resources and information. Formal Mutual Aid Agreements are in place that allow for interagency response to fire emergencies. Partnerships have developed related to fire prevention and demonstration projects, firefighting, public education and accessing resources such as equipment, grants and training.

**On Private and State Lands** fire protection is provided by the fire districts and the Archuleta County Sheriff's Office. All land in Archuleta County requires a permit to burn. This Ordinance shall apply throughout unincorporated areas of Archuleta County, including public, private, and state lands.

The purpose of this Ordinance is to preserve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Archuleta County, Colorado, by restricting open fires and open burning in the unincorporated areas of Archuleta County during times of high fire danger and to provide a permitting system that will (1) allow and regulate open and safe burning of slash; (2) inform persons of considerations for the appropriate, safe, and effective use of fire as a tool; and (3) reinforce knowledge of local requirements of homeowner associations, special districts having fire jurisdiction, and county ordinances to increase public awareness and protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

Pagosa Fire Protection District includes the Town of Pagosa Springs, the Pagosa Lakes Subdivisions, Aspen Springs Subdivision, south along Highway 84 to Loma Linda and Alpine Lakes Subdivisions, and the area around Chromo. Los Pinos Fire Protection District covers private lands in the southwest portion of Archuleta County and southeast La Plata County. The community of Arboles, Navajo State Park and Piedra Park Subdivision are within the district. Beyond the fire districts, the Archuleta County Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Services is responsible. Mutual Aid agreements are in place between Archuleta County, Pagosa FPD and the San Juan National Forest for times when more assistance is needed. The Sheriff's Office also provides a seasonal fire crew, engines and tenders through Archuleta County and grant funding. One of the engines and one of the tenders is provided by the Division of Fire Prevention and Control (DFPC) through agreement with the Sheriff's Office.

**The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) mission is “to achieve stewardship of Colorado’s diverse forest environments for the benefit of present and future generations.”**

The CSFS's activities include:

- 1) Providing leadership, resources and guidance to accomplish forest management;
- 2) Promoting wildfire mitigation projects and community planning;
- 3) Assisting county governments and community organizations in assessing wildfire hazards;
- 4) Sharing information with diverse audiences on the importance of mitigating hazards on their forested lands to help protect lives and property.

**On Southern Ute Tribal Lands**, the Bureau of Indian Affairs provides wildland fire protection. Much of the area managed is dotted and interspersed with private lands and some of it borders state land (Navajo Lake State Park). The largest wildland fires in recent history within Archuleta County have been lightning-caused fires that started on Southern Ute Lands (Dipping Vat Fire, 1996, 17,000 acres; Bolt Fire, 2003, 2200 acres)

**On USFS and BLM Lands**, the San Juan National Forest is organized into two Ranger Districts within Archuleta County. The Pagosa Ranger District manages the eastern



and northern reaches of these lands within Archuleta County generally east of the Piedra River. The Columbine Ranger District manages the western portion of these public lands from Bayfield. BLM lands are managed from an office in Dolores, but initial attack on BLM lands within Archuleta County is generally completed by Forest Service resources through coordination with the Dolores BLM office. The two Forest Ranger Districts, which adjoin in the Piedra River drainage, both maintain wildland engines and crews and host a fuels management organization. Additional fire qualified personnel come from staff in the districts. During periods of very high to extreme fire danger (usually June into July), national resources including additional engines, crews, and contract helicopters are pre-staged at these districts. The 20-person San Juan Interagency Hotshot Crew is stationed in Durango and is frequently utilized on wildland fires in Archuleta County. This crew is a national resource crew and is subject to being called on assignments away from this area at any time. The Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center is located at the Public Lands Center and is responsible for dispatching wildland fire resources. In addition, an air tanker base is located at the Durango-La Plata County Airport and single-engine air tanker (SEAT) bases are located at the Cortez Airfield and in Dulce, NM. Aircraft are dispatched through The Durango Interagency Fire Dispatch Center.

#### Partners in this Updated CWPP

- Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD)
- Los Pinos Fire Protection District (LPFPD)
- Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS)
- United States Forest Service (USFS)
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Archuleta County Sheriff's Office (ACSO)
- Archuleta County
- Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Southern Ute Agency
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership (SJHFHP)
- Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP, Formerly FireWise of SW CO)
- Town of Pagosa Springs
- Chama Peak Land Alliance
- The Pagosa Area Chamber of Commerce
- Property Owners Associations (POAs)
- Private and Commercial Landowners
- Private Contractors – specializing in fuels thinning and forest health

## Archuleta County Wildland Urban Interface

### Definition of Wildland Urban Interface Communities

Archuleta County CWPP stakeholders have agreed to use the definition of wildland urban interface (WUI) communities (“Communities at Risk”) as defined in the Federal Register on January, 2001 (Vol. 66, No. 3, Pages 751-777). According to the Federal Register “the urban wildland interface community exists where humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuel.” These communities are further classified as:

#### *Intermix Community*

An area with more than one structure per 40 acres scattered throughout the wildland fuels.

#### *Interface Community*

- An Area where structures are directly adjacent to wildland fuels with three or more structures per acre and a clear line of demarcation between urban and wildland.

#### *Occluded Community*

- An area with less than 1,000 acres where structures are adjacent to an island of wildland fuels generally within a city.

### Communities of Concern

Communities at Risk are defined as those communities that are listed in the Federal Register referenced above. In addition the Stake Holders have identified “Communities of Interest” defined as those communities that meet the definition of Communities at Risk (intermix, interface or occluded) but are not listed in the Federal Register. For the purposes of this CWPP, the Stakeholders have defined **Communities of Concern** as both Communities at Risk and Communities of Interest.

### Wildland Urban Interface Definition

*“...the urban wildland interface community exists where humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuel.” – Federal Register*

In accordance with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act, Archuleta County has established a localized definition of the Wildland Urban Interface this definition was developed in collaboration with the USFS, CSFS, local fire protection districts and homeowners associations. Wildland Urban Interface in Archuleta County is defined as:

1. An area extending ½ mile from the boundary of a Community of Concern or;
2. an area within 1 ½ miles of a Community of Concern, including any land that

- a. has a sustained steep slope that creates the potential for wildfire behavior endangering the community at risk;
- b. has a geographic feature that aids in creating an effective fire break, such as a road or ridge top;
- c. is in condition class 3 (areas where fire frequency has departed from historic condition by multiple return intervals, or the risk of losing key ecosystems is high as defined by the National Interagency Fire Center, Fire Regime Condition Class Definition)
- d. is adjacent to an evacuation route for a community at risk.

It is anticipated that as new development takes place in the county, new Communities of Concern will be identified and mapped. If a community does not appear on the base map but meets the county's definition of a WUI community then it shall be considered to be included within the Wildland Urban Interface.

#### Community Base Map and Other important maps

The Archuleta County Fire Risk - Communities of Concern map has been developed (see attachment) in response to completing this CWPP update. This map was developed in cooperation with the USFS, CSFS, local fire protection districts and the Archuleta County planning department. The map illustrates the relative wildfire risks in the WUI. This map will be used in our county to assess risk, identify areas for future fuel reduction projects on Federal Lands, and for decision-making in the County's land use development process. Additional maps that will be used include the SJHFHP Forest Health Activities Map and the pertinent CSFS COWrap risk maps.

#### Communities of Concern Inventory

In cooperation with the USFS and using national guidelines, Archuleta County has produced a list of communities at risk. This document, combined with the Archuleta County Fire Risk - Communities of Concern map and the Federal Fuels Treatment map, show current priorities for fuel treatments. The inventory not only identifies communities at risk in three categories (WUI, Intermix and Occluded) but also documents risk factors such as fuels and terrain. It is anticipated that as new development takes place in the county or as better data is collected, the Communities of Concern Inventory will be updated and / or re-ranked.

### Revised Goals, Strategies, and Partner Responsibilities

#### Goal: Reduce Risk of Destructive Wildland fire in the Wildland-urban Interface (WUI)

**Strategy #1)** Utilize the Archuleta County Community Base Map and other maps to display the identified threat areas to as broad a segment of residents and land owners as possible, including community groups and Property Owners Associations. Share

mapping information and provide working copies to fire departments, county departments, state and federal agencies involved in reducing wildland fire risk especially in the WUI.

Partners responsible:

(Presenting fire information and education to county residents)

- Pagosa Fire Protection District Staff
- San Juan National Forest Staff
- Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) Staff
- Los Pinos Fire Protection District Staff
- Archuleta County Sheriff's Office – Office of Emergency Management
- Archuleta County Commissioners
- Archuleta County GIS Mapping Office
- Wildfire Adapted Partnership

**Strategy #2)** Continue adding layers to the Archuleta County Community Base Map database to assist in emergency operations management and overall planning involving future development and infrastructure. Also add layering to show accomplished wildland fire mitigation treatments and methods used.

Partners responsible:

- Archuleta County Sheriff's Office – Division of Emergency Services
- Archuleta County GIS Mapping Office
- San Juan National Forest
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
- Wildfire Adapted Partnership
- 2-3-2 Cohesive Strategy Partnership

**Strategy #3)** Build the capacity of the Wildfire Adapted Partnership's Neighborhood Ambassador Program through recruitment, training and utilization. Partners responsible:

- Wildfire Adapted Partnership
- Chama Peak Land Alliance
- Local Homeowners Associations
- Pagosa Fire Protection District
- Los Pinos Fire Protection District

**Strategy #4)** Coordinate fire mitigation projects including mechanical fuels treatments, prescribed fire and timber harvests with partner organizations. Within Archuleta County, the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership is an umbrella

organization that coordinates treatment planning and implementation across the multiple partner organizations including the Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Colorado State Forest Service, Chama Peak Land Alliance and other partner organizations. Planning and implementation of fire and fuels management projects is a continually evolving process dependent on available resources and funding. Contact the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership or San Juan National Forest for the latest planning and implementation information.

Partners responsible:

- San Juan National Forest
- San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Chama Peak Land Alliance
- Prescribed Fire Learning Exchange (TREX)

**Strategy #5)** Support and advertise the existence of private contractors who can carry out Firewise mitigation projects on homeowners' properties.

Partners responsible:

- Colorado State Forest Service
- Wildfire Adapted Partnership

**Strategy #6)** Encourage the development of private, small diameter wood products processing businesses including biomass technologies. Also, encourage the extraction of saleable material from mitigation projects such as pulp, fence posts, fuel wood, mulch products, compost material, and wood for furniture and other ornamental purposes.

Partners responsible:

- All partners
- Colorado State Forest Service
- USFS, State and Private Forestry
- 2-3-2 Biomass Committee
- Private and Commercial Landowners
- Good Wood Program (New Mexico)

**Strategy #7)** Assist Property Owners Associations in developing wildland fire protection plans in at-risk subdivisions through partnering with San Juan National Forest, Colorado State Forest, Wildfire Adapted Partnership and San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership. These plans can be part of a CWPP or a Community Assessment.

Consider requiring a Community Assessment when a new subdivision is developed in the wildland/urban interface.

Partners responsible: All partners

**Strategy #8)** Promote participation in the Firewise/USA community recognition status program. A Community Assessment, firewise committee and mitigation work are some of the requirements for recognition. This recognition is often used in conjunction with or in lieu of a CWPP.

Partners responsible:

Colorado State Forest Service

Wildfire Adapted Partnership

Pagosa Ranger District (dependent on location of community)

Pagosa Fire Protection District (dependent on location of community)

Los Pinos Fire Protection District (dependent on location of community)

Bureau of Indian Affairs (dependent on location of community)

[Goal: Increase the number of fuel reduction projects on San Juan National Forest in the WUI and other priority areas](#)

**Strategy #1)** Collaborate with San Juan National Forest in identifying wildland fire mitigation projects on federal lands identified on the CWPP Community Base Map and consistent with land management direction and current 5 year action plans. Prioritize the projects after appropriate review processes are completed. These projects will be carried out by the San Juan National Forest in partnership with local communities, fire protection districts, CSFS, ACSO, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, private landowners or commercial landowners.

Partner responsible: San Juan National Forest

**Strategy #2)** Continue to build, create and strengthen partnerships among federal, state and local governments and agencies, fire protection districts, private sector entities, non-profits, Property Owners Associations and landowners.

Partners responsible: All partners

**Strategy #3)** Encourage continued development of private small diameter wood products processing businesses including biomass technologies.

Partners responsible: All partners

Goal: Work with ranches and rural landowners to promote healthy watersheds, forest and range ecosystems along with wildland fire mitigation.

**Strategy #1)** Support efforts by private landowners and adjacent federal land managers to implement stewardship projects that are beneficial to both parties and the ecosystem as a whole. These projects may include mechanical fuels reduction, watershed restoration and protection, prescribed burning and management of natural fires as fire for resource benefits. Utilize current federal legislation that fosters such partnerships such as the Wyden Amendment and the Healthy Forests Restoration Act. Follow the US Forest Service policy of Shared Stewardship projects that involve multiple stakeholders.

Partners responsible:

- Colorado State Forest Service
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Chama Peak Land Alliance
- All partners

**Strategy #2)** Landowners, fire professionals, county officials, natural resource specialists and representatives from the Colorado State Forest Service, Natural Resource Conservation Service and San Juan National Forest should continue to work together to promote the health of rural lands within the county. Promote the idea of shared stewardship amongst partners.

Partners responsible: All partners

**Strategy #3)** Support the professional use of prescribed fire and wildland fire use as an effective and appropriate resource management tool. (Colorado House Bill 00-1283 also supports the use of prescribed fire.)

Written burn plans are not required for agricultural burns but a burn permit is required under Archuleta County Amended and Restated Ordinance NO 18-2017 for the Regulations of open burning in the unincorporated areas of Archuleta County, which shall apply throughout unincorporated areas of Archuleta County, including public, private, and state lands.

The purpose of this Ordinance is to preserve and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Archuleta County, Colorado, by restricting open fires and open burning in the unincorporated areas of Archuleta County during times of high fire

danger and to provide a permitting system that will (1) allow and regulate open and safe burning of slash; (2) inform persons of considerations for the appropriate, safe, and effective use of fire as a tool; and (3) reinforce knowledge of local requirements of homeowner associations, special districts having fire jurisdiction, and county ordinances to increase public awareness and protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

All persons burning in unincorporated Archuleta County are required to call The Archuleta County dispatch center at 970-731-2160 before they commence ignition. Any person planning any type of burn should obtain a weather forecast for the time they intend to burn before commencing ignition.

For broadcast prescribed burns, in accordance with House Bill 00-1283, Archuleta County may enter into memoranda of understanding with public or private landowners within boundaries of the county who seek to implement professionally conducted prescribed fire or natural ignition fire.

Archuleta County Sheriff's Office, local fire protection districts and the Department of Fire Prevention and Control will provide general guidance for planning and execution of prescribed burns and natural ignition activities for private landowners who participate in such memoranda of understanding. This guidance will include:

- Minimum prescribed burn and natural ignition plan contents
- Prescription development considerations.
- Implementation and execution considerations.
- Differentiate between ditch and field burning, pile burning and broadcast understory burning.

Archuleta County strongly recommends the use of the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) Prescribed Fire Template. The final burn plan shall include the landowner(s) signature and approval, as well as be submitted to Archuleta County Sheriff - Office of Emergency Management at least two weeks prior to ignition. This submittal will be for notification purposes only. The Archuleta County Sheriff's Office will not approve or disapprove the burn plan or any of its components.

Partners responsible: All partners

#### Goal: Reduce Ignitability of Structures

**Strategy #1)** Promote the use of Firewise construction techniques and defensible space strategies to reduce the wildland fire risk to existing and planned structures within the WUI. The following resources may be of use:

- Creating Wildfire-Defensible Zones: [https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/FIRE2012\\_1\\_DspaceQuickGuide.pdf](https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/FIRE2012_1_DspaceQuickGuide.pdf)



- Fire-Resistant Landscaping: <https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/06303.pdf>

Partners responsible: All partners

**Strategy #2)** Support and advertise the existence of private contractors who can carry out Firewise prevention projects on homeowners’ properties.

Partners responsible:

- CSFS
- Wildland Fire Prevention and Education Month Committee

**Strategy #3)** Continue to work collaboratively across jurisdictions to support and develop the Archuleta County land use code, fire code, building codes and WUI codes. Address issues such as access for emergency fire equipment, water sources, less flammable building materials, access and egress, and distances from structures to burnable vegetation constantly in development planning. The following resource may be of use:

- Firewise Construction Design and Materials: <https://static.colostate.edu/client-files/csfs/pdfs/firewise-construction2012.pdf>

Partners responsible:

- Archuleta County
- Fire protection districts
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Wildfire Adapted Partnership

#### Goal: Increase Public Involvement in Wildland Fire Awareness

**Strategy #1)** Increase the collaboration with partners to provide timely information on wildland fire awareness and community responsibility. Fire prevention messages should be directed not only to permanent residents but also seasonal residents and tourists. This job cannot be done by the public agencies alone because of the general misconception that wildland fire awareness doesn’t apply to private lands. Specifically, increase working relationships with the Wildfire Adapted Partnership, Fire Chiefs Associations, San Juan National Forest, Information Specialists, CSFS, SJMA, Chama Peak Land Alliance and other non-profits. Continue to recruit for Wildfire Adapted Ambassadors from diverse areas and neighborhoods throughout the county. Continue involvement with the Wildfire Community Preparedness Day. Use diverse spokespersons with the media outlets to keep messages from becoming “canned”.

Partners responsible: All partners

Proposed Project Types:

- Public Awareness Campaign

- Subdivision Community Assessments
- Firewise USA Recognition Status
- Ready Set Go Program

**Strategy #2)** Continue ongoing demonstration projects and add new ones in different areas to give property owners a visual picture of treatments. The Pagosa Ranger District/Field Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and private contractors have had positive results with demonstration project areas. This effort is very productive and should increase. The other side of this “visual picture” is looking at areas near structures that are at very high risk. WAP and the Pagosa Fire Protection District will continue to promote homeowners participating in tours of these areas. Increasing these activities will be a major catalyst to success.

Partners responsible: All partners

Proposed Project Types:

- Conduct tours of mitigated properties
- Establish partnerships between fire districts and developers
- Signage on mitigated properties

## Regional Efforts in Wildland Fire Prevention/Education

Efforts across the five county region of southwest Colorado in presenting wildland fire prevention information and developing media for homeowners on defensible space have been a cooperative venture led by the Wildfire Adapted Partnership. Since its inception in 2003, the organization has produced videos and DVDs, newspaper articles and brochures, and has presented public programs at meetings and on local and regional radio stations. Archuleta County property owners have greatly benefited in the years the Partnership has been active.

### Neighborhood Ambassador Program

In December 2004, the Firewise Council of Southwest Colorado initiated a pilot program to establish wildland fire prevention “ambassadors” from within individual neighborhoods and subdivisions. Built on research principles from a Fort Lewis College project, results showed that one of the most trusted sources of information about wildland fire prevention is neighbors and friends — everyday people who are trusted and known. The Neighborhood Ambassador Program recruits, trains, and utilizes volunteers who serve as Ambassadors. Firewise was reorganized in 2018 and became the Wildfire Adapted Partnership. The Neighborhood Ambassador program has gained national recognition and become a model program for other communities.

Duties include:

- Plan educational campaigns or events particularly during the annual Wildland Fire Season.
- Wildfire Community Preparedness Day (May)
- Wildfire Awareness Month (May)
- Maintain contact with your local fire district as an on-the-ground information source on specific local conditions
- Ensure that residents in your subdivision, through as many means as possible, have access to the wildland fire mitigation companies' contractor list kept by CSFS.
- Link to WAP in ways that will assist your neighborhood group or Property Owners Association.
- Serve as an example of a home site where defensible space has been created.
- Assemble contact information for homeowners with phone numbers, email addresses, etc.
- Ensure that all street signs and addresses are readable.
- Provide information on homes/property that have animals that may need evacuation or rescuing.
- Gather information on residents with special needs, such as those who are physically impaired and may need special assistance.
- Maintain regular contact with your POA or other neighborhood organizations.
- Provide a map of your subdivision showing locations of structures, propane tanks, power lines, water sources, roads, gas lines, bridges (and weight limits), hazardous materials, archaeological or cultural resources, and areas of heavy fuel loads. As part of the continued updating and additional information in this CWPP (individual subdivision mapping is proposed using GIS), this will be a great opportunity for Neighborhood Ambassadors to get involved in the near future!

### Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

As a result of the partnerships built regionally over the years, in 2003 a strong region wide education program was launched called *What Are You Waiting For? May Wildland Fire Prevention and Education Month*. Over 20 partners, including representatives from Archuleta County, have joined together to produce a month of public events, forums, newspaper inserts (including the weekly Pagosa Sun and the daily Durango Herald), tours to demonstration projects, video releases, and distribution of free educational materials, including DVDs and VHS.

More recently, the National Fire Prevention Association Firewise USA program has promoted the first Saturday in May as Wildfire Community Preparedness Day. Archuleta County groups have supported this event and sponsored events and community work days.

Local groups continue to hold outreach events throughout May.

\* Partners in the Archuleta County CWPP should continue to participate actively in the WAP Neighborhood Ambassador Program and Wildfire Community Preparedness Day events.

### *Plan Evaluation*

Various methods will be used to measure of success of this CWPP. These include:

- An increase in the number of local Community Assessments that are tiered to this document.
- An increase in the number of acres of fuels mitigation treatments on both private and public lands.
- An increase in the number of homes protected by Defensible Space.
- Documented examples of fuels mitigation treatments that helped to stop or limit the destructiveness of a wildfire.
- Land use, building code, WUI code and fire code changes that are in compliance with firewise concepts.
- Growth of the WAP ambassador program.

**Success of this CWPP will also be realized through sustained, careful, and effective partnership building among all affected stakeholders.**

### Summary

This CWPP complements and builds upon the nationally recognized Community Fire Plan. It incorporates key principles and guidelines arising from the HFRA. The plan lays out an ambitious program for:

- Reducing wildland fire risk in the wildland-urban interface (WUI)
- Accomplishing important fuel treatments on federal and private lands
- Reducing structural ignitability
- Increasing community safety
- Continuing successful education and community mobilization endeavors
- Continuing to enhance partnerships between federal, state and local agencies and among community organizations and local governments
- The plan also sets the Archuleta County WUI definition (see the map in the following email) and defines Archuleta County's Communities of Concern.

## Maps

*(Attached after Appendixes)*

***Archuleta County Community Base Map; Fire Risk – Communities of Concern***  
(Combined risk map) \* This map was created by combining the Archuleta County Urban Interface Definition with fuel, aspect, slope, and land status polygons.

***Archuleta County Land Use Map***

Displays all private property with color-keyed acreage size groups and subdivisions outlined with a black line.

***Archuleta County Fuel Polygons Map***

From fuel inventories in the field and aerial images, vegetation is classified according to its fuel loading.

***Archuleta County Combined Aspect & Slope Polygons Map***

Color-keyed to show areas of southern aspect with the steepest slopes highest on the scale.

***Archuleta County Combined Fuel Polygons & Aspect/Slope Polygons Map***

Combining the two previous map layers over the land status shows highest fuel hazard areas.

## Appendixes

- A. *Federal Register / Vol. 66, No. 3 / Thursday, January 4, 2001 / Notices 753*  
Urban Wildland Interface Community Definition
- B. *Wildland Urban Interface Mapping Process*
- C. *Archuleta County Communities of Concern Inventory*
- D. *Archuleta County Community Fire Plan*

The initial definition of urban wildland interface and the descriptive categories used in this notice are modified from “A Report to the Council of Western State Foresters – Fire in the West – The Wildland/Urban Interface Fire Problem” dated September 18, 2000. Under this definition, “the urban wildland interface community exists where humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuel.” There are three categories of communities that meet this description. Generally, the Federal agencies will focus on communities that are described under categories 1 and 2. For purposes of applying these categories and the subsequent criteria for evaluating risk to individual communities, a structure is understood to be either a residence or a business facility, including Federal, State, and local government facilities. Structures do not include small improvements such as fences and wildlife watering devices.

*Category 1. Interface Community*

*The Interface Community exists where structures directly abut wildland fuels.*

There is a clear line of demarcation between residential, business, and public structures and wildland fuels. Wildland fuels do not generally continue into the developed area. The development density for an interface community is usually 3 or more structures per acre, with shared municipal services. Fire protection is generally provided by a local government fire department with the responsibility to protect the structure from both an interior fire and an advancing wildland fire. An alternative definition of the interface community emphasizes a population density of 250 or more people per square mile.

*Category 2. Intermix Community*

*The Intermix Community exists where structures are scattered throughout a wildland area.*

There is no clear line of demarcation; wildland fuels are continuous outside of and within the developed area. The development density in the intermix ranges from structures very close together to one structure per 40 acres. Fire protection districts funded by various taxing authorities normally provide life and property fire protection and may also have wildland fire protection responsibilities. An alternative definition of intermix community emphasizes a population density of between 28-250 people per square mile.

*Category 3. Occluded Community*

*The Occluded Community generally exists in a situation, often within a city, where structures abut an island of wildland fuels (e.g., park or open space).*

There is a clear line of demarcation between structures and wildland fuels. The development density for an occluded community is usually similar to those found in

the interface community, but the occluded area is usually less than 1,000 acres in size. Fire protection is normally provided by local government fire departments.

### **Preliminary Criteria for Evaluating Risk to Communities**

The Secretaries are required to publish in the **Federal Register**, by May 1, 2001, a second list of urban wildland interface communities within the vicinity of Federal lands that are at high risk from wildfire in which treatments will not have begun during 2001. The Federal agencies will work with Tribes, States, local governments, and other interested parties to refine and narrow the initial list of communities provided in this notice, focusing on those that are at highest risk, as determined through the application of appropriate criteria. In discussions with States, Tribes, local governments, and other interested parties, the Secretaries will suggest using the specific factors listed below, as modified through further discussion with and input from interested parties, in evaluating risk to communities. Similar risk factors will be included in interim guidance to the agencies' field units that will be required to implement urban wildland treatment projects during FY 2001.

#### *Risk Factor 1: Fire Behavior*

*Potential Situation 1:* In these communities, continuous fuels are in close proximity to structures. The composition of surrounding fuels is conducive to crown fires or high intensity surface fires. There are steep slopes, predominantly south aspects, dense fuels, heavy duff, prevailing wind exposure and/or ladder fuels that reduce firefighting effectiveness. There is a history of large fires and/or high fire occurrence.

*Situation 2:* In these communities, there are moderate slopes, broken moderate fuels, and some ladder fuels. The composition of surrounding fuels is conducive to torching and spotting. These conditions may lead to moderate firefighting effectiveness. There is a history of some large fires and/or moderate fire occurrence.

*Situation 3:* In these communities, grass and/or sparse fuels surround structures. There is infrequent wind exposure, flat terrain with little slope and/or predominantly a north aspect. There is no large fire history and/or low fire occurrence. Firefighting generally is highly effective.

#### *Risk Factor 2: Values At Risk*

*Situation 1:* This situation most closely represents a community in an urban interface setting. The setting contains a high density of homes, businesses, and other facilities that continue across the interface. There is a lack of defensible space where personnel can safely work to provide protection. The community watershed for municipal water

is at high risk of being burned compared to other watersheds within that geographic region. There is a high potential for economic loss to the community and likely loss of housing units and/or businesses. There are unique cultural, historical or natural heritage values at risk.

*Situation 2:* This situation represents an intermix or occluded setting, with scattered areas of high-density homes, summer homes, youth camps, or campgrounds that are less than a mile apart. This situation would cover the presence of lands at risk that are described under State designations such as impaired watersheds, or scenic byways. There is a risk of erosion or flooding in the community if vegetation burns.

### *Risk Factor 3: Infrastructure*

*Situation 1:* In these communities, there are narrow dead end roads, steep grades, one way in and/or out routes, no or minimal firefighting capacity, no fire hydrants, no surface water, no pressure water systems, no emergency operations group, and no evacuation plan in an area surrounded by a fire-conducive landscape.

*Situation 2:* In these communities, there are limited access routes, moderate grades, limited water supply, and limited firefighting capability in an area surrounded by scattered fire conducive landscape.

*Situation 3:* In these communities, there are multiple entrances and exits that are well equipped for fire trucks, wide loop roads, fire hydrants, open water sources (pools, creeks, lakes), an active emergency operations group, and an evacuation plan in place in an area surrounded by a fireproof landscape. The Secretaries will work collaboratively with States, Tribes, local communities, and other interested parties to develop a ranking process to focus fuel reduction activities by identifying communities most at risk. Public input is welcome on the form a ranking system should take, as is input on measures that may be useful to assess the impacts of fuels treatment projects.

### **Preliminary Criteria for Project Selection**

After the Federal agencies consult with States, Tribes, local leaders, and other interested parties on the risk to communities, the Secretaries will work collaboratively with those entities to identify and prioritize specific treatment projects. Projects will be focused on Federal land in the urban wildland interface, and may be extended to non- Federal land that falls in close proximity. All projects will be subject to review for conformance with applicable laws, as addressed in the report to Congress that responds to section 5(B) of title IV of the report accompanying the FY 2001 Interior and Related Agencies



Appropriations Act. The agencies expect the preliminary criteria for risk evaluation identified above, modified as appropriate in consultation with interested parties, to be helpful in project selection.

Among other factors that may be considered in project selection is the contribution the project will make toward establishing an adequate buffer around, or defensible space for, a community at risk. By this criterion, priority would be given to projects that are adjacent to combustible structures within the interface communities.

Another factor will be the degree to which the community actively supports and invests in hazardous fuel reduction activities and programs. Support would be demonstrated by a combination of: developing partnerships with adjacent Federal agencies, States, and Tribes; sharing costs for hazardous fuels reduction and fire prevention activities; enhancing a fire-safe environment through enforcement of fire-related laws, regulations and ordinances; applying appropriate community planning practices; and participating in the organization of and support for fire safety and related environmental education.

## Appendix B: Wildland Urban Interface Mapping Process

### 1. Identify Communities of Interest.

#### Assumptions:

- All communities of Interest in Archuleta County fall within the intermix category.
- Although there are some areas, eastern and western Pagosa Springs, that may be considered interface communities they are relatively small (less than 160 acres), surrounded by intermixed communities, and will be captured and treated as if they were intermixed.
- All structures are located at the center of a developed parcel unless better data exists.

#### Process:

1. Identify all developed parcels less than 40 acres.
2. Identify all of the above parcels that adjoin at least one other identified parcel. Define the newly selected area as communities.
3. Identify all inhabited structures or all business structures (If no better data exists, then it is assumed a single structure is located at the center of a developed parcel)
4. Identify the area 526 feet from each structure. This gives each structure an initial buffer of just less than 20 acres.
5. Identify the structures where their initial buffer area overlaps the initial buffer of at least one other structure. This shows which structures are within 40 acres of each other.

6. Buffer these identified structures by a secondary buffer of 75 feet (Defensible Space Zone 1 & 2) and join the secondary buffers with the other structures whose initial buffers overlap. Define the secondary buffer area as communities.
  7. Combine communities from step two with the communities from step 6.
2. Define Wildland Urban Interface

Assumptions:

- Given the documented volatility of frost killed oak brush it will be considered a condition class 3.
- Although there are isolated areas where less than a condition class 3 exist (golf course, tundra and ponds), the initial assessment of the urban interface will be calculated utilizing a condition class 3 for the entire county. This calculation will be further refined during subsequent updates when improved parcel and field data becomes available.
- Travel ways / escape routes that connect rural communities will be buffered by appropriately sized interface to allow for safe travel.

Process:

1. Create a 1.5 mile buffer around the communities defined in step 1 above.
  2. The buffer around the community and the community itself are the WUI
  3. Identify the major travel ways / escape route connecting remote communities.
  4. Create a 1.5 mile buffer along the travel ways. This buffer is WUI.
  5. Combine the WUI in step 2 and step 4.
3. Rank the Communities at Risk.

Assumptions:

- The process used in 2003 to rank the communities at risk followed the national guidelines. The communities will be re-ranked using updated field data, a corrected parcel layer and better overall data when they are developed.

Process:

1. Adopt the current ranking until it can be further defined.

### [Appendix C: Archuleta County Communities of Concern Inventory – June, 2008](#)

This list will be continually updated as new information or improved information becomes available.

Sources of updated information may include, but are not limited to:

- Red Zone Project Data (Structure Level Data)
- Improved fuels data
- Improved topological data
- Improved Mapping

- Public comment

Updates to this appendix will not require an official action for approval, as updates may be frequent.

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
1992-17 ANNEX	TBR
1993-1 ANNEX'N	TBR
1999-3 ANNEX	TBR
1999-4 ANNEX	TBR
1999-5 ANNEX	TBR
ADAMS - WHITAKER	HIGH
ALPINE HILLS	HIGH
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - COYOTE PARK 1	LOW
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - COYOTE PARK 2	MEDIUM
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - ELK RIDGE 1	HIGH
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - ELK RIDGE 2	HIGH
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - MEADOWS 1	LOW
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - MEADOWS 2	LOW
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - PONDEROSA HILLS 1	LOW
ALPINE LAKES RANCH - PONDEROSA HILLS 2	LOW
ALR-ALPINE MEADOWS-3	TBR
ANDREWS 1	HIGH
ANDREWS 2	HIGH
AQUA VISTA	HIGH
ASPEN SPRINGS 1	HIGH
ASPEN SPRINGS 2	HIGH
ASPEN SPRINGS 3	HIGH
ASPEN SPRINGS 4	HIGH
ASPEN SPRINGS 5	MEDIUM
ASPEN SPRINGS 6	HIGH
ASPEN VILLAGE III	TBR

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
ASPEN VILLAGE IV	TBR
ASPEN VILLAGE PHASE I	TBR
ASPEN VILLAGE PHASE II	TBR
BEAR SPRINGS RANCH	MEDIUM
BEAUGUREAU & MACKENZIE MI	MEDIUM
BENNETT BOOTHE COMMERCIAL PARK	HIGH
BLUE LAKE ESTATES	MEDIUM
BLUE MOUNTAIN RANCHES 1	HIGH
BLUE MOUNTAIN RANCHES 2	HIGH
CANDELARIA 1	HIGH
CANDELARIA 2	MEDIUM
CAPSTONE VILLAGE	LOW
CARRI-BLANCO CABIN SITES	HIGH
CAT CREEK ESTATES	HIGH
CENTRAL CORE	MEDIUM
CHRIS MOUNTAIN RANCH	LOW
CHRIS MOUNTAIN VILLAGE	LOW
CIMARRONA RANCH 1	LOW
CIMARRONA RANCH 2	HIGH
CIMARRONA RANCH 3	MEDIUM
CLOMAN INDUSTRIAL PARK 1	LOW
COLORADOS TIMBER RIDGE 1	LOW
COLORADOS TIMBER RIDGE 2	LOW
COLORADOS TIMBER RIDGE 3	LOW
COLORADOS TIMBER RIDGE 4	LOW
CONTINENTAL DIVIDE RANCH	TBR
CONTINENTAL ESTATES 1	MEDIUM
CONTINENTAL ESTATES 2	HIGH
COOL SPRINGS RANCH	LOW

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
CORDOVA MINOR SUBDIVISION	LOW
CORRIGAN SUBDV.	LOW
COX EAST ALLISON 1	MEDIUM
COX EAST ALLISON 2	MEDIUM
COYOTE COVE	TBR
CRESTVIEW ESTATES	LOW
CROWLEY RANCH RESERVE 1	LOW
CROWLEY RANCH RESERVE 2	MEDIUM
CROWLEY RANCH RESERVE 3	LOW
CROWLEY RANCH RESERVE 4	TBR
DAVIDSON MINOR	TBR
EAGLE PEAK RANCHES	MEDIUM
EATON PAGOSA ESTATES	LOW
ECHO CANYON RANCH	MEDIUM
ECHO CANYON RESERVOIR	TBR
ECHO LAKE ESTATES	LOW
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ADDITION	MEDIUM
ELK MEADOWS RIVER RESORT	TBR
ELK PARK MEADOWS 1	MEDIUM
ELK PARK MEADOWS 2	MEDIUM
ELK PARK MEADOWS 3	MEDIUM
ELK PARK RANCH 1	MEDIUM
ELK PARK RANCH 2	MEDIUM
ELK RUN ESTATES	HIGH
EMERALD LAKE RANCH	MEDIUM
ENCLAVE @ ASPEN VILLAGE	TBR
FAIRGROUNDS MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
FKA SHOESTRING RANCH	MEDIUM
FOUR CORNERS VACATION PROPERTIES	HIGH

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
FRIENDLY FOREST	HIGH
GARVIN ADDITION	HIGH
GASTON ADDITION	MEDIUM
GOUGH MINOR	MEDIUM
GREVEY-LIBERMAN TRACT 2	HIGH
GREVEY-LIBERMAN TRACT I	HIGH
HANA'S RETREAT	TBR
HARMAN MINOR	TBR
HARMAN PARK SUBDIVISION	LOW
HARRIS MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
HARVEY MINOR IMPACT	HIGH
HATCHER VILLAGE CONDOS	HIGH
HENNIS MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
HERMANN & SCHLICHTING MINOR IMPACT	HIGH
HIDDEN VALLEY ESTATES UNIT 1	TBR
HIDDEN VALLEY RANCH	MEDIUM
HIGH WEST UNIT 11	MEDIUM
HIS	LOW
HOLIDAY ACRES 1	MEDIUM
HOLIDAY ACRES 2	MEDIUM
HOLIDAY ACRES 3	HIGH
HORSE GULCH	LOW
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 1	HIGH
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 2	HIGH
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 2A	HIGH
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 3	MEDIUM
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 4	MEDIUM
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 5	HIGH
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 5A	HIGH

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 6	HIGH
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 8	MEDIUM
HUDSON RIO BLANCO 9	HIGH
JEHOVAH WITNESS CHURCH	LOW
JUNCTION SUBDIVISION	LOW
KETCHUM MINOR	TBR
KING RANCH MINOR	TBR
LADO DEL RIO ESTATES	MEDIUM
LAKE FOREST ESTATES	MEDIUM
LAKE HATCHER PARK	LOW
LAKE PAGOSA PARK	LOW
LAKESIDE HILLS	HIGH
LAVERTY RANCH MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
LAVERTY RANCH SUBDIVISION	TBR
LEEPER MINOR	TBR
LINDSEY	HIGH
LOG PARK	HIGH
LOMA LINDA 1	LOW
LOMA LINDA 2	MEDIUM
LOMA LINDA 3	HIGH
LOMA LINDA 4	LOW
LOMA LINDA 5	HIGH
LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD	HIGH
MAJESTIC MOUNTAIN HOMESITES PART 1	HIGH
MAJESTIC MOUNTAIN HOMESITES PART 2	HIGH
MARMADUKE MINOR	LOW
MARTINEZ ANNEX	LOW
MARTINEZ CANYON ESTATES	HIGH
MARTINEZ MOUNTAIN ESTATES 1	LOW

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
MARTINEZ MOUNTAIN ESTATES 2	LOW
MASTERSON MINOR IMPACT	HIGH
MCINNIS MINOR	TBR
MCKEOWN MINOR IMPACT	HIGH
MEES	HIGH
MESA HEIGHTS	HIGH
MILL CREEK MEADOWS RANCH	LOW
MOUNTAIN VIEW	MEDIUM
MOUNTAIN VISTA 1	HIGH
MOUNTAIN VISTA COMMERCIAL	MEDIUM
MTN CROSSING	LOW
NAVAJO PEAK RANCH	HIGH
NAVAJO RIVER RANCH (DON ENGLISH)	LOW
NAVAJO RIVER RANCH 1	LOW
NAVAJO RIVER RANCH 2	MEDIUM
NAVAJO RIVER RANCH 3	MEDIUM
NAVAJO RIVER RANCH 4	MEDIUM
NAVAJO RIVER RANCH 5	HIGH
NORTH VILLAGE LAKE	LOW
OAK HILL RANCHES	HIGH
OLD WEST LANDING	HIGH
ONE HIDDEN MEADOWS RANCH	MEDIUM
P & C MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
PAGOSA ALPHA	LOW
PAGOSA DEVELOPMENT 1	HIGH
PAGOSA DEVELOPMENT 2	HIGH
PAGOSA DEVELOPMENT ADDITION A	LOW
PAGOSA DEVELOPMENT ADDITION B	MEDIUM
PAGOSA HIGHLANDS ESTATES	LOW



<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
PAGOSA HILLS 1	HIGH
PAGOSA HILLS 3	HIGH
PAGOSA HILLS 4	HIGH
PAGOSA IN THE PINES	MEDIUM
PAGOSA LAKES PLAZA MINOR	LOW
PAGOSA LAKES RANCH	LOW
PAGOSA LAKEVIEW ESTATES 1	LOW
PAGOSA LAKEVIEW ESTATES 2	LOW
PAGOSA LAKEWOOD VILLAGE	MEDIUM
PAGOSA LODGE CONDOS	HIGH
PAGOSA MEADOWS 1	LOW
PAGOSA MEADOWS 2	MEDIUM
PAGOSA MEADOWS 3	MEDIUM
PAGOSA MEADOWS 4	MEDIUM
PAGOSA PEAK ESTATES 1	HIGH
PAGOSA PEAK ESTATES 2	LOW
PAGOSA PINES 1	HIGH
PAGOSA PINES 2	HIGH
PAGOSA PINES 3	HIGH
PAGOSA PINES 4	LOW
PAGOSA SOUTH ADDITION	HIGH
PAGOSA SPRINGS 1883	MEDIUM
PAGOSA SPRINGS 1883	TBR
PAGOSA TRAILS	LOW
PAGOSA VISTA	MEDIUM
PARADISE MESA	LOW
PARK MEADOWS	LOW
PASCUAL ACRES	LOW
PIEDRA ESTATES	MEDIUM

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
PIEDRA PARK 1	MEDIUM
PIEDRA PARK 10	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 10A	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 10B	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 2	LOW
PIEDRA PARK 2A	MEDIUM
PIEDRA PARK 3	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 4	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 5	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 6	HIGH
PIEDRA PARK 7	MEDIUM
PIERCE ADDITION	LOW
PIERCE SECOND ADDITION	HIGH
PINON HILLS RANCH 1	LOW
PLAZA @ ASPEN VILLAGE	TBR
POINT VIEW	MEDIUM
POLE CREEK RANCH MINOR IMPACT	LOW
POWDER HORN	LOW
POWELL MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
PS MARTINEZ ANNEXATION	TBR
PUTNAM HOMESTEAD MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
QUARTZ RIDGE RANCH	LOW
QUINTANA MINOR IMPACT	LOW
RANCH COMMUNITY	LOW
RANSON MINOR	TBR
RENDEZVOUS	MEDIUM
RESERVE AT PAGOSA PEAK 1	LOW
RESERVE AT PAGOSA PEAK 2	LOW
RESERVE AT PAGOSA PEAK 3	MEDIUM

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
RESERVE AT PAGOSA PEAK 4	LOW
RIDGEVIEW SUBDIVISION	LOW
RIO BLANCO CABIN SITES 1	HIGH
RIO BLANCO CABIN SITES 2	LOW
RIO BLANCO CABIN SITES 3	MEDIUM
RIO BLANCO VALLEY 1	MEDIUM
RIO BLANCO VALLEY 2	HIGH
RIO BLANCO VALLEY 3	HIGH
RIO BLANCO VALLEY 4	HIGH
RIO BLANCO VALLEY A	MEDIUM
RIO BLANCO VALLEY REPLAT 1	HIGH
RITO BLANCO RANCH 1	HIGH
RITO BLANCO RANCH 2	MEDIUM
ROCK RIDGE COUNTRY ESTATES	HIGH
SAN JUAN RIVER ESTATES 1	MEDIUM
SAN JUAN RIVER ESTATES 2	MEDIUM
SAN JUAN RIVER RANCH	HIGH
SAN JUAN RIVER VILLAGE 1	HIGH
SAN JUAN RIVER VILLAGE 2	MEDIUM
SANITATION DISTRICT ANNEX	LOW
SCHOOL DISTRICT & BLYTHE ANNEX	LOW
SCOFIELD HEIGHTS	LOW
SOUTH SHORE ESTATES	LOW
SOUTH VILLAGE LAKE	MEDIUM
SPRING ESTATES	HIGH
SPRING VALLEY RANCHES	MEDIUM
SUNRIDGE VILLAS TOWNHOMES	TBR
SUNSET HEIGHTS	HIGH
TEYUAKAN 1	MEDIUM

<b>SUBDIVISION</b>	<b>RANKING</b> (TBR: To be Ranked)
TEYUAKAN 2	MEDIUM
THE KNOLLS RANCHES	LOW
THE RIVER RANCH	HIGH
TIERRA DEL ORO	LOW
TRUJILLO ACRES	HIGH
TWINCREEK VILLAGE	MEDIUM
TWO BEAR RANCH	TBR
VALLEY VIEW PART 1	MEDIUM
VALLEY VIEW PART 2	MEDIUM
VILLAGE SERVICE COMMERCIAL	MEDIUM
WAGNER SUBDIVISION	LOW
WESTERN ADDITION	LOW
WHISPERING WOOD	HIGH
WHITE	HIGH
WHITE-GREENE MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM
WILDFLOWER	LOW
WOLF CREEK RUN	MEDIUM
WOLFCREEK ESTATES	LOW
WOLTER AND VALDEZ MINOR SUBDV.	LOW
WOODSCREST ESTATES	MEDIUM
ZINSER MINOR IMPACT	MEDIUM

Appendix D: Archuleta County Community Fire Plan 2001  
(Contacts and information in this document may be out of date)

# **Archuleta County Community Fire Plan**

## *A Component of the National Fire Plan*

### **Background:**

The Archuleta County Community Fire Plan is a direct extension of the National Fire Plan authorized by Congress, as a response to the tragic summer fires of 2000. As a component of the National Fire Plan, the County Community Fire Plan is meant to help coordinate fire readiness efforts between local communities and federal agencies through four major goals.

- 1.) Ensure firefighting resources
- 2.) Rebuild communities and ecosystems damaged by the fires of 2000
- 3.) Thin vegetation in areas that are adjacent to public lands
- 4.) Help local residents to reduce fire risk and improve fire protection.

This Community Fire Plan has been developed to assist the Sheriff, Fire Officials, and residents of Archuleta County, Colorado, in the identification of private and public lands at risk of severe wildland fires, to explore strategies for the prevention and suppression of such fires, and to improve firefighting resources.

Over 50% of the total landmass of Archuleta County is in public ownership. Federal lands within the County consist primarily of the San Juan National Forest in the northern half of the county, a small amount of BLM land in the south central portion of the county, and a few small areas of State Land scattered across the remainder of the county. All three have fire management programs in place. The Southern Ute Tribe is the largest landowner in the southwest quarter of the county holding approximately 125,000 acres. The Southern Ute Tribe also has a fire management program in place.

Archuleta County, Colorado ranked as the fifth fastest growing county in Colorado and the ninth in the United States last year. Much of this residential growth has been occurring in the wildland/urban interface where private lands are adjacent to federal and tribal land (US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Southern Ute Indian Tribe). These thickly forested interface areas into which people are moving are highly susceptible to wildland fire.

While the risk of wildfire on public land is generally understood, much of the adjacent private land is equally at risk. These areas adjoining public lands are becoming increasingly valued for their scenic beauty, solitude, and access to recreation opportunities. As development in these areas continues to increase, the risk to lives, property, and resources correspondingly increases.

## **Authorization:**

Under Colorado law, the county Sheriff has been given the authority to act as fire warden for the county as provided by the following statutes:

- C.R.S. v.9 30-10-512 Sheriff to act as fire warden.
- C.R.S. v.9 30-10-513 Sheriff in charge of forest or prairie fire.
- C.R.S. v.9 30-10-513.5 Authority of Sheriff relating to fire within unincorporated areas of county.

## **Archuleta County's Fire Protection Infrastructure:**

Archuleta County has one fire protection district. The Pagosa Fire Protection District (PFPD) covers an area of 320 square miles of the county with funds collected from a special tax district. It responds to structure fires within its boundaries, but works on wildland fires outside of its jurisdiction only if asked and able to. The remaining portion of the county has no dedicated structural fire protection. All agencies respond to fire calls within one mile of their boundaries, as per the Annual Operating Plan (AOP), providing free services for the first 24 hours of a fire. If it is not suppressed by then a fee is charged for firefighter time and equipment. Many times, the US Forest Service, BIA and BLM have responded to wildfires on private lands as a part of their interagency activities.

During 2001, county commissioners implemented a county-wide planning ordinance requiring real estate developers to thin fire-prone parcels before receiving final plat approval. At least two developers have paid a private business as much as \$500 per acre to thin forested lots plotted for sale. Early response to the requirement has been positive. Through the county's *Site Development Standards* requirement, five developments have conducted, or are conducting, thinning projects: Elk Park Meadows, Timber Ridge, The Reserve at Pagosa Peak, Powderhorn Subdivision, and Snow Circle. This pro-active approach is an excellent example for other counties in the region.

Related to this action, the Archuleta County Planning Department recently purchased a new computer and GIS fire-risk assessment software to identify and characterize fire-prone areas in an effort to plan practical and safe new residential development. However, it may be several months before this can affect issues of development and policy. Once in place, this system should help county officials immensely in long range strategic planning. Additionally it will provide excellent information for county residents concerned with fire safety.

## **Overall Goals of the Archuleta County Community Fire Plan:**

The Archuleta County Community Fire Plan is a living document intended to be used as a tool to stimulate community involvement and long range strategic planning. This document should be evaluated, and updated on a regular basis as new information is gathered. The following goals have been identified as initial desired outcomes of this plan.

- Identify areas thought to have high or moderate risk of wild fire.
- Document and outline strategies for protecting community values such as watersheds, residences, recreation resources, economic resources etc.
- Outline planning & design strategies that private landowners can use to reduce wildfire risk.
- Improve the fire suppression resources of the community by identifying equipment and training needs.
- Coordinate fire suppression efforts between the county and federal land agencies.
- Coordinate fuels reduction opportunities between private landowners and federal land management agencies.
- Identify potential public/ private lands fuels reduction demonstration projects that can illustrate fuels mitigation techniques and results.
- Identify economic development and networking opportunities regarding fuel reduction enterprises.
- Identify public education strategies using information gathered through the development of this plan.

## **Archuleta County Community Fire Plan**

### **The Process:**

Information for the plan was recorded during five meetings and several follow-up conversations held in Archuleta County during late summer and fall of 2001. Participants included US Forest Service fire management officers with the San



Juan Public Lands, the Pagosa Ranger District, Pagosa Fire Protection District Chief, county Sheriff's office, County Emergency Management Office, planning staff director and (GIS) technician, and about 12 residents. The Office of Community Services, at Fort Lewis College, drafted the fire plan through a cost share agreement with the San Juan Public Lands.

## **Wildfire Risk Mapping:**

Community leaders, and individuals with specialized knowledge of the surrounding land base were interviewed to provide information and opinions on the level of fire risk for private and public lands within the county. Information gathered through these interviews was used to map areas where the risk of wildfire could pose a special threat to homes, property or other cultural resources.

## **Mapping criteria:**

Areas were identified and mapped based in part on the following subjective criteria:

- Remote areas where fire starts would prove to be difficult to access or suppress.
- Developing areas with excessive fuel loading.
- Developing areas that lie outside a fire protection district.
- Developing areas adjacent to public lands which due to terrain and fuel load could pose an increased fire risk. (ie. Home sites situated at the top of heavily wooded canyons etc.)
- Areas where a lack of water sources would hamper fire suppression.
- Areas where pending development may compound fire risk.
- Areas where fire starts could spread to sensitive areas. (community watersheds, archaeological resources, wildlife habitat, oil or gas fields, etc.)

## **Wildfire Risk Areas Identified: (Appendix 1)**

Thirty -four areas of private lands along the urban/ wildland interface thought to be at some degree of risk from wildfire were identified and mapped. These areas include;

1. Aspen Springs	18. Cimarron
2. Log Park	19. Continental Estates
3. Pagosa Lakes	20. Eagle Peak
4. San Juan River Village	21. Alpha
5. Alpine Lakes Estates	22. Ghost Elk Valley
6. Loma Linda	23. High West
7. Burns Canyon	24. Holiday Acres
8. Pagosa Peak Reserve (Design Reg)	25. Keyah Grande
9. Piedra Peak (Design Regulations)	26. Lower Blanco
10. Snow Circle (Design Regulations)	27. Navajo River Ranch
11. Elk Park Meadows (treated area)	28. Rito Blanco
12. Timber Ridge (Design Regulations)	29. Stevens Canyon
13. Turkey Springs	30. Tierra del Oro
14. Alpine Lakes Subdivision	31. Twin Creek
15. Echo Canyon	32. Upper Blanco
16. Chris Mountain Estates	33. Wildflower
17. Blue Mountain Estates	34. Crowley Ranch

Of these thirty-four areas, six areas of special concern have been tentatively identified and labeled as “At Risk”.

These areas include:

- **Aspen Springs** – Located approximately 10 miles west of Pagosa Springs the Aspen Springs Subdivision is bisected by Highway 160. The subdivision is thought to be at risk because of thick timber and heavy brush, insufficient water sources for firefighting, steep slopes, and adjacency to heavily timbered Public and Tribal Lands. Furthermore new construction with exposed timber framing, and construction trash piles contribute manmade hazards. The area is also crisscrossed with roads making navigation more difficult. This subdivision is within the Pagosa Fire Protection District, and there is a substation located near the entrance. Response times are relatively quick, but are hampered by the proliferation of roads. Improved signage could help the navigational situation.
- **Alpine Lakes Estates** – Located approximately 20 miles south of Pagosa Springs this relatively remote subdivision is thought to be at risk because of heavy timber and brush. Furthermore there is only one access road leading into the subdivision which could potentially create a “bottle neck” situation. The subdivision is not within the Pagosa Springs Fire Protection District, and response time may take 30 to 45 minutes by road.

- **Log Park** – Located approximately 3 miles northeast of Pagosa Springs, this subdivision may be at risk because of the presence of thick timber and brush, steep slopes, and adjacency to heavily timbered public lands. Furthermore the single access road lead to the subdivision could create “bottle-neck” situations. The Log Park Subdivision is located within the Pagosa Springs Fire Protection District, and response times may take up to 15 minutes by road.
- **San Juan River Village** – Located approximately 6 miles north east of Pagosa Springs, this subdivision may be at risk because of the adjacency to heavily timbered public lands. The subdivision is located within the Pagosa Fire Protection District and response times are usually within 10 minutes by road.
- **Burns Canyon** - The Burns Canyon Area Is located approximately 10 miles south west of Pagosa Springs. The area is sparsely populated, but it is thought to be at risk because of the heavy brush and timber, extremely steep slopes, difficult road and foot access, and a lack of water sources. This area has historically been the location of a high number of fire starts due to lightning, and prevailing winds could push a fire towards more populated areas to the east. Response time may take as long as 30 minutes by road and even longer when fire crews finally hit the ground because of the extremely rugged terrain. Effective firefighting in many parts of this area is too dangerous to attempt by ground crews leaving air attacks as the only practical means of fire suppression.
- **Pagosa Lakes (near Martinez Canyon)**- Located approximately 6 miles northwest of Pagosa Springs, this area is thought to be at risk due to its adjacency to a large area of thick timber and heavy brush on National Forest land. Also, because of its location along the eastern side of the timbered area, there is concern that prevailing winds could push a wildfire into this populated area from the National Forest land. Response times are usually within 10 minutes by road.

### **Additional Map Data:**

In addition to the location of subdivisions thought to be at “high risk”, two other areas of private land thought to be “at risk” have been identified and mapped.

These areas are:

- **The Crowley Ranch** – Located approximately 25 miles southeast of Pagosa Springs, this relatively remote subdivision is thought to be at risk because of the thick stands of timber and brush, steep slopes and lack of water to suppress fires. Not located within the Fire Protection District, response time can take as long as 45 minute to an hour by road.

- **Mesa Cortado** – Located approximately 25 miles south of Pagosa Springs this multi-jurisdictional area is thought to be at risk because of the thick stands of pinyon/ juniper, brush, steep slopes, and lack of water for fire suppression. This relatively remote area is not within the Fire Protection District and response times can take as long as 45 minutes to an hour by road.

Also shown are two “at risk” subdivisions with landowners who are interested in doing fuels reduction treatments. These subdivisions are;

- **Holiday Acres** – Located approximately 5 miles south of Pagosa Springs.
- **Loma Linda** – Located approximately 8 miles south of Pagosa Springs.

**Federal Projects;** Federal fuels treatment projects are also located on the map. As indicated there are a number of planned and previous treatments near subdivisions that have been identified as having some level of risk.

## **Emerging Issues;**

Through the interview process a number of issues that can be addressed in the plan have emerged.

- 1) **Data gaps within existing wildfire hazard map.** There are a number of data pieces that could be added to the hazard map, which would make the map more useful in the coordination of emergency responses and strategic planning. These data gaps include, but are not limited to the following.
  - a) **Parcel, Cultural, residential densities & Subdivision Information;** The inclusion of parcel and subdivision information would be helpful to emergency response teams who could use field GPS units to help locate their vicinities, property lines, water sources, utilities, and other cultural values such as oil wells, tank batteries, watersheds, archeological sites etc, which may play a role in fire suppression activities.
  - b) **Comprehensive roads layer with mile marker reference points;** Updated county wide road information including mile marker reference points would assist in strategic emergency response. Additionally it may be helpful to indicate roads that may have seasonal closures, or other roads that may be permanently closed but which could offer access under extreme conditions.

- c) **Location of fire stations, fire hydrants, & water line sizes;** A good inventory of fire protection resources may be helpful in projecting fire response strategies and implementing suppression efforts.
- d) **Fire Protection District Boundaries;** Delineation of Fire Protection District Boundaries on the fire hazard map would benefit intra-agency coordination.
- e) **Inventory of past fire starts;** Delineation of past fire starts could assist in strategic planning by identifying areas more prone to fire starts due to lightning etc. Delineation of past burns can also indicate areas where fire risk has been reduced.
- f) **Section Lines;** Inclusion of section lines could aid in reference locations.

2.) **Federal land boundaries are difficult to locate on the ground.** There is concern over fire suppression efforts that inadvertently cross federal land property lines. Because they are typically the first responders on the scene, local fire fighters need to have some latitude to perform fire suppression activities in areas where fire starts on federal ground may pose a direct threat to private property. Regular exchange of information and training opportunities would help to maintain strong working relationships between federal and local agencies and provide more technically skilled firefighters.

3.) **Continued air support is essential in suppression of fire in remote areas, and along private/ public interface lands.** Continued and if possible expanded air support is key in controlling fire starts in inaccessible or remote areas in effort to maintain control over the situation until ground efforts can get in place.

4.) **Access to water.** Lack of water is the biggest obstacle to fire suppression once a fire starts. Having air support helps to alleviate this problem. However remote development should plan ahead to provide onsite water sources of at least 2,500 gallons.

5.) **Fire Fighting Equipment & Training Needs;** There has been a modest increase in personal safety equipment for volunteers over the last year; however, there are still substantial gaps to be filled.

6.) **Proactive fire preparedness by private homeowners;** The risks of wildfire striking and hazards of it spreading rapidly are serious. Fire departments can do only so much to respond to fire. In the event of a large fire, or multiple fires, it may not be possible to protect every home in the wildland/urban interface. Homeowners can make a difference by taking action to protect themselves and their property from wildfire. Following defensible area guidelines provided by the Colorado State Forest Service and

the local fire district is one way. Also, commercial businesses are increasingly available to provide fuel reduction services.

7.) **Funding shortfalls;** The funding issue basically has two parts.

- a) **Adequate Funding for the Fire Protection Districts;** The Fire Protection Districts are constantly trying to keep up with a growing demand for services, increasing equipment needs, and increasing training needs. Additional funding may be available through Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) grants and through the Rural Fire Assistance Program (RFA) cost share grants.
- b) **Fuels Treatments and Defensible Areas;** Fuels reduction efforts by private individuals can be a daunting task. Faced with limited resources many landowners cannot afford to hire commercial businesses to complete work, and many times the extent of the treatment required is more than a landowner can accomplish by themselves.

8.) **Access into developing areas;** Many new subdivisions are often limited to one road in and out, which can potentially cause a “bottleneck” situation with residents trying to leave a subdivision while emergency crews are trying to enter the subdivision.

### **Current Fuels Reduction Efforts:**

There are a number of fuels reduction efforts underway in Archuleta County by private landowners or developers. These areas, once completed can be very helpful in showcasing the finished product of fuels reduction and defensible space, in addition to the process. Subdivisions which will be completing work as required by the Land Use Code, or by their own initiative include:

- Timber Ridge
- Piedra Peak
- Snow Circle
- Elk Park Meadows
- Timber Ridge/ Crowley Ranch
- Pagosa Peak Reserve

Additionally the Federal Forest Service has fuels reduction demonstration areas underway in:

- Turkey Springs
- Fawn Gulch
- Mill Creek

## **Archuleta County Wild Fire Plan** **Implementation**

The following recommendations have been developed in an effort to reach the goals stated in of the Community Action Plan. As a living document, these recommendations should be reviewed periodically and new recommendations or amendments to the existing recommendations should be included where appropriate.

### **Action Recommendation # 1**

**Continue to refine, update, and circulate the wildfire risk map on an annual basis, between the Sheriff's Department, Fire Districts, County Commission, County Planning Commission, Emergency Management Offices, Federal Agencies and other appropriate stakeholders.**

The Wildfire Risk Map (**appendix 1**) is designed to be a living map that provides common geographical reference information for the Community Action Plan. The map is intended to be used as a resource to help coordinate the long range, intra-agency strategic fire management goals identified in the (CAP). As a common resource, the map will help local and federal government agencies;

- Prioritize and coordinate mitigation treatments on private and public lands, to reduce fire risks.
- Provide decision-making data for the County Commissioners, and County Planning Commission, regarding development.
- Identify resource gaps.
- Protect and manage community values such as; residences, watersheds, archeological or historic sites, view-corridors, recreation resources, wildlife habitat, energy resources, grazing and timber resources etc.
- Provide common reference and direction for fire suppression efforts between Fire Districts and Federal Fire Management Officers.
- Keep “up-to-date” information on new developments locations.
- Keep track of lands that are in need of fuels treatments, lands that have been previously treated, and when treatments were conducted.

In the months ahead additional map refinement will include a polygon mapping exercise known as the “Quick Fire Plan” to more narrowly focus in on geographical areas where hazardous fuels, residences, and other community values overlap.  
**(Appendix 2)**

## **Action Recommendation # 2**

**Develop and sustain a general public informational campaign and concentrate special efforts in areas identified as high risk.**

Expanding the use of public informational tools already in place is an immediate action step that can be taken. Fire-wise publications and videos produced by the Colorado State Forest Service, and the San Juan Public Lands Center, are available in addition to “Fire wise” information that can be found over the internet.

Additional steps may include:

- Development of an informational presentation booth to be used at public events such as the County Fair, Rodeos, school events etc. Such a display may include photo documentation of good mitigation work examples, and graphic illustration of “fire wise” homes.
- Local newspaper coverage. Feature articles dealing with wildfire preparedness could be run in the paper on a regular basis to maintain a high level of fire awareness at the community level.
- Seek ways to raise the level of recognition for the fire districts. Possible action steps may include; hosting an “open house”, community radio spots, etc.
- Informational briefs and videos can be broadcast over the community closed circuit television station.
- Integrate “fire wise” education into school curriculum. Involve local clubs such as 4H, FFA, boy & girl scouts etc.
- Working with homeowners associations, builders, realtors and a door-to-door outreach program to individual landowners in an effort to jumpstart word- of -mouth community networking.
- Develop highly visible on-going demonstration projects. (Several projects are already underway.)



- Expand the ranks of volunteer fire fighters.
- Provide more comprehensive and frequent fire training for existing firefighters.
- Conduct a door-to-door public outreach effort in areas thought to be at risk.
- Exchange information regularly on a regional scale.
- Encourage subdivisions and developments to elect a “fire board” with one person identified as a point person for other working groups and disseminating information and ideas within other developments.
- Post information on the Archuleta County and Archuleta Sheriff’s Office Facebook page as well as on the Archuleta County Web Site.

### **Action Recommendation #3**

#### **Create a mechanism for the oversight and management of the Archuleta County Community Fire Plan.**

To maintain momentum the (CAP) regular monitoring will be required. Some possibilities for accomplishing this duty may include; oversight through the Sheriff’s Office, oversight through Pagosa Fire Protection District, oversight through the County Planning Commission, or creating a local Fire Council. Other possibilities for the assumption of this role can be discussed among county officials.

Some of the oversight functions may include but not be limited to;

- Administering a sustained public education strategy.
- Administration and follow-up on grant applications.
- Coordination between Counties/ Fire districts.
- A contact point for coordination with Federal Agencies.
- Monitoring equipment and training needs.
- Administering/coordinating post- fire rehabilitation efforts such as damage assessment, erosion control, reseeding, weed control etc.

- A contact point for public “fire boards”, or individual landowners, which could provide a vehicle for the dissemination of information and ideas.
- Review rehabilitation proposals.

### **Action Recommendation #4**

#### **Continue to support and promote private contractors who perform fire safe mitigation work.**

There are a number of contractors in the region who provide fire safe maintenance and mitigation work for private landowners.

Opportunities exist for local contractors to start new businesses or to expand on existing businesses within the fire prevention / fuels reduction market. Some possibilities could include:

- Contracting with private landowners for fire prevention work.
- Contracting for fire prevention work with Federal, State or Tribal entities.
- Extraction of saleable material from fire prevention projects, which could include; saw timber, pulp, fence posts, firewood, mulch products for landscaping, compost material or wood for furniture and other ornamental purposes.
- Use State Grant opportunities as matching funds to catalyze action among neighborhood inhabitants.

### **Action Recommendation #5**

#### **Continue to use the Land Use Code as a vehicle for maintaining the momentum of wildfire management strategies on private lands.**

The existence of regulations intended to pro- actively address the dangers of wild fires on private lands is a ground- breaking accomplishment for the region. Other counties look to the Archuleta County Land Use Code as a model to help them draft their own version of fire management strategies. Other amendments to the code can be made over time to reflect new techniques or improve upon existing management strategies.

Some possible ideas include;

- On-going fuels reduction within developments. Because fuels tend to accumulate over time, periodic maintenance is needed to maintain fuel loads at an acceptable level. The land use code may be a way to carry the fuels reduction requirements placed upon new developments into the future rather than just as a one-time requirement.
- Regulatory procedures for “landowner initiated burns”. Controlled burning is an integral part of agricultural management. Burns can be an effective management tool for improving grazing range and annual cleanup of irrigation ditches and fields. However, landowner initiated fires that get out of control can have catastrophic effects on neighboring structures, property values and other community values. Furthermore fires of this nature carry an enormous amount of liability for the individual responsible for the ignition. Out of control fires of this nature consume vast amounts of community resources in time and in dollars. Good pre-burn planning can help to alleviate much of this threat.

Possible steps to improving the pre-burn planning effort include;

- Low level regulation, such as a courtesy call to the Sheriff Office, or Archuleta County Combine Dispatch, to describe the location, estimated size, and proposed time of burn. Recommendations regarding appropriate procedures could be passed on to the landowner based on burn reports from local weather centers. Dispatch could recommend postponement of burning on “Red Flag Warning Days”
- Higher level regulation, such as the ordinance requiring a mandatory “open burning permit” from the Pagosa Fire Protection. Such permits could be issued based on current fire/weather conditions and could include an onsite visit by a Sheriff’s department representative, to evaluate the situation under certain conditions. Penalties will be issued for noncompliance.

### **Action Recommendation # 7**

**Continue to pursue grant funding to build fire-fighting capacity within the Fire Protection Districts, and for fuels reduction on private lands.**

Successfully pursuing grant funding for equipment and training needs within the Fire Protection Districts, and for Fuels Reduction Treatments on private lands requires diligent monitoring of grant requests. Because of the competitive nature of the grant system it is often necessary to reapply for grants every grant cycle. Therefore, it may be beneficial to set up some sort of a mechanism to provide for the preparation and

administration of grants. The creation of a matrix to help keep track of what needs to be, or has been funded could be helpful.

### **Action Recommendation # 8**

#### **Provide a means for county residents to dispose of slash accumulated through thinning efforts.**

Enormous amounts of slash are generated through the thinning process creating a disposal problem for private landowners. Leaving slash in piles is not a preferred option because it still contributes to the fire danger. Burning slash piles can be a hazard in itself, and could only be done during the winter. Mulching is the preferred option but it can be fairly cost prohibitive. Some possible solutions could include;

Providing an approved dumping site for vegetative slash. (this could include slash generated through spring pruning's, Christmas trees etc. within the city limits as well.) Develop a County/City partnership to purchase and operate an industrial sized chipper to create mulch from slash piles. (The resulting mulch could be given away or sold to interested community members.)

Contract with a local business to chip slash into mulch. (The resulting mulch could be given away or sold to interested community members.)

Some benefits to a proactive community approach to the slash disposal problem may include;

1.) Better control of the outbreaks of pests such as the Ips beetle, which are more attracted to downed branches than live trees. Because beetles are attracted to the tree volatiles secreted from fresh cuts, one large slash pile would be better than many small piles. Also by concentrating the slash, chemical treatment of the pile to kill existing beetle larva would be more practical.

### **(Appendix 2)**

### **Quick Fire Plan**

The quick fire plan will have two basic objectives;

- 1) Identify areas where wildland fire would be **highly undesirable (Class A)**. Where management activities will be focused on aggressive suppression, prevention, and where there is a need for immediate mitigation work.
- 2) Identify areas where wildland fire would be **undesirable under current conditions (Class B)**. Where short-term management activities will be focused on

aggressive suppression and prevention, and long-term management focused on fuels reduction.

### **The Quick Plan Process**

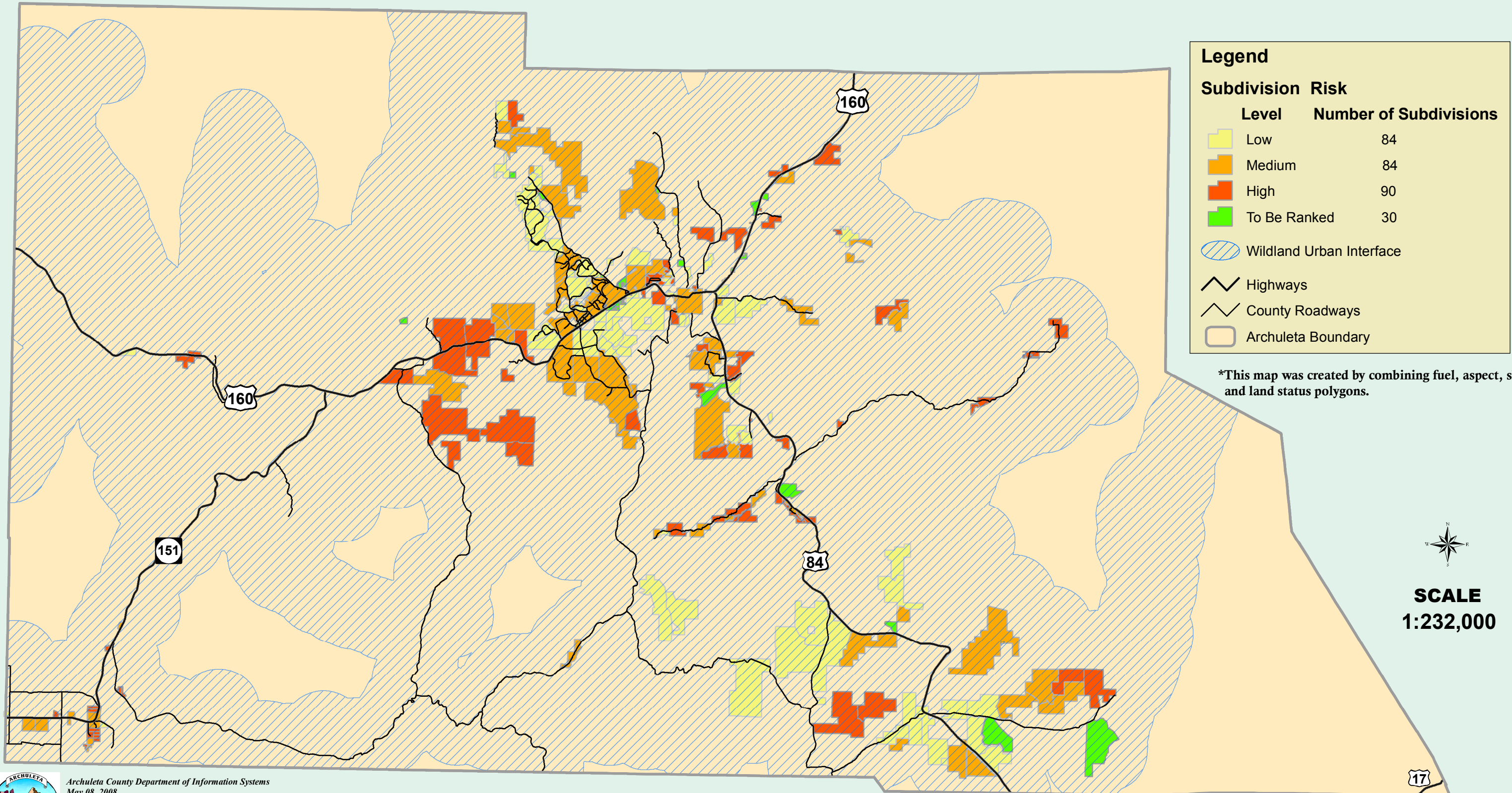
- Areas will be designated as **Class A**; or **Class B**.
- *Criteria for **Class A polygons**: are the existence of values that have a high likelihood of being unacceptably altered or damaged as a result of exposure to fire intensities and durations expected under current conditions. (These may be Watersheds, view sheds, infrastructure, cultural resources, subdivisions etc.)*
- After areas are designated, the township, range and section number closest to the center of the area will be recorded and an easily recognizable name will be assigned to the area.
- A written assessment of each area will be drafted which will include; a description of the size and shape of the area, an evaluation of the level of ignition risk, a description of fire hazard conditions, an analysis response potential, and an evaluation of potential losses as related to the conditions described.
- **Class A** areas will be ranked from those most in need of attention to those in less urgent need based on the evaluations.
- General “Fire Protection Action Plans” will be developed for each area.
- Completed maps and evaluations will be circulated amongst cooperating agencies to coordinate fire management and suppression activities.

## Archuleta County CWPP Maps

- ***Archuleta County Community Base Map; Fire Risk – Communities of Concern*** (Combined risk map) \* This map was created by combining the Archuleta County Urban Interface Definition with fuel, aspect, slope, and land status polygons.
- ***Archuleta County Land Use Map***  
Displays all private property with color-keyed acreage size groups and subdivisions outlined with a black line.
- ***Archuleta County Fuel Polygons Map***  
From fuel inventories in the field and aerial images, vegetation is classified according to its fuel loading.
- ***Archuleta County Combined Aspect & Slope Polygons Map***  
Color-keyed to show areas of southern aspect with the steepest slopes highest on the scale.
- ***Archuleta County Combined Fuel Polygons & Aspect/Slope Polygons Map***  
Combining the two previous map layers over the land status shows highest fuel hazard areas.
- ***Fire Intensity***
- ***Drinking Water Map***
- ***San Juan Headwaters – Forest Health Activities – Input Map***
- ***Wildfire Risk Map***
- ***Wildland Urban Interface Risk Map***
- ***Wildfire History Map***
- ***Fuels Treatments Map***
- ***Fuels Maps***

# ARCHULETA COUNTY COMMUNITY BASE MAP

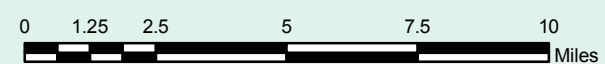
## FIRE RISK - COMMUNITIES OF CONCERN



\*This map was created by combining fuel, aspect, slope, and land status polygons.



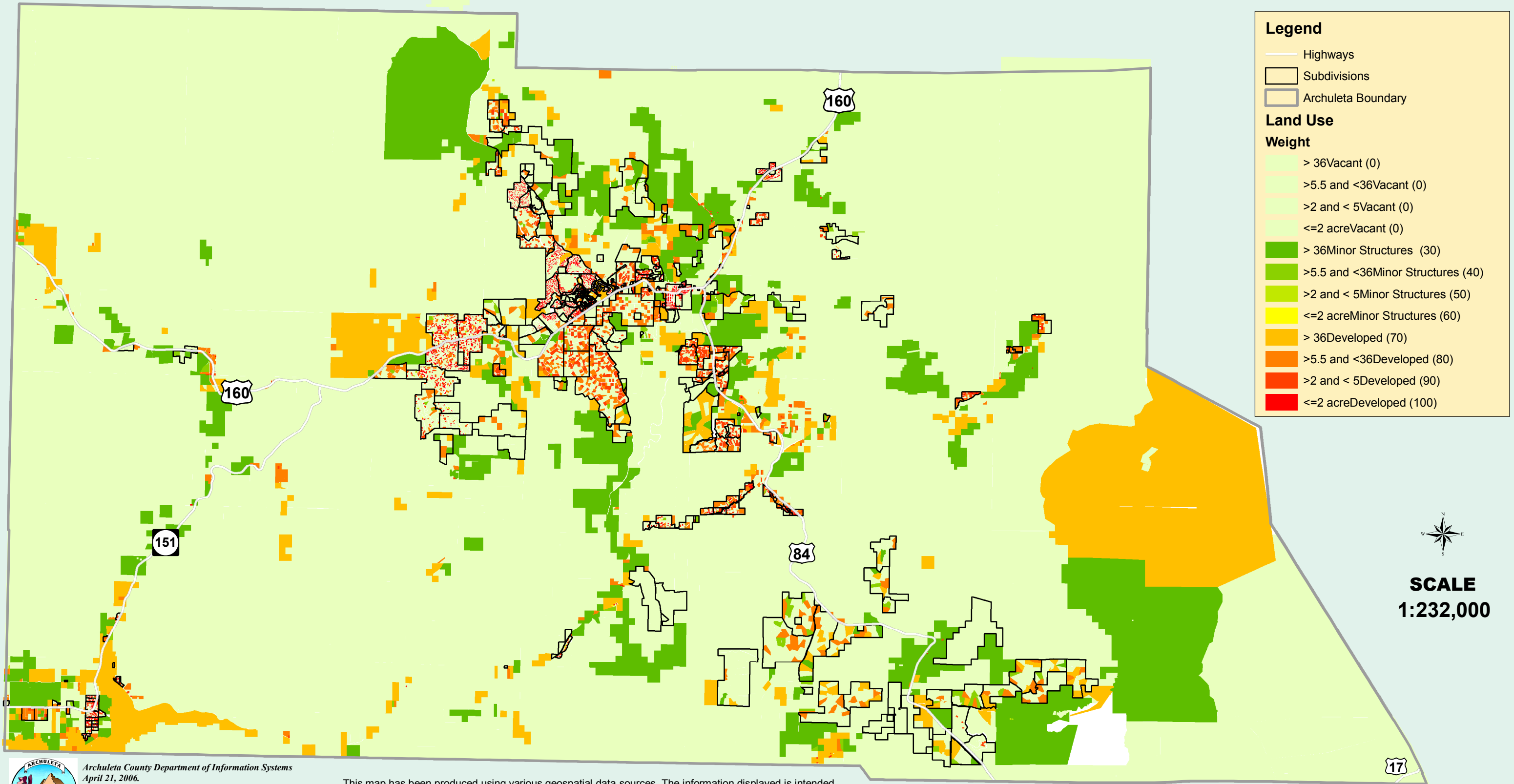
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Archuleta County Department of Information Systems  
May 08, 2008  
Address: PO Box 1507  
777 CR 600, Ste. 200  
Pagosa Springs, CO 81147

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# ARCHULETA COUNTY COMMUNITY LAND USE POLYGONS



**Legend**

- Highways
- ▭ Subdivisions
- ▭ Archuleta Boundary

**Land Use Weight**

- > 36Vacant (0)
- >5.5 and <36Vacant (0)
- >2 and < 5Vacant (0)
- <=2 acreVacant (0)
- > 36Minor Structures (30)
- >5.5 and <36Minor Structures (40)
- >2 and < 5Minor Structures (50)
- <=2 acreMinor Structures (60)
- > 36Developed (70)
- >5.5 and <36Developed (80)
- >2 and < 5Developed (90)
- <=2 acreDeveloped (100)



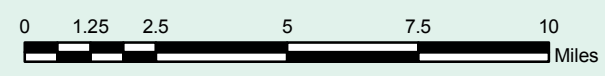
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Archuleta County Department of Information Systems  
April 21, 2006.

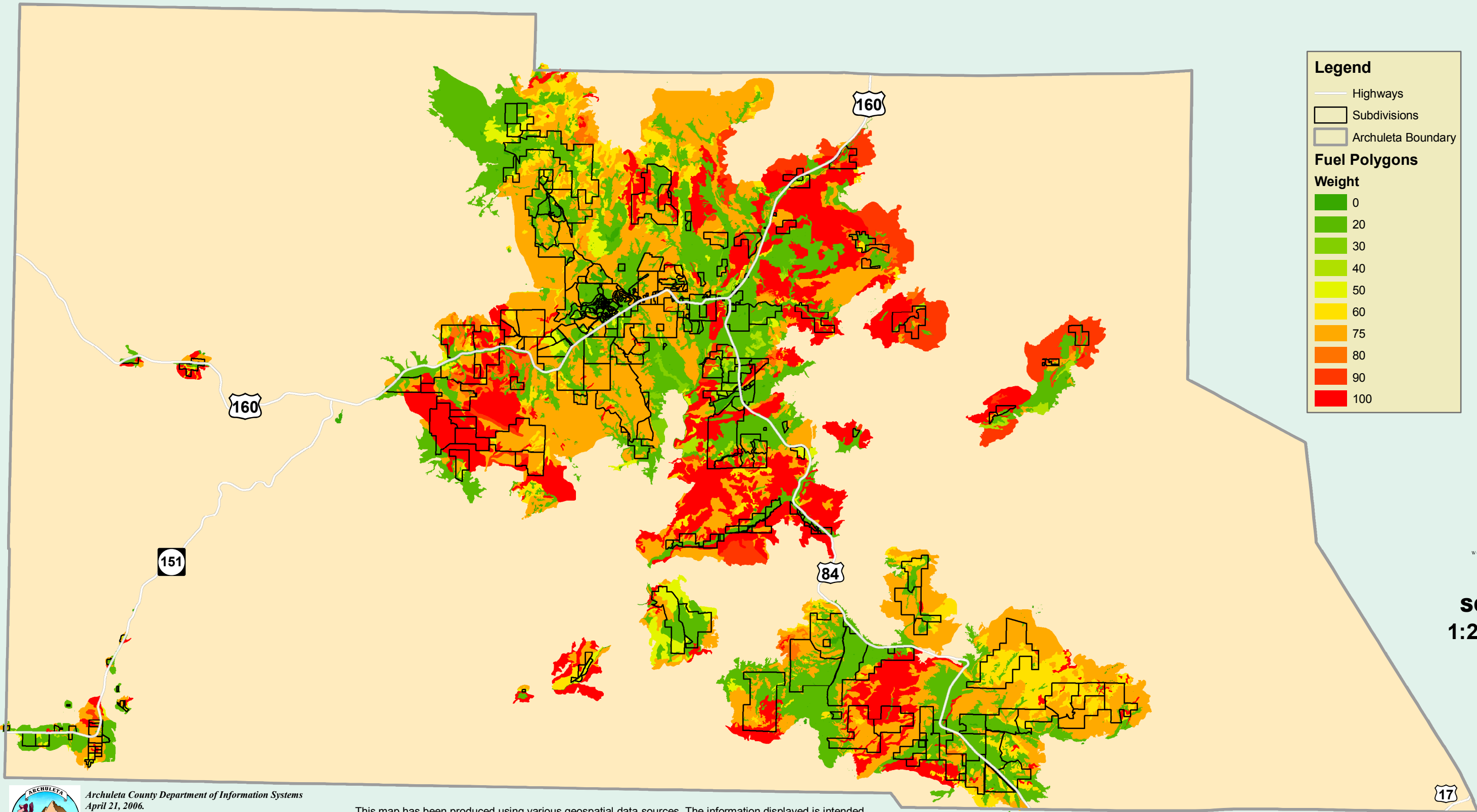
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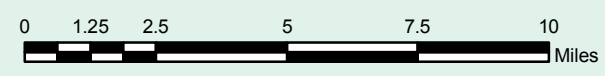
# ARCHULETA COUNTY COMMUNITY FUEL POLYgons



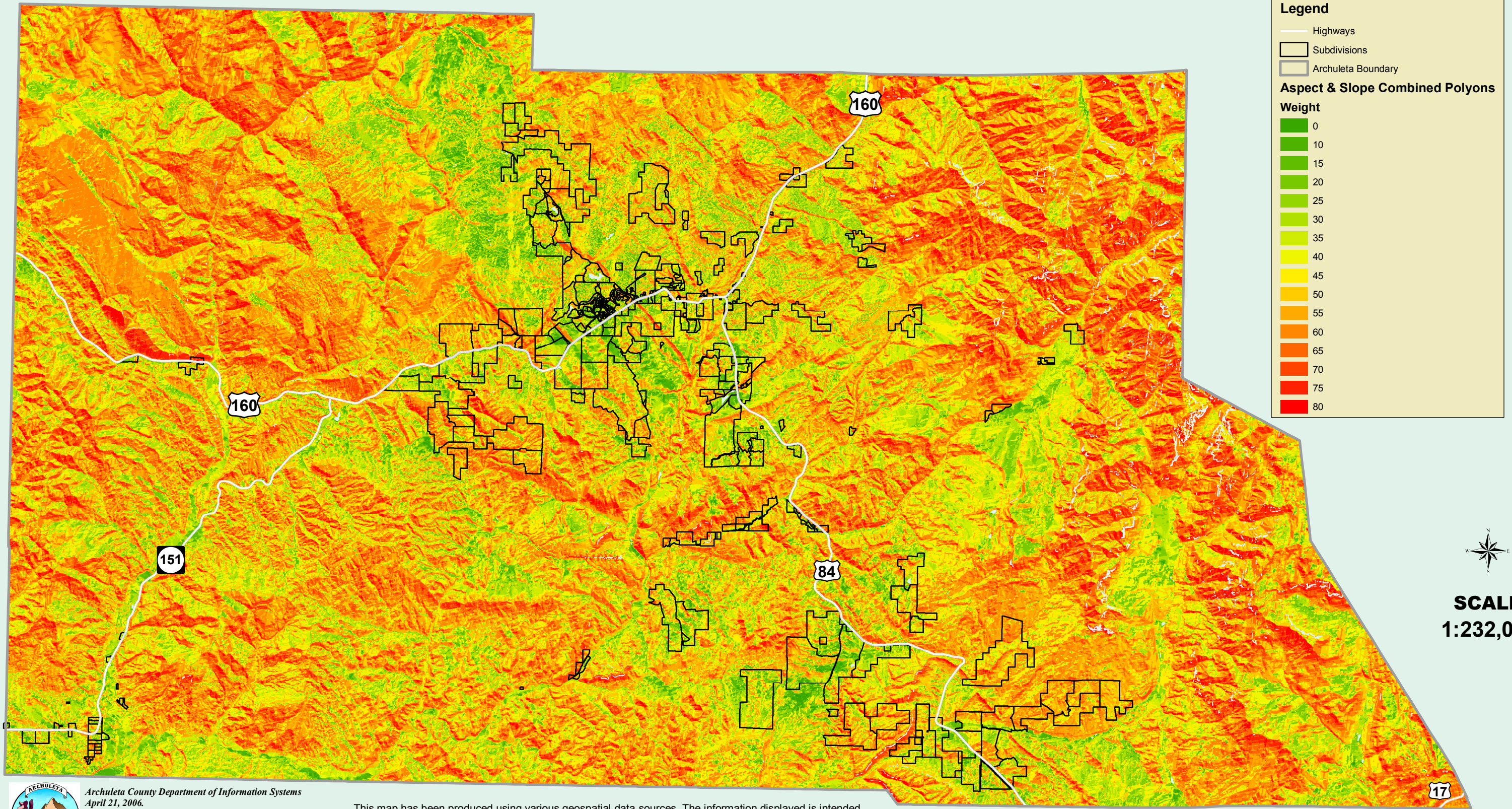
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April 21, 2006.

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# ARCHULETA COUNTY COMMUNITY COMBINED ASPECT & SLOPE POLYGONS



**Legend**

- Highways
- Subdivisions
- Archuleta Boundary


**Aspect & Slope Combined Polygons**

**Weight**

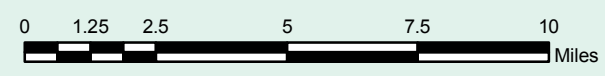
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**SCALE**  
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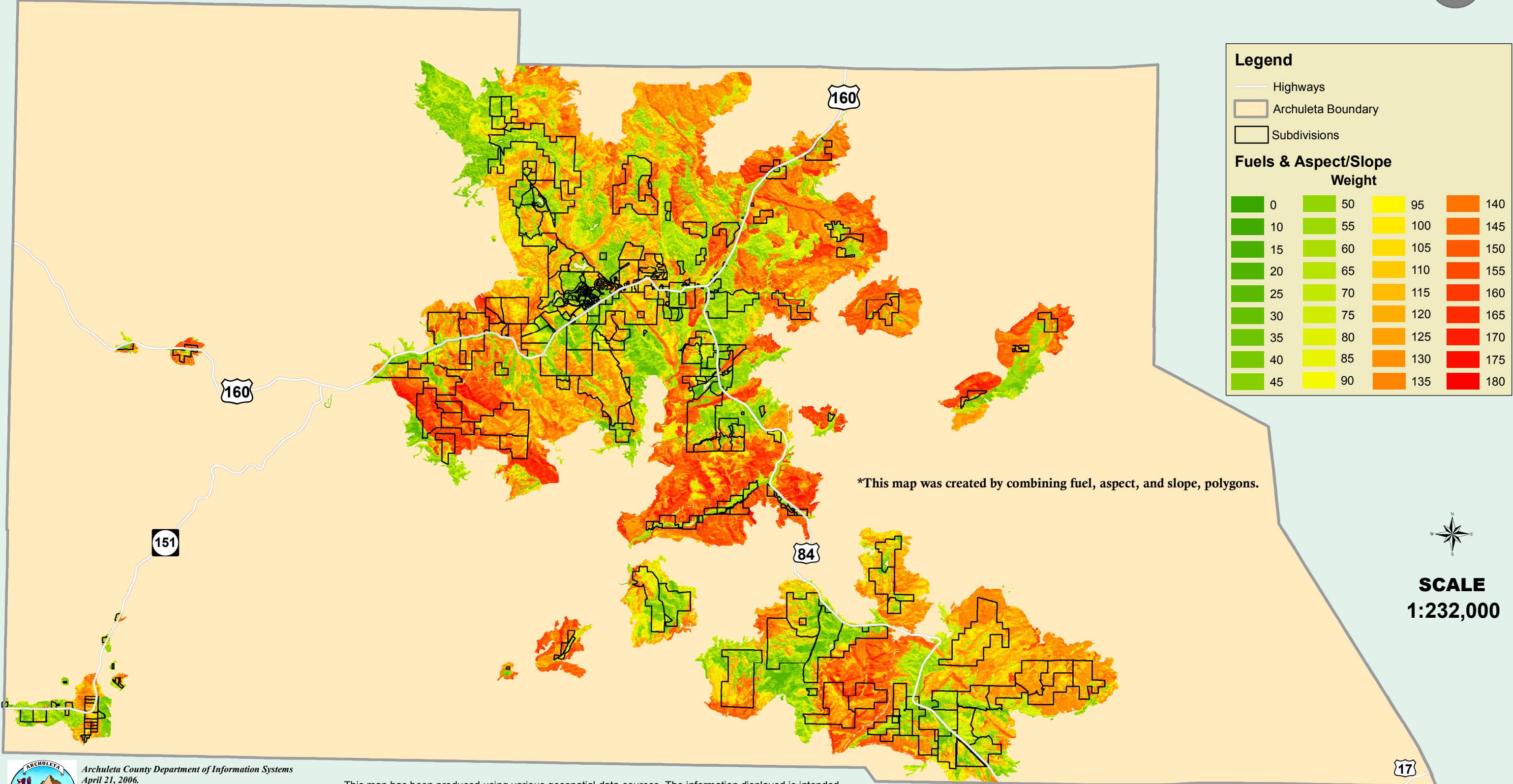

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 Pagosa Springs, CO  
 81147

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# ARCHULETA COUNTY COMMUNITY COMBINED FUELS, ASPECT, AND SLOPE POLYGONS

A3



Archuleta County Department of Information Systems  
April 21, 2006.

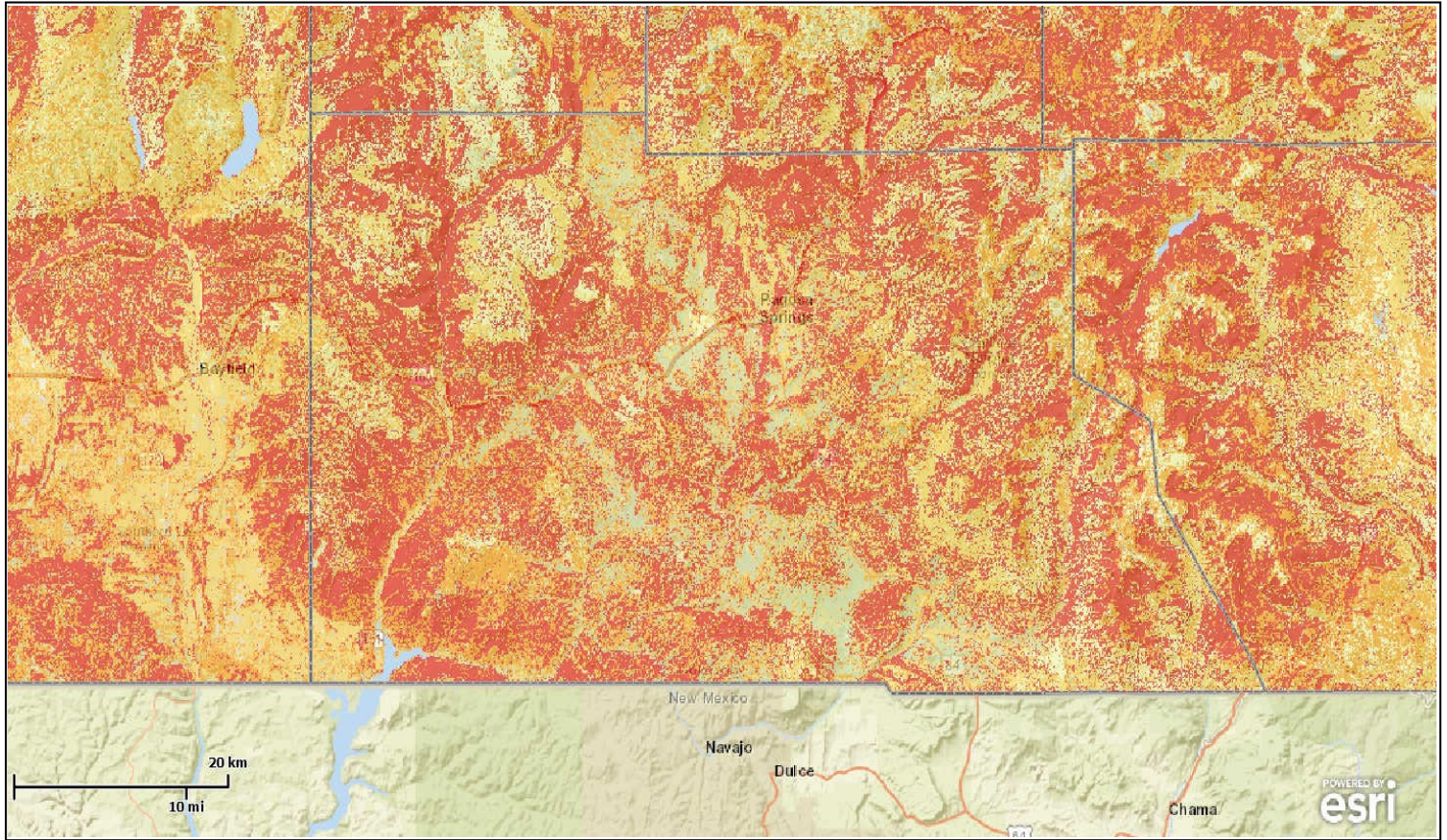
Address: PO Box 1507  
449 San Juan Street  
Pagosa Springs, CO  
81147

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# Fire Intensity Scale

Quantifies the potential fire intensity by orders of magnitude.



Report Created:  
08/03/2019 5:13 PM

## Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment 2017

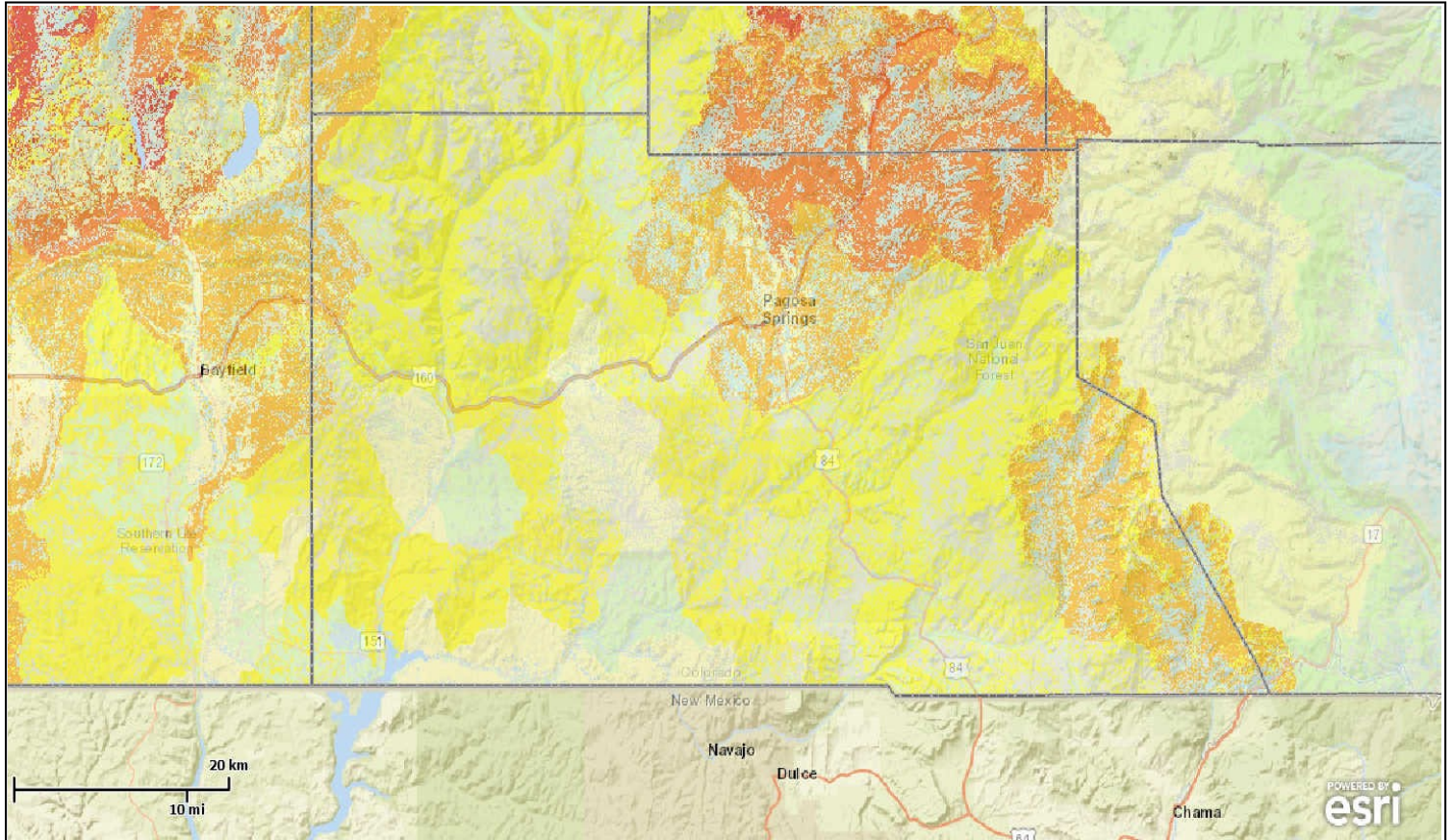
[www.coloradowildfirerisk.com](http://www.coloradowildfirerisk.com)

The user assumes the entire risk related to their use of the Colorado State Wildfire Risk Assessment and either the published or derived products from these data. The Colorado State Forest Service is providing these data "as is" and disclaims any and all warranties, whether expressed or implied, including (without limitation) any implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. In no event will Colorado State Forest Service be liable to you or to any third party for any direct, indirect, incidental, consequential, special or exemplary damages or lost profit resulting from any use or misuse of these data.



# Drinking Water Risk

A measure of the risk to DWIAs based on the potential negative impacts from wildfire



Report Created:  
08/03/2019 5:17 PM

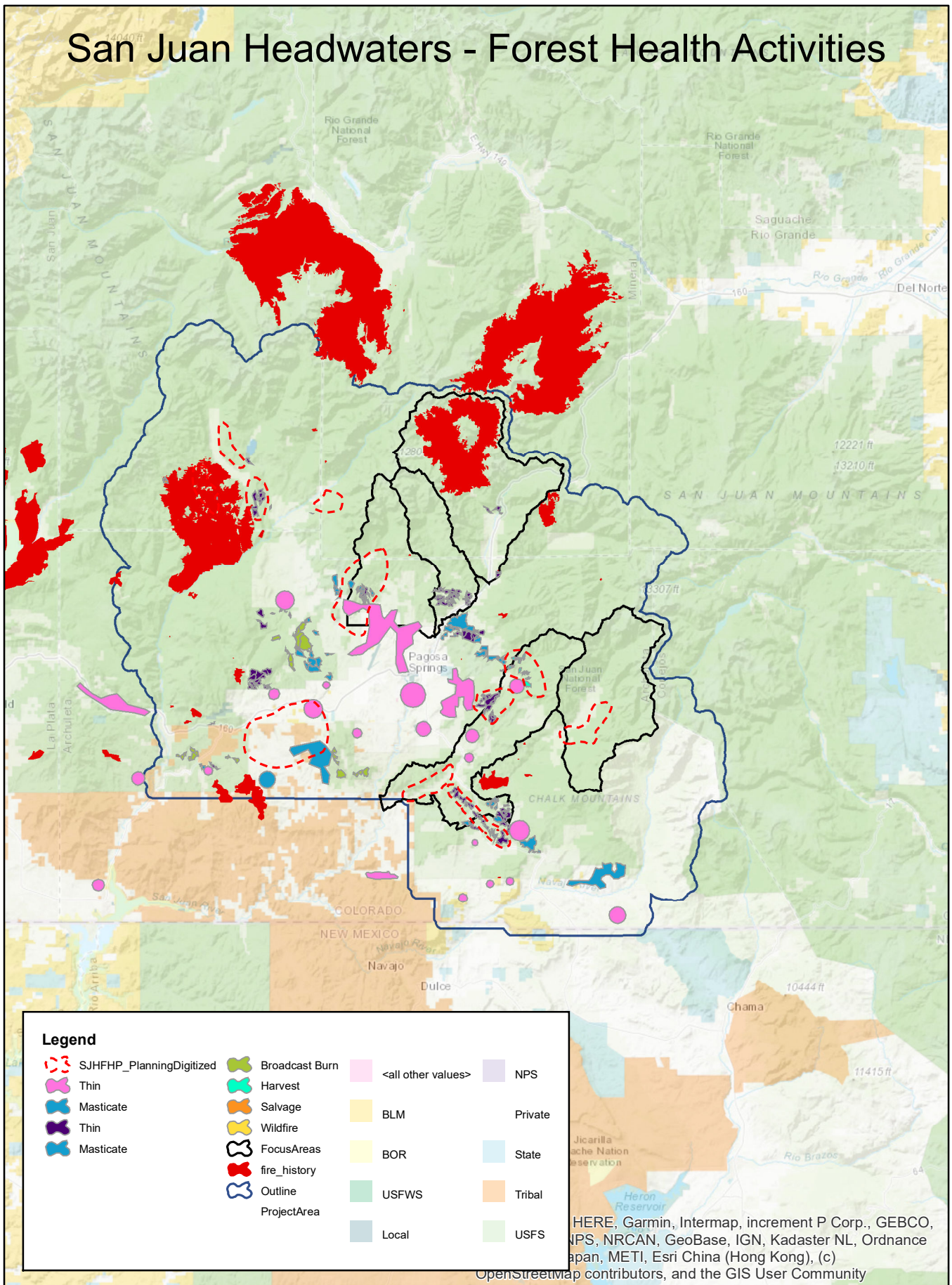
## Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment 2017

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# San Juan Headwaters - Forest Health Activities



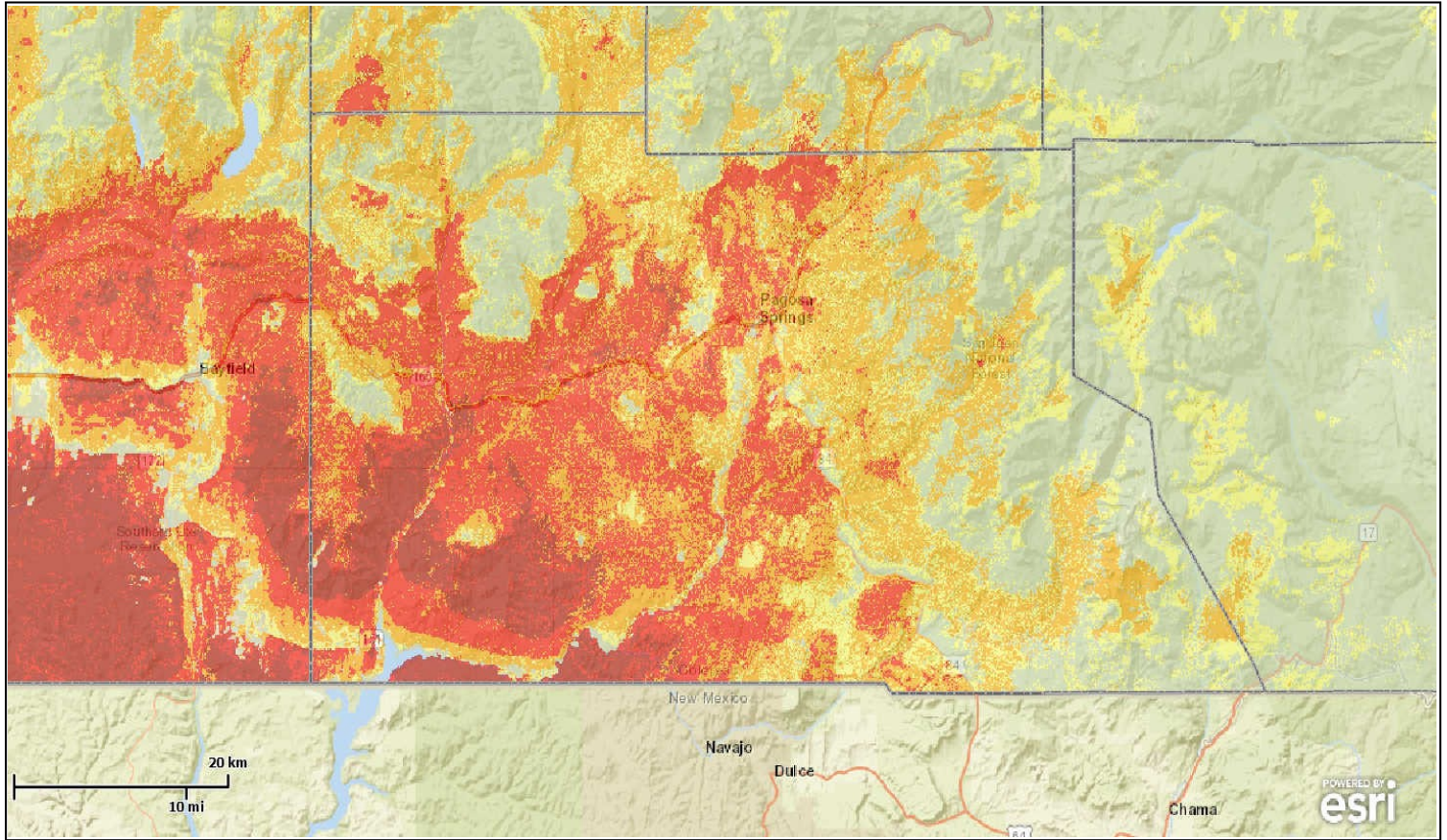
**Legend**

SJHFHP_PlanningDigitized	Broadcast Burn	<all other values>	NPS
Thin	Harvest	BLM	Private
Masticate	Salvage	BOR	State
Thin	Wildfire	USFWS	Tribal
Masticate	FocusAreas	Local	USFS
fire_history	Outline		
ProjectArea			

HERE, Garmin, Intermap, increment P Corp., GEBCO, NPS, NRCAN, GeoBase, IGN, Kadaster NL, Ordnance Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), (c) OpenStreetmap contributors, and the GIS User Community

# Wildfire Risk

The overall composite risk occurring from a wildfire derived by combining Burn Probability and Values at Risk Rating



Report Created:  
08/03/2019 5:12 PM

## Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment 2017

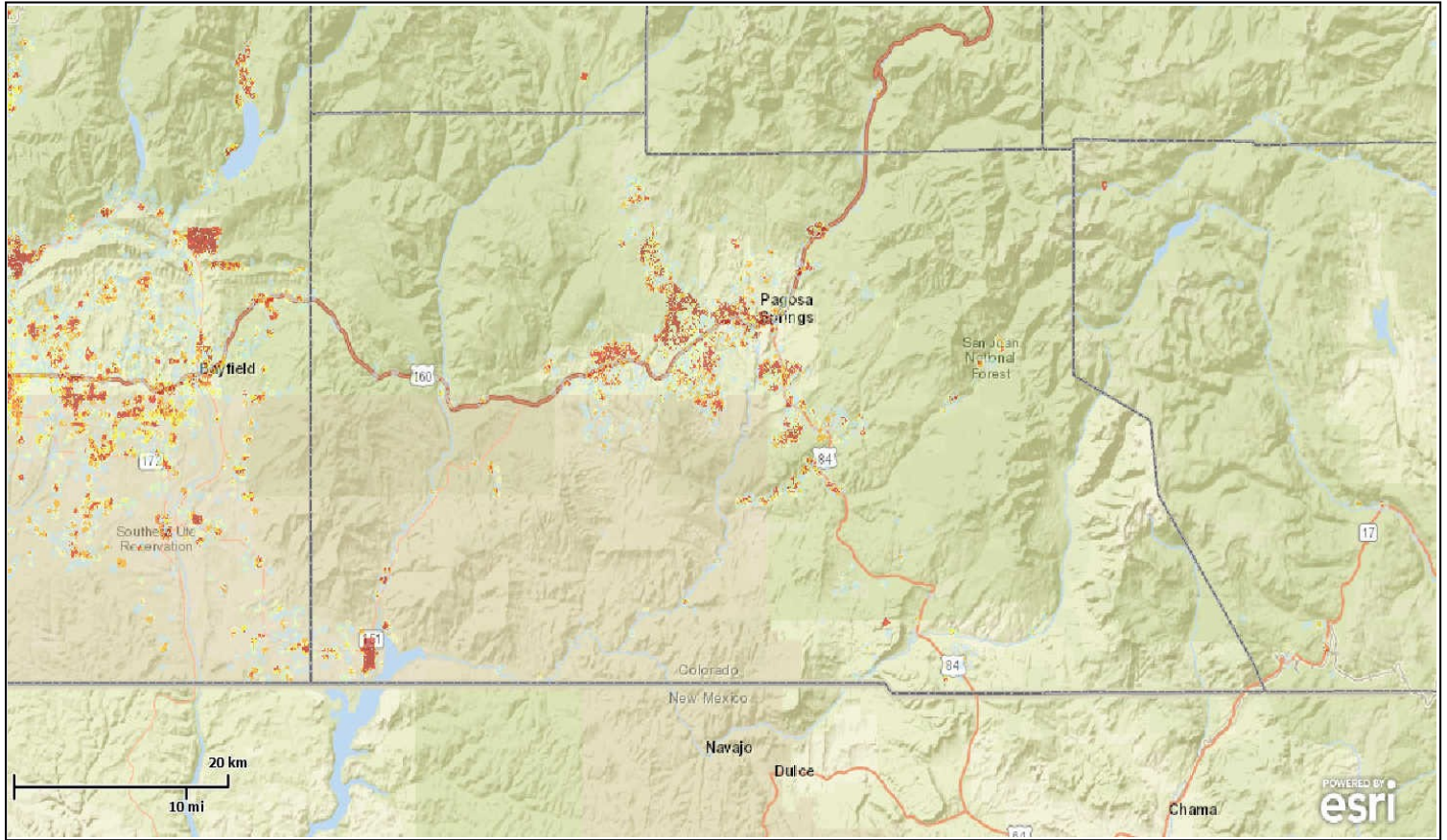
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# Wildland Urban Interface Risk

A measure of the potential impact on people and their homes from wildfire.



Report Created:  
08/03/2019 5:15 PM

## Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment 2017

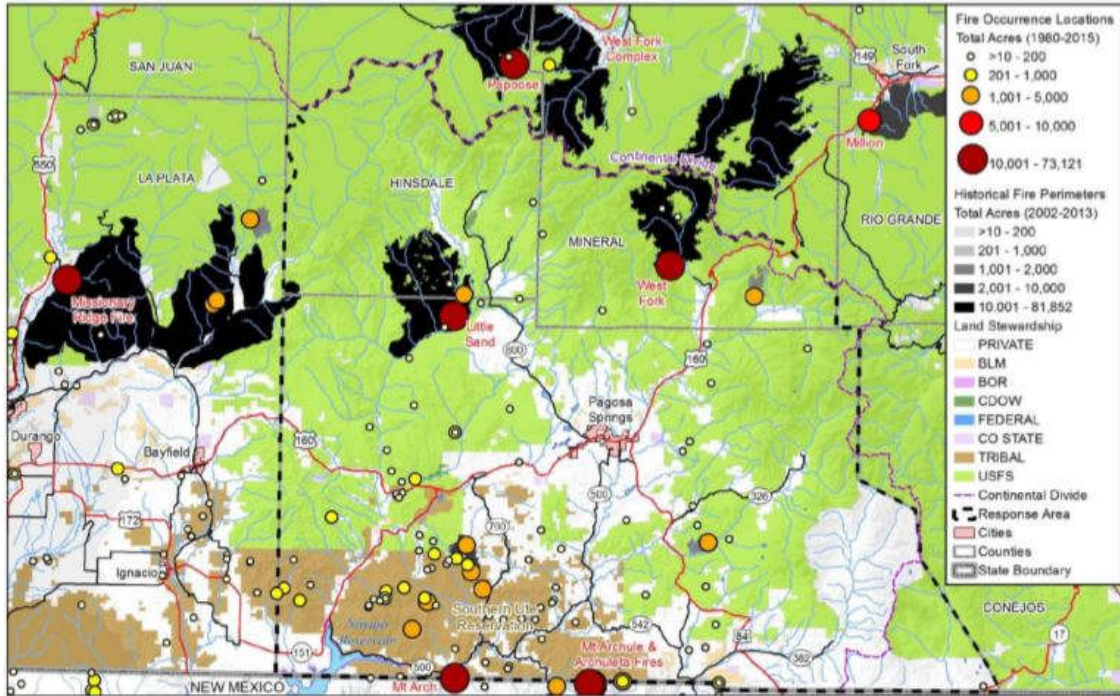
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# Wildfire History

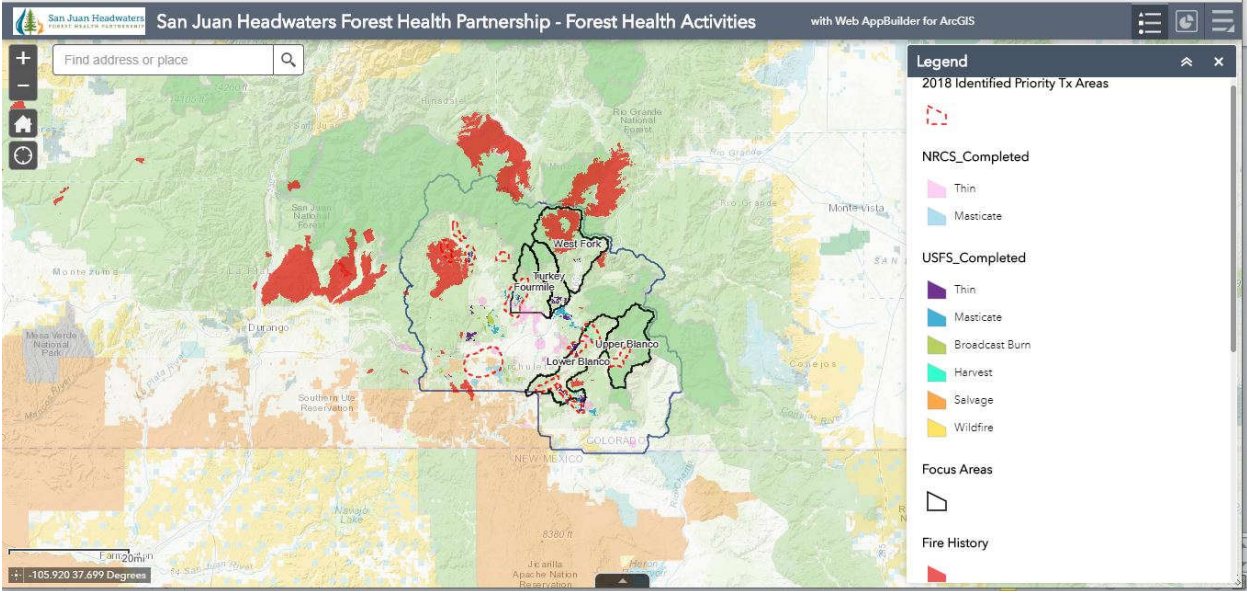


Map compiled 7/2017;  
intended for planning purposes only.  
Data Source: Archuleta County, CDOT, HSIP Freedom 2015,  
Federal Wildland Fire Occurrence: BIA, SLM, USFS, NPS

0 5 10 Miles



# Fuels Treatments



# Fuels, Aspect & Slope

