

# Preparing Communities for Wildfires

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# Topics we will discuss

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## Risk Analysis

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## Wildfire Fuel Mitigation

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## Structure Hardening

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## Emergency Plans/Evacuation Planning

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## Alert and Messaging

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## Educating the public

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## Putting it all together - CWPP

# Perception of wildfire risk – personal responsibility, civic responsibility

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A strong majority (68%) of respondents stated that they see themselves responsible to protect home and property.

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A small minority (18%) of respondents stated that they see the local fire department as responsible to protect their home and property.

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About 43% believe that the city or county government is responsible to protect home and property, whereas 37% do not believe this is the city or county's role, and about 18% are not sure.

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About 63% believe that the city or county government is responsible to protect public lands, whereas 23% do not believe this is the case, and about 19% are not sure about it.

# Planning Committee

- Engage your community
  - Emergency Management
  - Fire Departments
  - Sheriff
  - Land Use Planners
  - State and Federal Partner (Idaho Office of Emergency Management, Idaho Department of Lands, Forest Service, BLM)
  - Concerned homeowners, HOA presidents
  - Interested elected officials or senior leadership
  - Local Insurance officials
  - Power Company
  - Local Non-profits concerned about forest/rangeland health

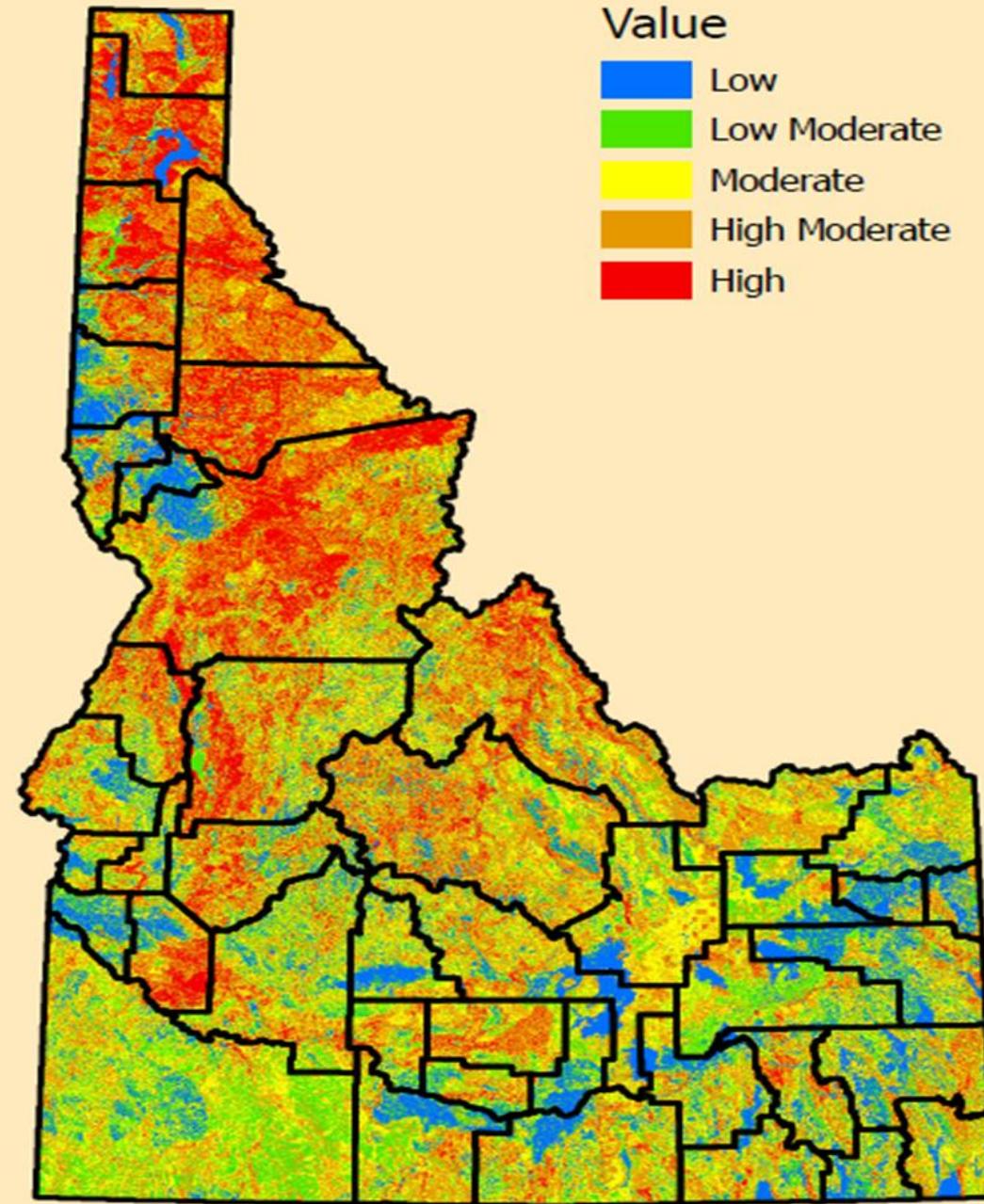
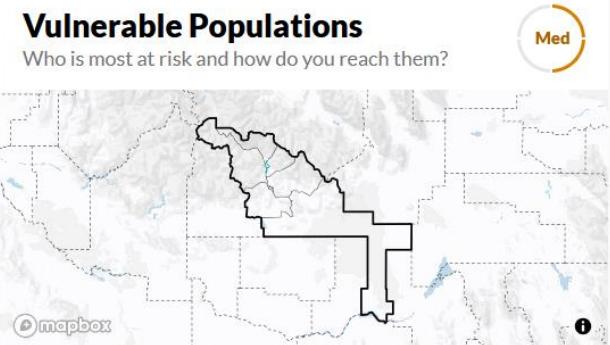
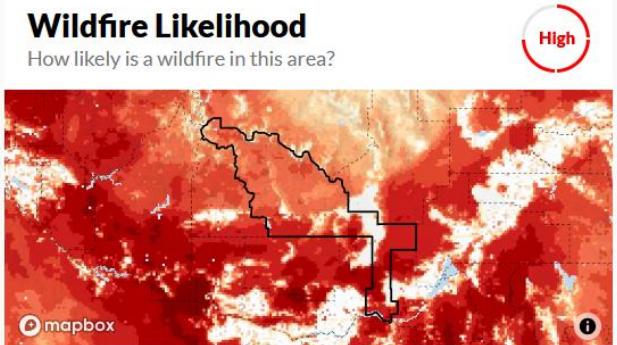
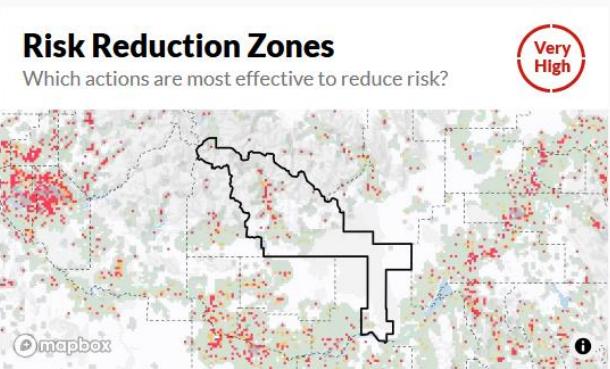
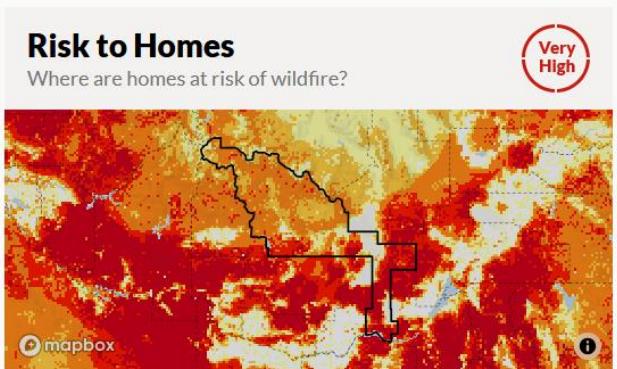
# Risk Analysis

- Identify the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)
  - Definition of WUI - The WUI is the zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development. It is the line, area or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. (US Fire Administration)
  - Leaves a lot of room for interpretation but its important that you define your WUI.
- Identify private lands vs public lands.
- Identify fuel loads and categorize them. (High, Medium, Low)
- Identify properties and critical infrastructure like communication towers, power lines at the most risk.

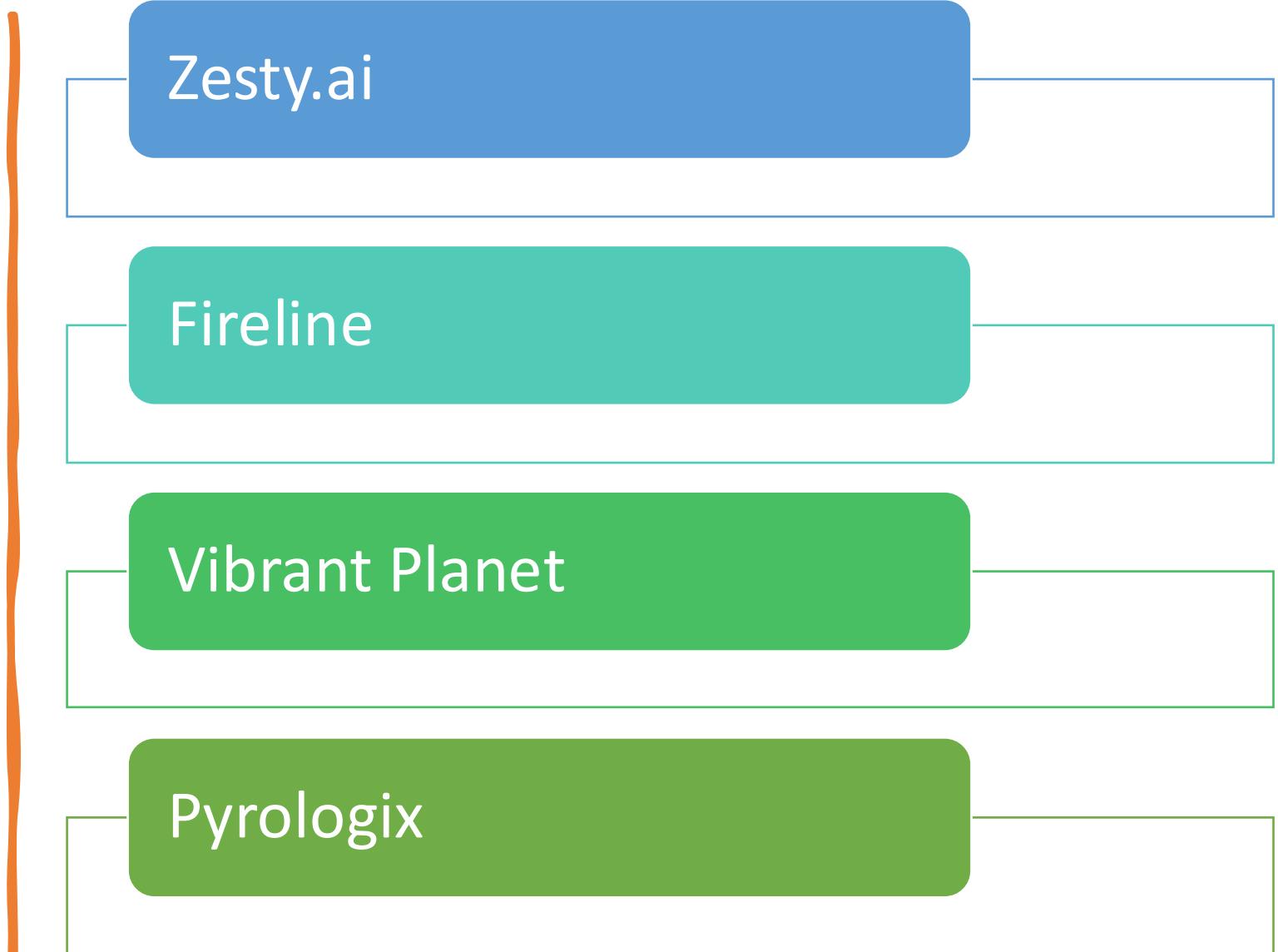


# Risk Analysis – Online Tools

- Wildfire Risk to Communities Website
  - <https://wildfirerisk.org/>
- Idaho Department of Lands
  - Tyre Holtzfeltz
  - Wildfire Risk Map



# New AI and Predictive Tools



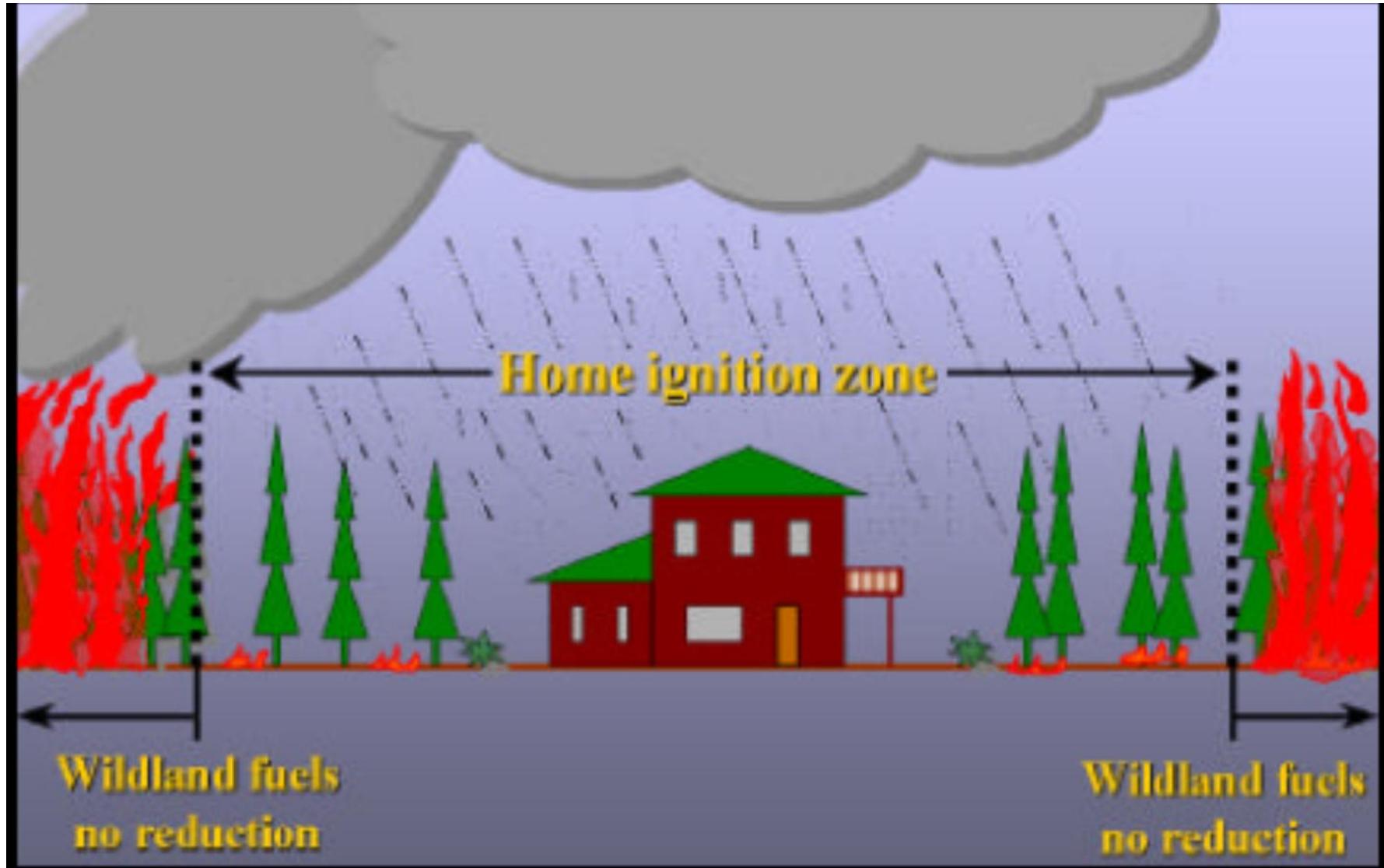
A photograph of a dense forest. The scene is filled with tall, thin trees, likely birches, standing close together. Sunlight filters through the dense canopy of green leaves, creating bright highlights and deep shadows. The forest floor is covered with fallen leaves and some low-lying green plants. The overall atmosphere is one of a healthy, mature woodland.

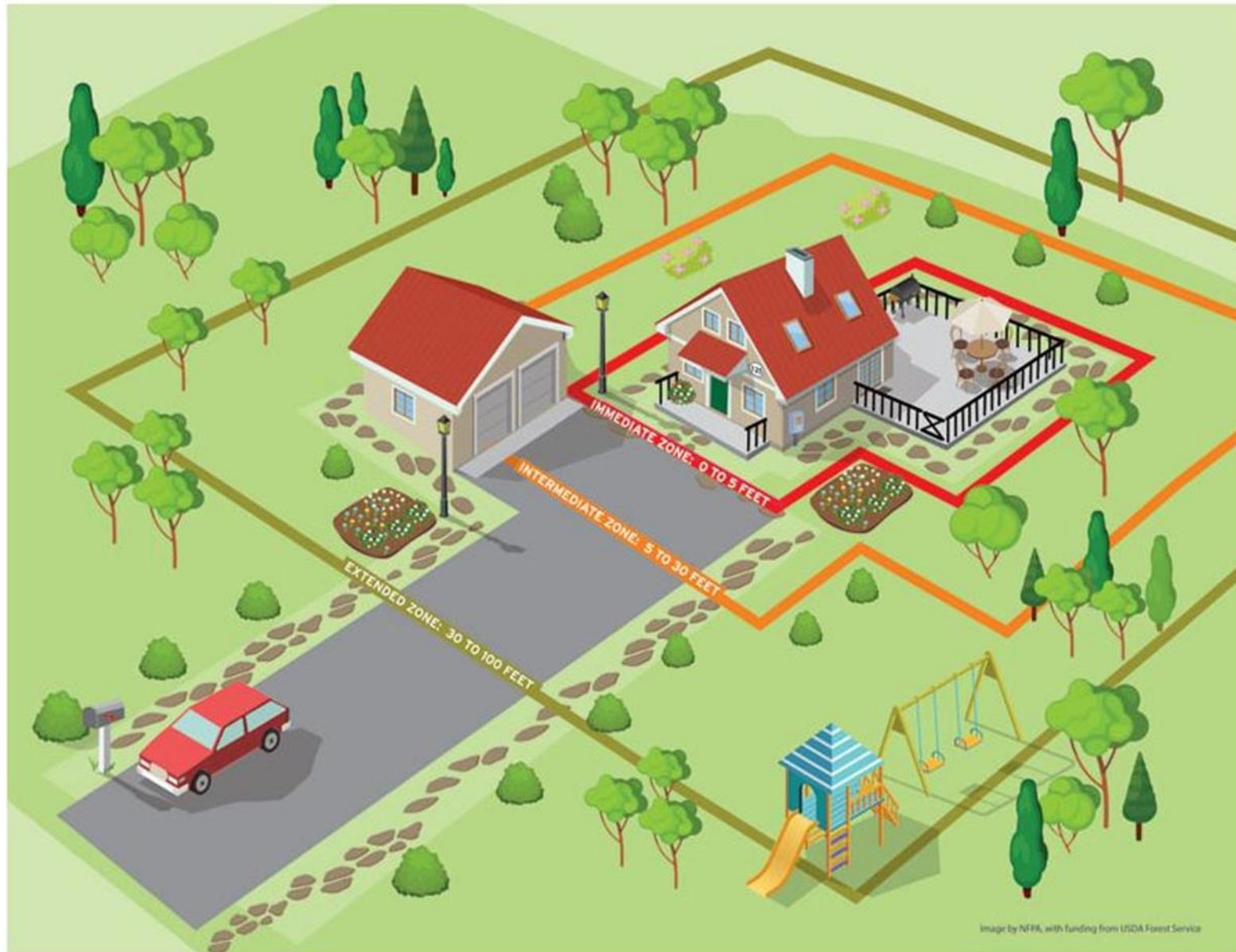
# Mitigation: Fuels

- Public Lands
  - Work with Federal, State and Utility Companies
  - Forest Collaboratives
  - Good Neighbor Authorities
  - Partnerships with Non Profits that already have a working relationship with land owners

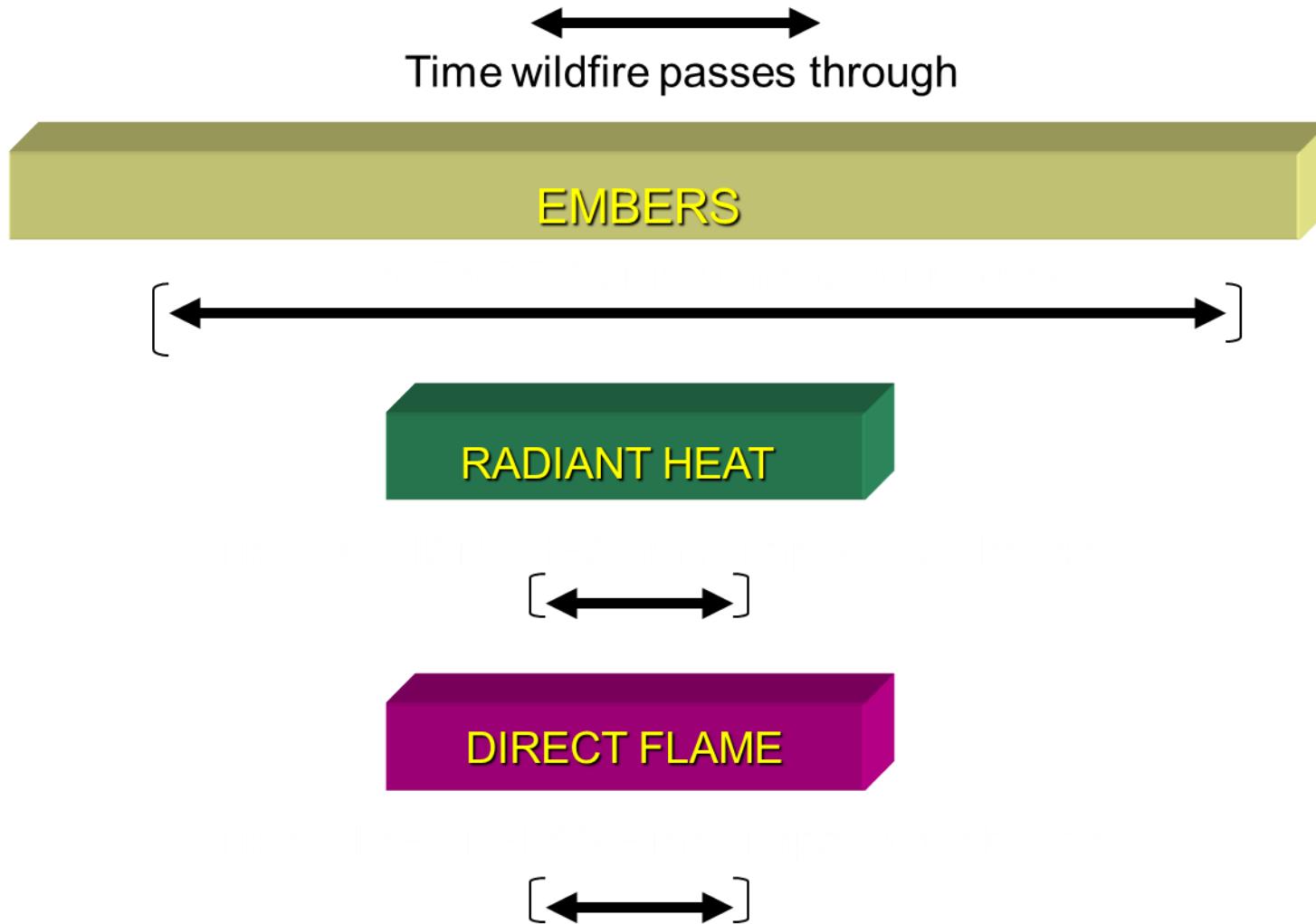
# Mitigation: Fuels

- Private Land
  - Fire Adaptive Programs
    - FireWise®
    - Fire Adapted Communities
    - Wildfire Prepared – IBHS (more about structures but also have fuel specifications)
  - Work with Neighborhoods/HOA
  - Basic Tenets of Fire Adaptive Fuel Mitigation
    - Zone 1 – 0 to 5 ft from house or structure... NO VEGETATION
    - Zone 2 – 5 to 30 ft from house... Reduce fires intensity, fewer trees and vegetation, well landscaped
    - Zone 3 – 30 to 100 ft from house... Keep fire on the ground, again work to reduce intensity. Create fuel breaks.
  - Work to create creative programs that remove fuels like yard clean up days or Chipping Days.





# The Amount of Time a Structure is at Risk





# Structure Hardening

- Changes to your home and the area 0 to 5 ft from your home to make it more difficult for your home to start on fire.
- Common Construction Flaws
  - Roofs
  - Vents
  - Eaves
  - Gutters
  - Fences
  - Windows
  - Siding
  - Decks
- Other flammable materials around the home like furniture and fire wood.



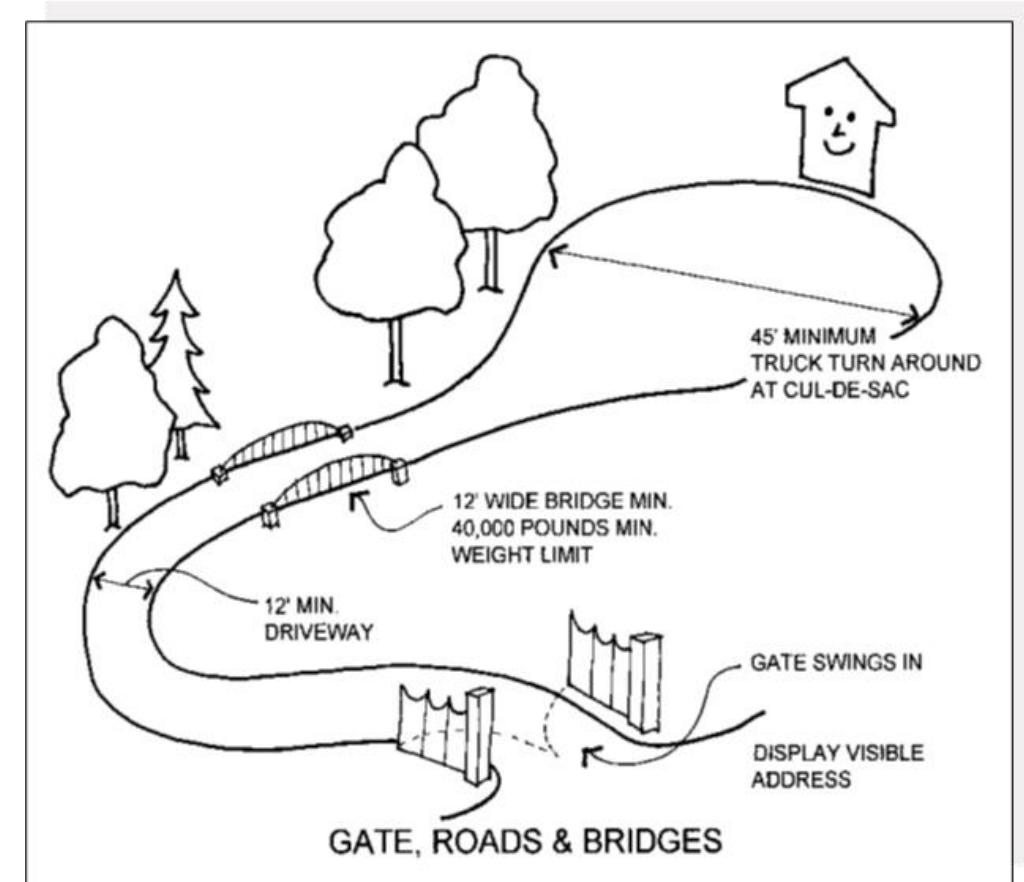
# Wildfire Home Assessment Software

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- Start a Program to Assess homes for citizens in high risk areas.
- Ready to use software
  - WUII
  - FireAside
  - Consulting firms like SWCA
- Create your own
  - Excel
  - ArcGIS
- Important for Education but remind citizens, not regulatory. But can get a jump on insurance issues.

# Other Home Survivability Considerations

- Location
  - Slope, Ridges, Draws
- Access
  - Driveway, Pull-outs, Turn arounds, Gates, Culverts
- Other Structures
  - Neighbors (within 30 ft), Garages, Sheds, Storage



# Maintenance Plan



# How to pay for all this?

**Types of Grants**



**USDA Forest Service Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program**

Community Wildfire Defense Grants (CWDG) help communities plan for and mitigate wildfire risks.

[Learn More](#)



**Landscape Scale Restoration**

A competitive grant program that promotes collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes. Find more information about the LSR Grant Program.

[Learn More](#)



**Western State Fire Managers**

A competitive grant program funding fire risk mitigation efforts in the Wildland Urban Interface. Find details about the WSFM Grant Program.

[Learn More](#)



**Hazardous Fuels Reduction**

This competitive grant program focuses on hazard fuel reduction, restoration, prevention education, and county wildfire protection planning.

[Learn More](#)

- **Fire Mitigation & Response Capacity Grants Through IDL**

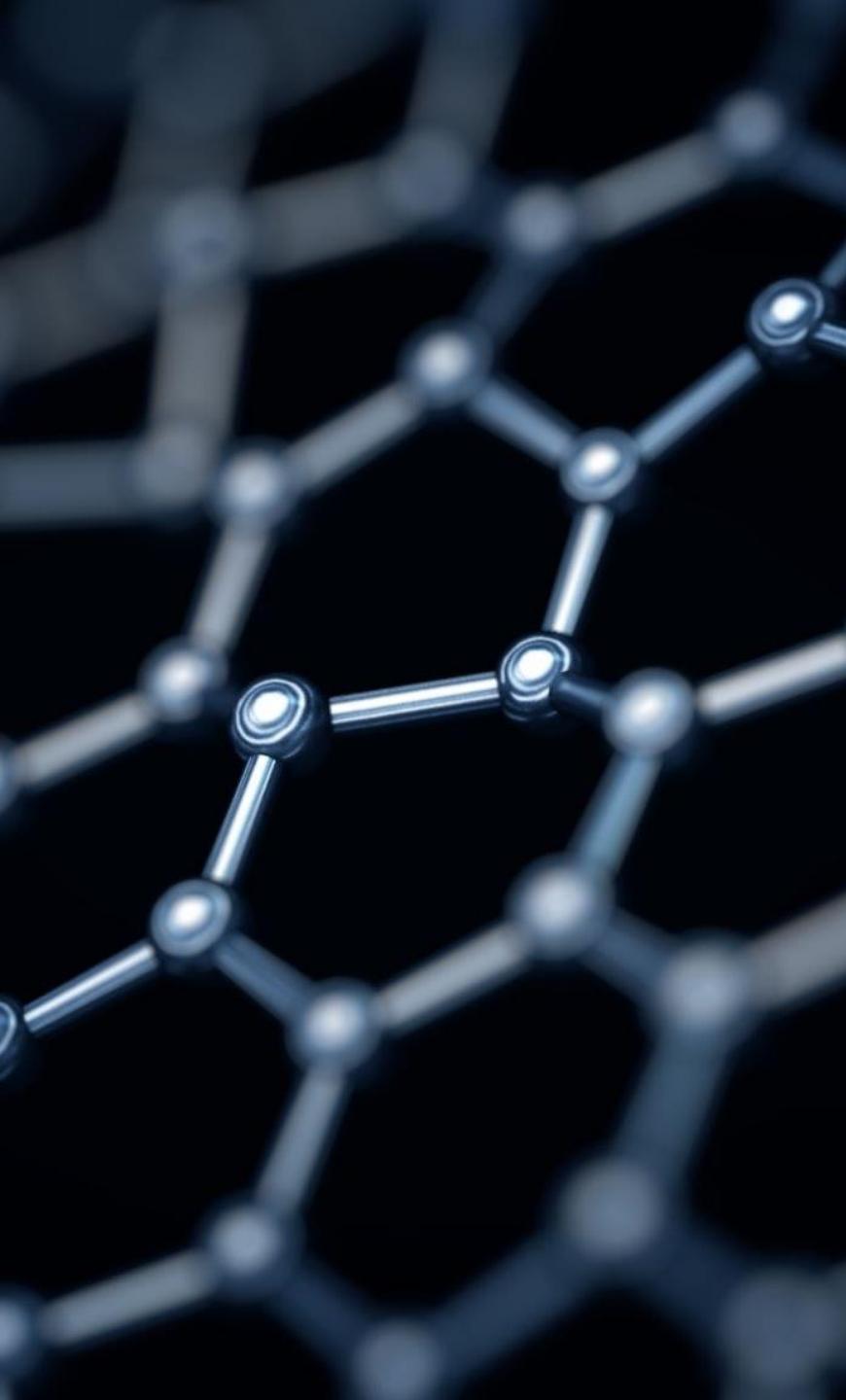
- **Education/Outreach, Planning, & Implementation Grants**

**Visit the link below:**

**Idaho Department of Lands  
Forestry and Fire Grants**

# Evacuation Planning

- Create pre-defined evacuation zones.
- Educate the Public on your messaging
  - Ready, Set, Go
  - Or other language
- Work to develop evacuation routes
- Establish Temporary Fire Refuge Areas (TFRA)
  - a pre-identified open space intended to offer reduced exposure to flames and heat when evacuation is no longer possible. Unlike safety zones or formal shelters, TFRAAs are not guaranteed safe zones; they are intended only as a last resort. Communities should understand the differences between TFRAAs, general TRAs, and safety zones, as well as when and how TFRAAs can be used during a fire to save lives under extreme conditions.



# Communicating with the Public

## Community Notification System

- Lots of software programs, even websites. Requires citizens to sign up

Don't rely on just social media but definitely use it

## IPAWS – Emergency Alert System

- You can become your own originator – will need a software system as mentioned above.
- State Comm/IOEM can be your originator.

Create message templates, to have messages ready to go immediately.



# Educating the Public

Work with HOAs

Townhall meetings.

Events like Home and Garden Shows.

Local Realtors

Social Media Posts

# Putting it All Together – CWPP

- Create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan with all the information and planning you have done.
- US Fire Administration Guide
  - [https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/creating\\_a\\_cwpp.pdf](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/creating_a_cwpp.pdf)



Questions?