



Preparing Communities for Wildfires

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Topics we will discuss

Risk Analysis

Wildfire Fuel Mitigation

Structure Hardening

Emergency Plans/Evacuation Planning

Alert and Messaging

Educating the public

Putting it all together - CWPP

Perception of wildfire risk – personal responsibility, civic responsibility

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

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

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.

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.

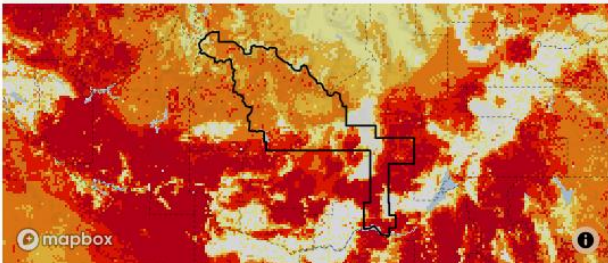


Risk Analysis – Online Tools

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

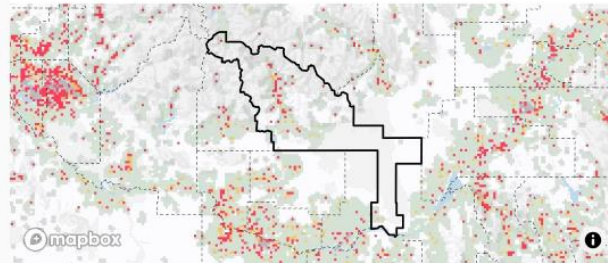
Risk to Homes

Where are homes at risk of wildfire?



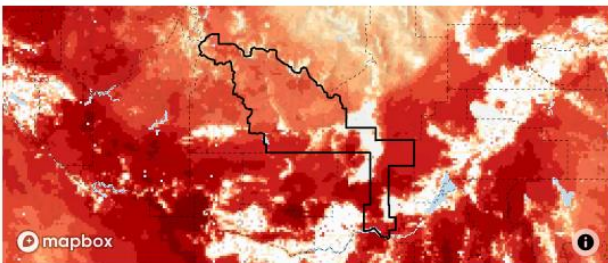
Risk Reduction Zones

Which actions are most effective to reduce risk?



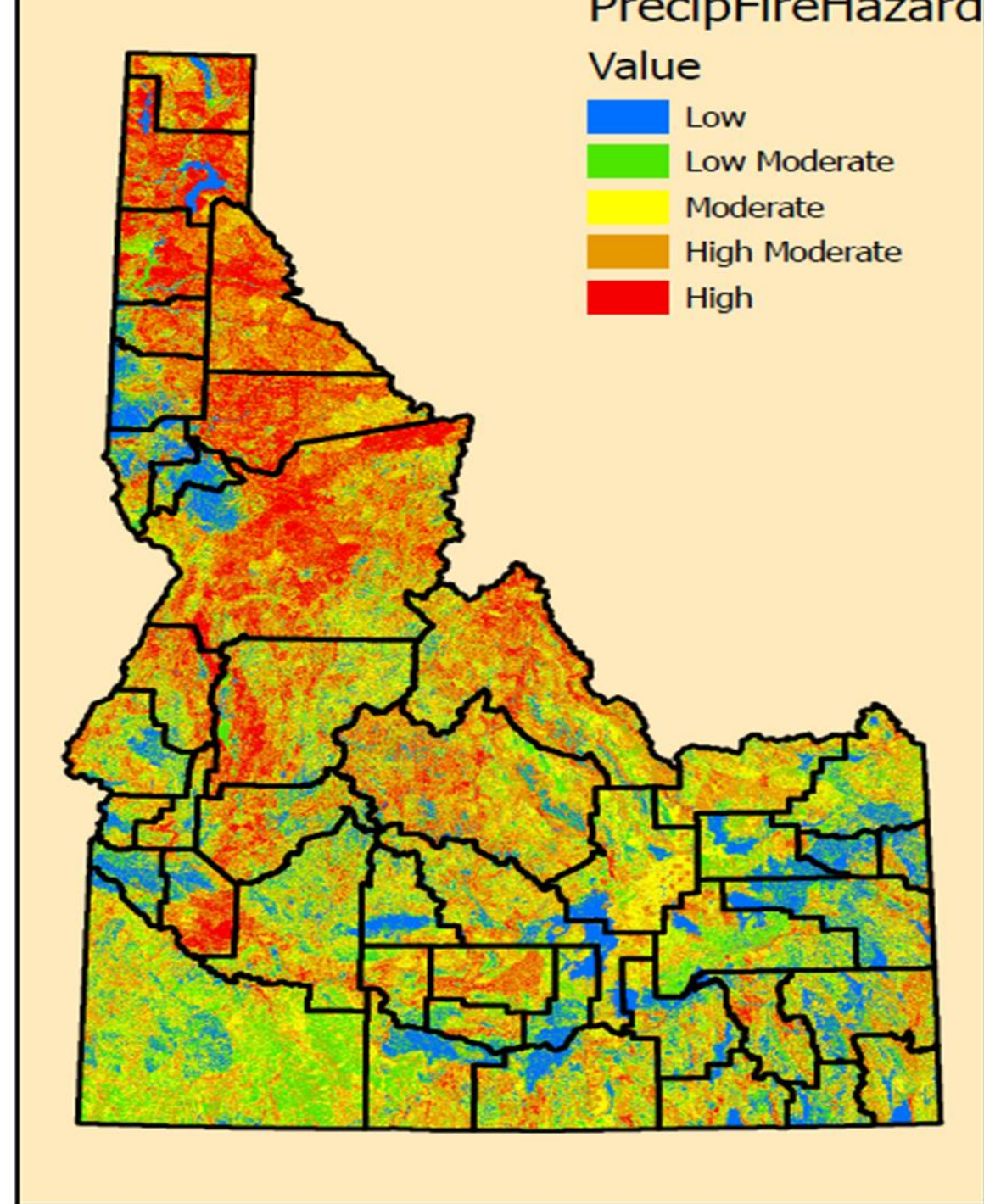
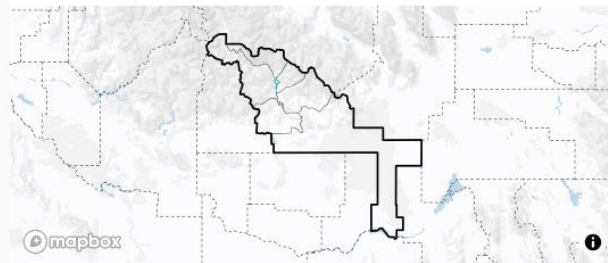
Wildfire Likelihood

How likely is a wildfire in this area?



Vulnerable Populations

Who is most at risk and how do you reach them?



New AI and Predictive Tools



Zesty.ai

Fireline

Vibrant Planet

Pyrologix

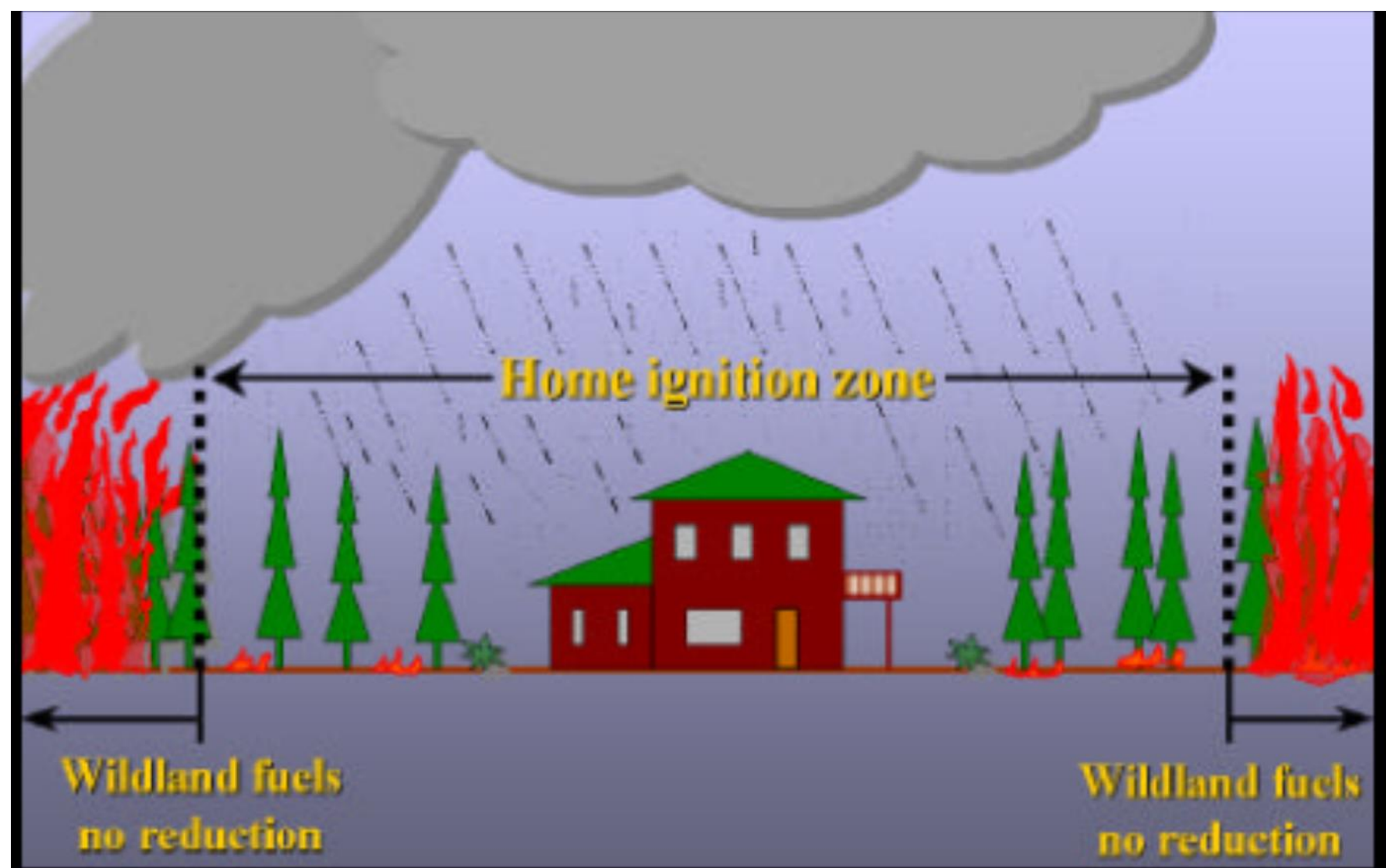


Mitigation: Fuels

- 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.



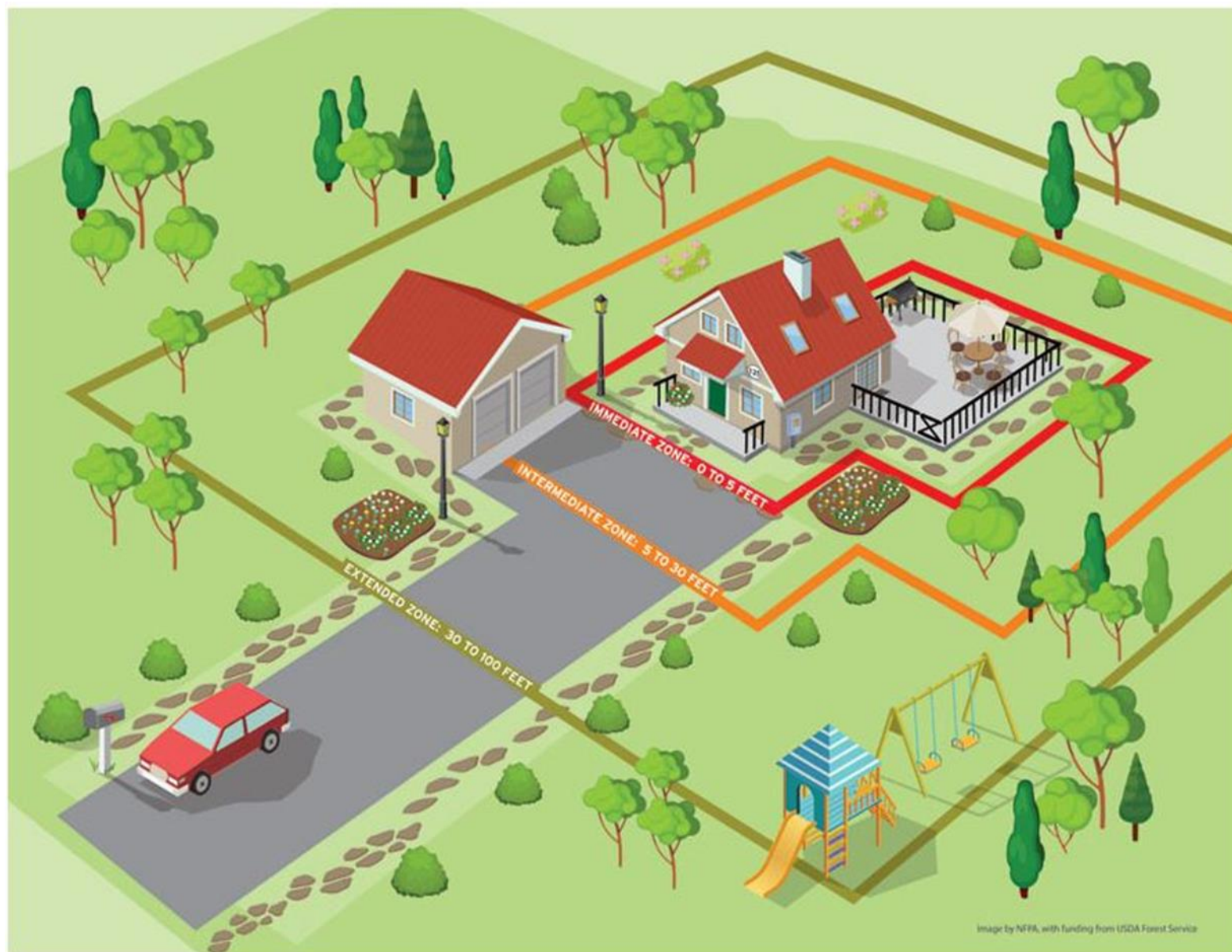
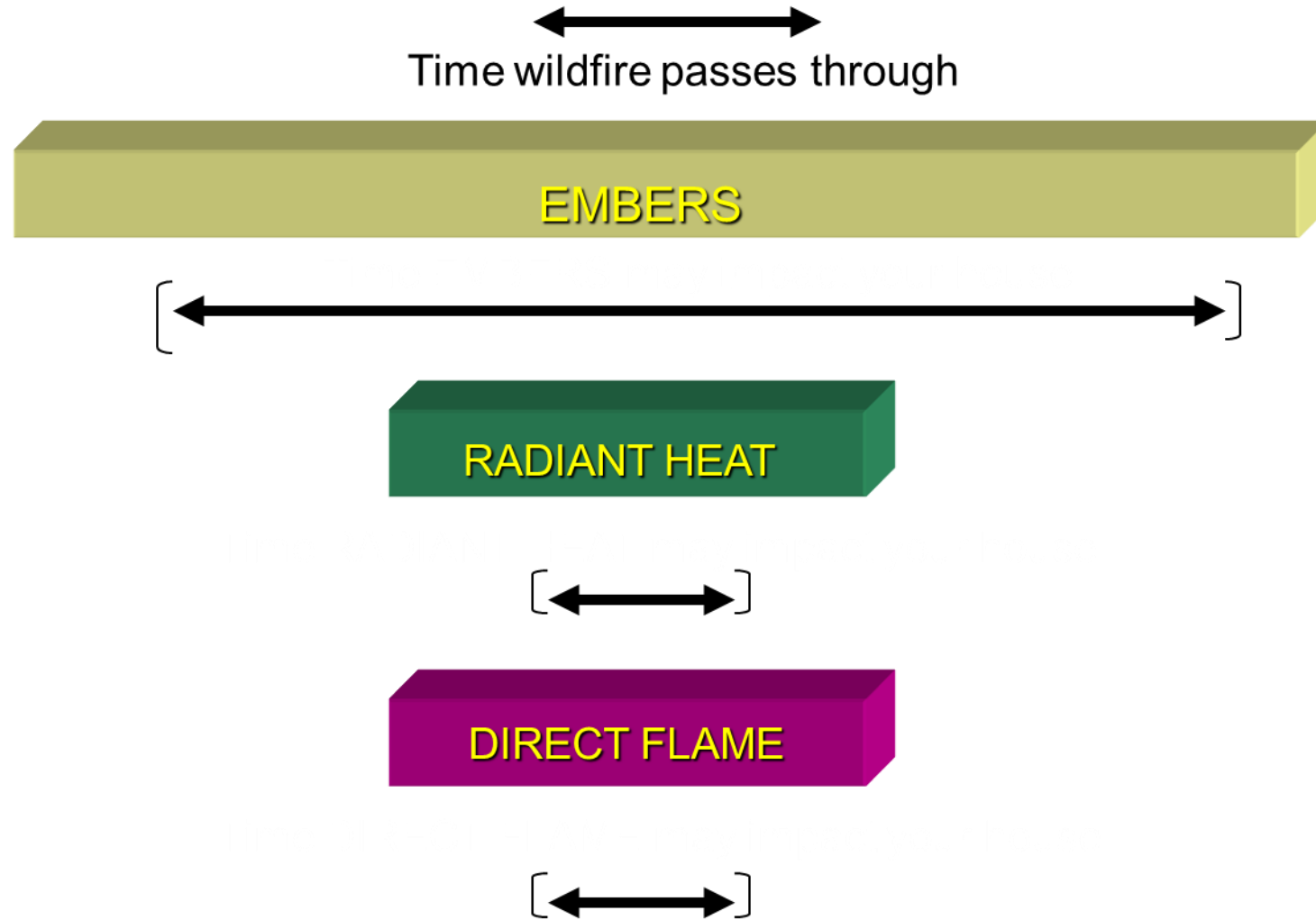


Image by NFFA, with funding from USDA Forest Service

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.



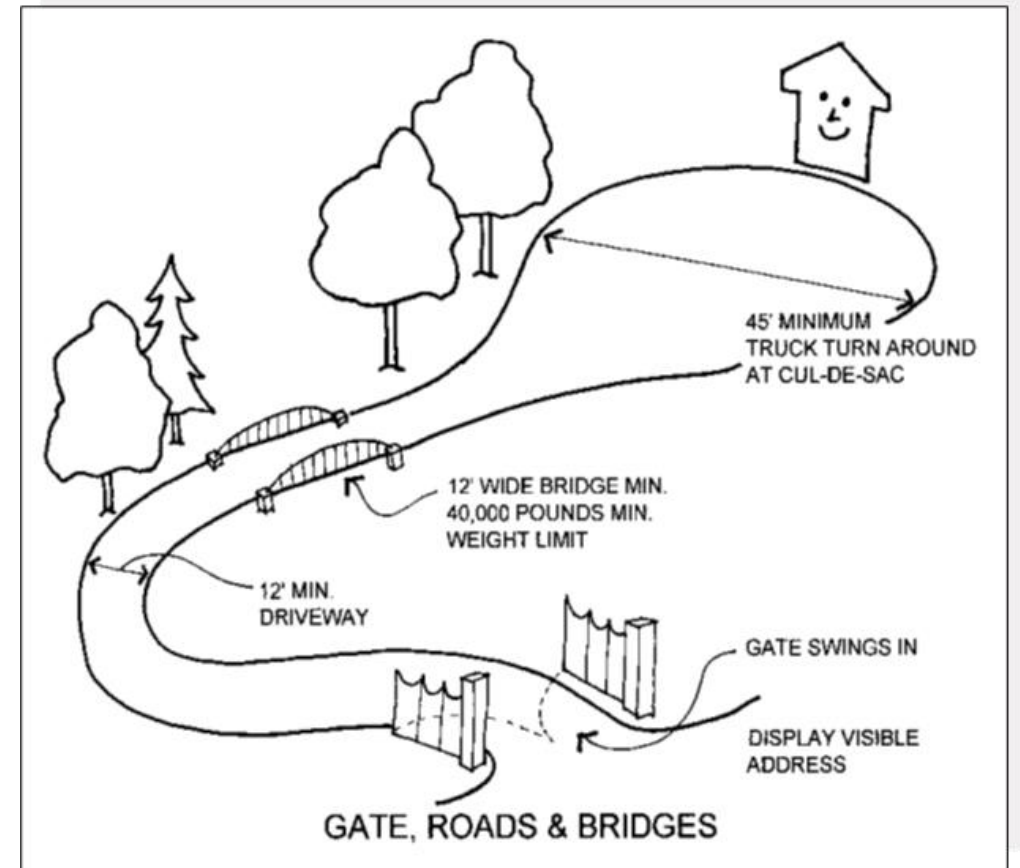
Wildfire Home Assessment Software



- Start a Program to Assess homes for citizens in high risk areas.
- Ready to use software
 - WUUII
 - 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, TFRAs are not guaranteed safe zones; they are intended only as a last resort. Communities should understand the differences between TFRAs, general TRAs, and safety zones, as well as when and how TFRAs 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





Questions?