A PEAK EXPERIENCE

HINSDALE COUNTY

COLORADO

2025 Hinsdale County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

2025 Update

wsp

PROMULGATION / CERTIFICATION SIGNATORY PAGE

The 2025 Hinsdale County Community Wildfire Protection Plan was developed in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA) and the Colorado State Forest Service's Minimum Standards for developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (2022). This plan was developed collaboratively with representatives from fire protection districts, Hinsdale County, state and federal agencies, communities, and other organizations.

This plan identifies and prioritizes areas for vegetative fuels reduction activities to reduce the wildfire threat to lives and economic values at risk in Hinsdale County. The plan recommends measures to reduce risk of ignition to structures and to reduce loss of life. This plan provides recommendations for improving wildfire response capabilities for the fire protection districts.

The following key personnel agree with the content within this plan and consent with its implementation.

Hinsdale County Sheriff	Date
Hinsdale County Emergency Manager	Date
Hinsdale County Commissioner	Date
Lake City Area Fire Protection District	Date
CSFS District Forester	Date
BLM Fire Mitigation & Education Specialist	Date
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison NF - District Ranger - Gunnison Basin RD	Date
Rio Grande NF- District Ranger – Divide RD	Date
San Juan NF - District Ranger – Pagosa RD	Date
Pagosa Fire Protection District	Date
Archuleta County Sheriff	Date
Mineral County Fire Protection District	Date

CSFS CERTIFICATION LETTER

From: Tarantino,Mike
To: em; Baum, Melissa
Cc: Field, Scott; Mialy, Pat
Subject: RE: Hinsdale County Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Date: Friday, March 6, 2026 4:49:53 PM
Attachments: image002.png
image003.png

Hey all,

I have reviewed Hindale Counties CWPP and can confirm that it meet's the CSFS Minimum Standards, I plan on signing the signature page for this plan. Here's the next steps to getting final approval:

IV. Approved CWPP
A. The Colorado State Forest Service will only accept CWPPs that contain the signatures of all core team members, including local fire department(s), local government(s), and a CSFS Supervisory Forester. Please note that CSFS personnel are not permitted to sign plans that do not clearly meet CWPP minimum standards.
B. After an approved CWPP has been submitted to the CSFS State Office, it will be posted on the CSFS website unless otherwise instructed.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks,

Mike Tarantino
Supervisory Forester
Colorado State Forest Service
Gunnison Field Office
Mike.Tarantino@colostate.edu
Office: (970) 641-6852

PLAN ADMINISTRATION

To serve intended purposes and remain useful, this Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) must go through a full update process on a regular basis. This ensures that a wildfire risk analysis is as up to date as possible. It also allows for community values and wildfire risk reduction projects to be updated based on changing priorities and landscapes. The Core Planning Team/Implementation Team is the best group of individuals to lead the update process. The Core Planning Team has committed that this CWPP will go through a full update at least every five years. Informal updates to the plan may be incorporated more frequently, especially in the event of a large wildfire in the county.

RECORD OF PLAN CHANGES

Date	Sections or Pages	Summary of Change
2010	Original Plan	Previous version
2011	Page 66-67	Index of revisions made to CWPP in May 2011
2025	All	Major Revision

PLAN DISTRIBUTION LIST

Unless otherwise indicated, digital copies and updates of this plan are provided to jurisdictions, agencies, and other representatives through electronic methods, such as email or internet links. Recipients are responsible for updating their copy of this plan. The Hinsdale County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for disseminating the updates. A copy of the current CWPP is available from OEM upon request.

Organization	Title / Name	Copies
Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office		
Hinsdale County Commissioners		
Lake City Area Fire Protection District		
CSFS District Forester		
BLM Fire Mitigation & Education Specialist		
Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, Gunnison NF – District Ranger – Gunnison Basin RD		
District Ranger - Gunnison Basin RD		
Rio Grande NF- District Ranger – Divide RD		
San Juan NF - District Ranger – Pagosa RD		
Pagosa Fire Protection District		
Archuleta County Sheriff's Office		
Mineral County Fire Protection District		

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Hinsdale County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a strategic plan that identifies specific wildland fire risks facing Hinsdale County, Colorado and provides prioritized mitigation projects and activities designed to reduce those risks. The need for a CWPP is crucial to help mitigate and minimize the threat of catastrophic wildfires in Hinsdale County. This Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP is a product of collaborative efforts involving local leaders, local agencies, and state agencies. CWPPs enhance a community's ability to secure grants for hazard mitigation projects, prevention initiatives, and preparedness education for residents.

The wildland urban interface (WUI) is a term which is referenced extensively throughout this document. The wildland urban interface is the location where human development in the form of buildings and other structures encroach and intermix with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. Due to this proximity between wildfire fuels and human development, the WUI may pose an elevated risk of fire and therefore an elevated risk to life, property, and other valued sites. Fires in the WUI are costly and dangerous to fight and require high levels of coordination. Consequently, Congress directed WUI communities to prepare a CWPP, as required by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA), discussed further below. This CWPP meets the requirements of the federal HFRA and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) current standards for CWPPs. See Section 1.5 for additional information on minimum standards for CWPPs.

1.1 Purpose and Need for a CWPP

Communities throughout Colorado are increasingly concerned about wildfire safety as increased development in the foothills and mountain areas and subsequent fire control practices have affected the natural cycle of the ecosystem. Wildfire risk is predominantly associated with WUI areas, a general term that applies to development adjacent to landscapes that support wildfire. However, significant wildfires can also occur in heavily populated areas.

Hinsdale County is exposed to a variety of wildfire hazard conditions based on fuels, topography, weather, and human behavior. Although wildlands need to burn periodically to naturally maintain viable environments, fuel maintenance (controlled burns, forest thinning, forest harvesting, mowing, cattle grazing and other means) is a necessary replacement to uncontrolled wildland fires when there are threats to human habitation.

The CWPP includes information relating to wildfire to be used by residents, fire district personnel, land management professionals, and other interested parties. This CWPP provides tools to better understand wildfire risk, and it recommends projects and other solutions to mitigate wildfire risk. Priorities are placed on solutions for communities and areas where risk is high, and values (i.e., developments and landscapes) are most vulnerable. The CWPP may address issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, watershed considerations, and structure protection. The development of the CWPP relies on collaborating entities and individuals, with expertise and valued perspectives relating to wildfire.

For community wildfire protection planning, a more specific definition is used. According to the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, the wildland-urban interface is defined as:

1. An area extending 0.5 mile from the boundary of an at-risk community.
2. An area within 1.5 miles of the boundary of an at-risk community, including any land that:
    a. Has a sustained steep slope that creates the potential for wildfire behavior endangering the at-risk community.
    b. Has a geographic feature that aids in creating an effective fire break, such as a road or ridge top.
    c. An area that is adjacent to an evacuation route for an at-risk community that requires hazardous fuels reduction to provide safer evacuation from the at-risk community.

1.2 Goals

To help focus the planning process and define the purpose of the CWPP, the planning team developed the following goals for this CWPP.

1. To enhance life safety for residents and first responders.
2. Reduce wildfire risk to landscapes and communities, and to mitigate undesirable fire outcomes to property, infrastructure, the environment, and quality of life.
3. Promote community awareness of and engagement with wildfire risk.
4. Expand the capacity of fire districts, residents, and other stakeholders to facilitate and prioritize appropriate wildfire risk reduction projects.

To accomplish these goals, the CWPP:

1. Considers values at risk in the study area.
2. Assesses wildfire risk in the study area and at the community level.
3. Develops and recommends specific actions that will reduce wildfire risk to values.

1.3 Policy Framework

This CWPP is planning document based on the wildfire planning industry's best practices. There is no legal requirement to implement the recommendations herein. Actions on public lands will be subject to federal, state, and county policies and procedures such as adherence to the HFRA and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Action on private land may require compliance with county land use codes, building codes, and local covenants.

This CWPP was developed in response to the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA). This legislation established unprecedented incentives for communities to develop comprehensive wildfire protection plans in a collaborative, inclusive process. Furthermore, this legislation directs the Departments of Interior and Agriculture to address local community priorities in fuels reduction treatments on both federal and non-federal lands.

The HFRA emphasizes the need for federal agencies to collaborate with communities in developing hazardous fuels reduction projects, and places priority on treatment areas identified

by communities through development of a CWPP. Priority areas include the WUI, municipal watersheds and other local values at risk, areas impacted by windthrow or insect or disease epidemics, and critical wildlife habitat that would be negatively impacted by a catastrophic wildfire. In compliance with Title 1 of the HFRA, the CWPP requires agreement among local government, local fire departments and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS), the state agency responsible for forest management. The CWPP also must be developed in consultation with interested parties and the applicable federal agency managing lands surrounding at-risk communities.

The HFRA also required the CSFS to establish minimum standards for development of CWPPs in Colorado, and the CSFS must approve any and all CWPPs to ensure that they meet these minimum standards. See Section 1.5 for more information on minimum requirements for CWPPs.

Electronic files of approved CWPPs, in addition to educational and reference materials, can be found at: https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/community-wildfire-protection-plans/

1.4 CWPP as a Living Document

In addition to meeting state, federal, and local grant programs criteria for potential funding, Hinsdale County intends to maintain this plan as a living document to effectively implement strategies for safer communities and healthier forests. The CWPP empowers communities to share the responsibility of determining the best strategies for protection against wildfire. The CWPP will be periodically refreshed to reflect new knowledge and changes in environmental conditions.

The CWPP will be updated and revised whenever an incident or exercise has occurred that results in the identification of planning gaps, policy changes, or major operational changes. It is anticipated that informal updates will occur as needed and CWPP recipients will be notified of changes made and provided with the updated information. Formal reviews and revisions will occur on a 5-year schedule and will be performed by the Core Planning Team.

1.5 CWPP Plan Requirements

This CWPP meets the Federal and State of Colorado minimum plan requirements, based on the following:

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) sets forth criteria for CWPPs to include content on:

- **Collaboration:** CWPPs must be developed collaboratively, engaging local and state government representatives, federal agencies, and other stakeholders to ensure community priorities are addressed.
- **Prioritized Fuel Reduction:** The plan must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments. It should also recommend treatment methods that protect at-risk communities and essential infrastructure.
- **Structural Ignitability:** CWPPs must recommend strategies homeowners and communities can use to reduce the risk of structure ignitability within the area covered by the plan.

The State of Colorado established minimum requirements ensure that CWPPs are viable, complete, and realistic in terms of risk reduction and implementation. In Colorado, Senate Bill 09-001 (SB 09-001) further defined CWPP development requirements, and the Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) introduced updated Minimum Standards for CWPPs in 2022. These minimum, additional requirements CWPPs in Colorado include:

- **Collaboration:** The plan must involve local government, local fire authority, CSFS representatives, and relevant federal land management agencies.
- **Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI):** A map outlining the WUI area with a narrative describing the community's values and risks.
- **Community Risk Analysis:** Consider fuel hazards, fire history, and community values to be protected.
- **Implementation Plan:** Recommendations for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and structural ignitability reduction strategies.
- **Signatures:** The plan must have signatures from all core team members, including local fire departments and CSFS representatives.

1.6 CWPP Limitations

The CWPP is not a legally binding regulatory document or a comprehensive scientific report. The CWPP and all maps prepared in conjunction with the CWPP are intended as general guidelines for Hinsdale County, property owners/tenants, and first responders. This CWPP and all associated maps have been prepared with due diligence, and by using industry best practices and known technologies. However, the maps may or may not be accurate regarding structures, location of such structures, location of water sources, survivability of any structures, and all described items on the maps. All components of the CWPP and all maps prepared in conjunction with the CWPP are subject to revision without notice.

No guarantees are made or implied regarding the survivability or non-survivability of structures within Hinsdale County as a result of wildfires.

1.7 Authorities

The following are local ordinances, regulations, or other authorities this CWPP complies with.

- H.R.1904 - Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003
- Colorado State Forest Service Minimum Standards for Developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans, 2022
- New Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code currently in adoption process.
- Hinsdale County Land Use Regulations, April 2011
- Town of Lake City Land Use Regulations, 2017
- San Juan Ranch Estates Subdivision Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2009)
- Hinsdale County Emergency Operations Plan (2023)

2 THE PLANNING PROCESS

The initial step in the development of the CWPP is to organize a core planning team that serves as the decision-making committee. Members of the Core Planning Team (CPT) included the County Emergency Services Director, Fire Chief - Lake City Area Fire Protection District, Lake City Town Management, Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM), Gunnison Office of Emergency Management, American Red Cross, representatives from County Health Department, CSFS, Bureau of Land Management, and US Forest Service. The CWPP team and the Hinsdale County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) update team convened together for developing the CWPP, as the individuals holding the positions for each team were the same. The initial CWPP CPT meeting was held on June 6, 2024. During this joint meeting, the CPT discussed two distinct plans: the CWPP, which focuses on strategies to reduce wildfire risks and enhance community safety, and the HMP, which aims to identify and mitigate various hazards to minimize their impact on the community. Despite the overlap in personnel, the discussions were tailored to address the unique objectives and requirements of each plan, ensuring comprehensive and effective planning for both wildfire protection and broader hazard mitigation.

2.1 Planning Meetings

Core Planning Team meetings were held on June 6, 2024, and on September 23, 2024. During the June 6 meeting, the Core Team reviewed overarching wildfire risk within Hinsdale County, and discussed related issues, concerns, and opportunities. During the second meeting, the Core Team refined information for inclusion in the CWPP and developed support strategies and gained agency commitments for the actions identified in plan. During the initial planning meeting, the CPT reviewed the overall wildland fire protection situation in Hinsdale County and discussed issues, concerns and opportunities. The CPT reconvened on September 23, 2024, to refine contents of the draft CWPP and assure universal support and commitment to the actions outline in the plan. Attendees also reviewed WUI maps with structures triaged for risk and fire control features and completed a questionnaire about wildfire hazards and mitigation.

2.2 Community and Partner Engagement

To ensure the success of this CWPP, members of the community and other relevant partners were engaged in numerous ways, such as through public surveys and solicitation of feedback, sharing data and planning efforts, and inclusion in the planning meetings. To develop this plan, public comment solicitation and input from subject matter experts and participating agencies was conducted through an online survey available for more than 2 weeks. Unfortunately, no comments were received from the public but input from response professionals was received and incorporated into this plan.

Another example of community engagement that informed this plan is the San Juan Ranch Estates community. The San Juan Ranch Estates Subdivision CWPP document outlines a comprehensive plan to mitigate wildfire risks for the San Juan Ranch Estates (SJRE) subdivision, located in Hinsdale County. The plan represents a collaborative effort between subdivision residents and forest managers to identify and mitigate wildfire risks, ensuring the safety of the community and its properties. The SJRE meets the classic definition of the WUI

where human development and structures are built close to naturally flammable vegetation. The contents of the SJRES CWPP are incorporated into this plan where applicable.

The SJRE CWPP includes the following information:

- **Location and Ingress/Egress Description**: The subdivision is situated in Hinsdale County, Colorado, approximately 3/4 mile north of Lake City on HWY 149. It has all-weather access via Colorado Highway 1491.
- **Structure/Lot Wildfire Hazard Evaluation**: The subdivision and its structures were evaluated for wildfire hazards using the CSFS's rating forms. The results indicated varying levels of risk from moderate to high.
- **Expected Fire Behavior**: The document describes the expected fire behavior in different vegetation types, including aspen stands, conifer stands, and sage/grass areas. It highlights the potential for high-intensity fires, especially in dense conifer stands.
- **Community Values to be Protected**: The plan emphasizes the importance of protecting community values, including reducing structure ignitability and creating defensible space around properties.
- **Community Preparedness**: The document outlines actions to be taken before, during, and after a wildfire emergency, including individual homeowner actions, subdivision actions, and coordination with fire and sheriff departments.
- **Vegetation Management**: The plan includes recommendations for managing vegetation to reduce wildfire risks, with a focus on timbered areas in specific management units.

2.2.1 Public Outreach and Public Review

Public Information: Information about the CWPP, including hazard identification, mitigation actions, community preparedness, safety zones, and structure protection, is available through downloadable versions of the plan and hard copies at local offices such as the Lake City Fire Department, Hinsdale County Administrative Office, and the Lake City Public Library. Areas and structures that are at the highest risk are identified and shared with the community during public meetings.

Public Survey: Stakeholder input was collected via an online 25 question survey about hazard significance, which was available to the public from June 24th through August 16th, 2024. The survey was advertised by the County and participating jurisdictions through social media. The public survey received 55 responses, representing 7% of the County’s population. Wildfire was perceived as the most significant hazard by a wide margin. Wildfire Mitigation, specifically wildfire fuels treatment projects, was also voted as a high priority mitigation action for Hinsdale County.

2.2.2 Other Applicable or Partner Agency Meetings

A monthly All Hazards Stakeholder meeting is convened with 19 agencies in the San Luis Valley to discuss preparedness, pre-planned events, and response for emergencies and events. This meeting enables state, federal, and local agencies to coordinate efforts, improving efficiency and effectiveness across all levels of government and state and local disciplines.

3 STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

Hinsdale County, Colorado, is the most remote county in the United States' lower 48 states. The county contains one of the most road-less areas in the country, with Highway 149 being the only connection to outside adjacent counties. With high elevations and difficult terrain coupled with the lack of formal road connections, a majority of this county is made up of dense forests and open land. This section discusses populations and areas in Hinsdale County that are within the WUI as well as the topography, climate, and natural environment throughout the county. An overview of the regional and local wildfire history, wildfire policies and programs, and the capabilities and infrastructure protections are also discussed.

3.1 Hinsdale County Profile

Hinsdale County is in the heart of the San Juan Mountains and was established in 1874. It is a mountainous, sparsely populated county approximately 22 miles wide and 50 miles long, covering an area of 719,278 acres or 1,123 square miles. This makes Hinsdale County the third least densely populated county of the 64 counties in the State of Colorado. Hinsdale County borders Gunnison County to the north, Saguache and Mineral Counties to the east, Archuleta County to the south, and La Plata, San Juan, and Ouray Counties to the west. Hinsdale County contains only one incorporated community, the Town of Lake City. The Town of Lake City is located at the north central portion of Hinsdale County, 4 miles north of Lake San Cristobal, the second largest natural lake in Colorado. The Town of Lake City is situated at the confluence of Henson Creek and Lake Fork of the Gunnison River in a narrow north-south oriented valley. Access to Lake City is via highway 149, the only access to Lake Fork of the Gunnison River Valley. There are 18 subdivisions in Hinsdale County, with many of those located within the WUI.

The County Government is comprised of a board of three County Commissioners. Commissioners are elected by the people of the county, each serving 4-year terms. The Board of County Commissioners is responsible for policy making, passing ordinances, resolutions, and is to manage the affairs of the county as authorized by the state. Some examples of the board's powers are:

- Adopt ordinances as provided in the Colorado Revised Statutes.
- Appoint staff and determine operating budget.
- Build and maintain county buildings.
- Construct or repair public roads, bridges and drainage facilities.
- Establish policies and procedures for the administration of county government.
- Grant licenses as prescribed by law.
- Levy taxes as provided by law; certify mill levies annually.
- Organize or contract for ambulance service.
- Organize the boundaries of precincts and establish voting places in each precinct.
- Oversee county income and expenses; adopt annual budget.
- Provide programs for aged and low-income residents

The Town of Lake City is a Statutory Town and the county seat of Hinsdale County. Consisting of a Mayor, Town Clerk & Manager, support staff, and 6 trustees, the Town of Lake City protects, maintains and enhances the sense of community, historical heritage and mountain environment. The Town provides economic, recreational, and social opportunities through ethical and professional leadership.

According to the 2023 US American Community Survey (ACS), the permanent population of Hinsdale County as of July 1, 2023, was 765, the least-populous county in the State. Hinsdale County reached its peak population of 1,609 in the 1900 census fueled by mining activity, resulting in numerous former mining and ghost towns throughout the county. According to the 2023 ACS figures, there are 1,384 total housing units in the county. Over the last 20 years the county population has fluctuated up and down by roughly 100 residents. This pattern has left approximately 65.8% of the total housing units in the county vacant. Summertime populations often increase dramatically to well over 2,500 visitors. A more detailed analysis of Hinsdale County's population can be found in Section 2.3, under the Population heading, of the 2025 Hinsdale County HMP.

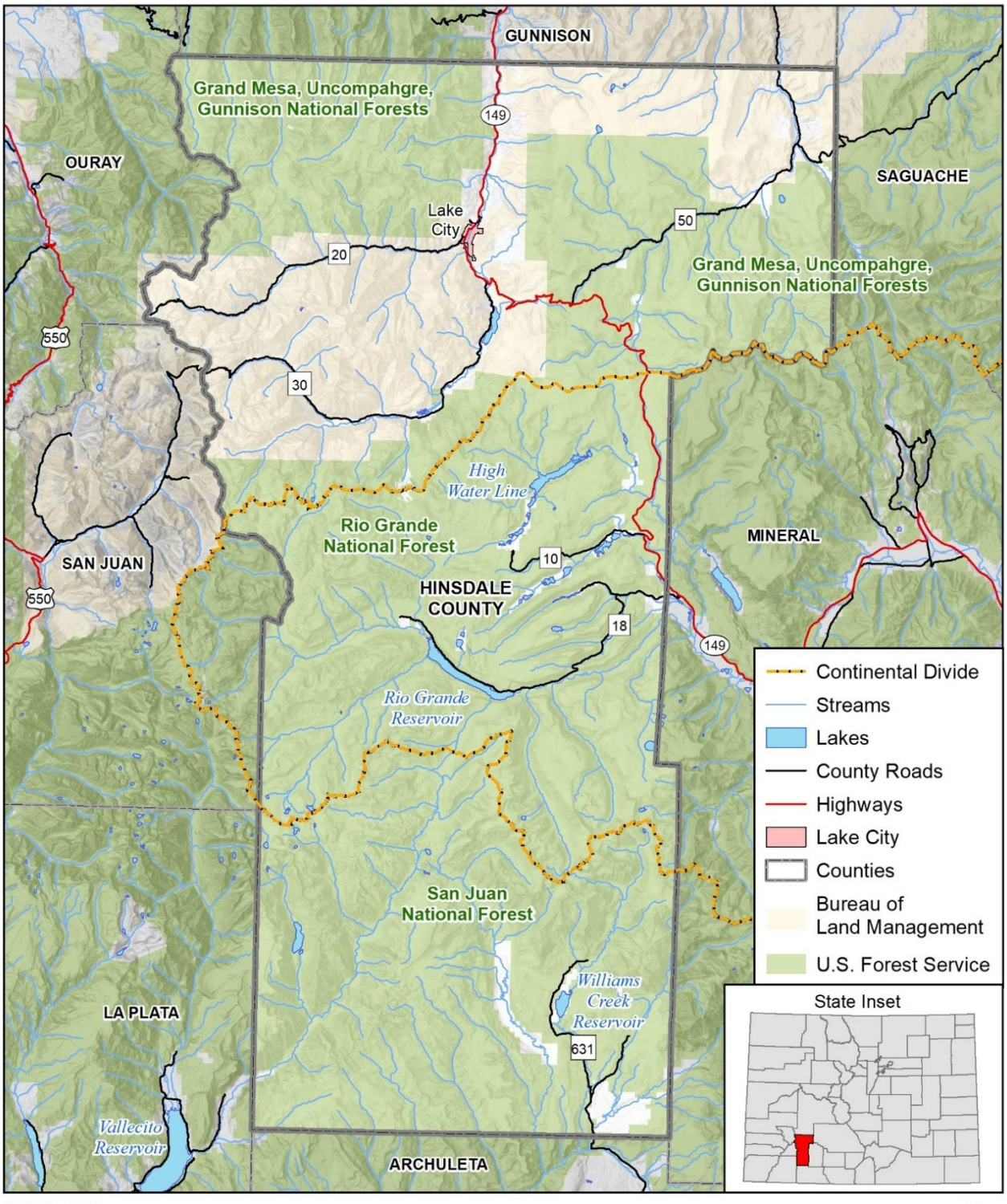
According to the Colorado Wildfire Risk Assessment (COWRA) from the Colorado State Forest Service, it is estimated that 769 people or 98% of the 2022 total project area population (781) live within the WUI. 140,250 acres within Hinsdale are located within the WUI, with Lower Lake Fork having the most area with 40,977 acres as shown in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 Wildland Urban Interface Areas in Hinsdale, by Acres

WUI Name	Acres
Cebolla	12,216
Henson	17,633
Hermit Lakes	6,504
Lost Trail	1,811
Lower Lake Fork	40,977
Oleo	1,504
Pearl Lakes	7,839
Piedra-Palisade	16,870
Ptarmigan Meadows	6,808
S Lazy U	596
Upper Lake Fork	27,492
Total Acres	**140,250**

Source: 2024 Hinsdale County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Figure 3-1 Hinsdale County Planning Area



3.2 Land Use

Hinsdale County and the Town of Lake City have adopted land use regulations with the purpose of promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of the present and future inhabitants in both communities. The regulations guide planning for and regulating the use of land to provide planned and orderly development and environmental protection in a manner consistent with constitutional rights.

The Hinsdale County Land Use Regulations were originally adopted in 1979 and have been amended several times since its original adoption, most recently in 2021. The Town of Lake City first adopted their land use regulations in 1969 and amended them in 2017. In addition to defining land uses for residential, commercial, recreational, and other types, both codes give special attention to hazardous areas, with the intent of protecting lands from activities that would cause immediate or foreseeable material danger to significant wildlife habitats, to regulate the use of land on the basis of impact on the communities or surrounding areas, and to secure safety from fire and other damages, among other things.

Hinsdale County is in the process of implementing an Innovative Housing Opportunities Program (IHOP) grant to adapt land use codes to increase affordable housing options. The Town of Lake City will also be reviewing land use codes under a Local Planning Capacity grant received in the fall of 2024.

3.3 Topography, Climate, and Natural Environment

3.3.1 Topography

The county is covered by mountains, including five peaks over 14,000 ft. in elevation, and twenty peaks over 13,000 ft. Hinsdale County has over 252 miles of roads to maintain, not including several more miles of trails. The continental divide crosses the county twice. The county is divided by three national forests (San Juan, Rio Grande, and Grand Mesa Uncompahgre Gunnison), four wilderness areas (Weminuche, Powderhorn, Uncompahgre, and La Garita), two wilderness study areas (Handies and Redcloud Peak) and one Bureau of Land Management (BLM) office. Hinsdale County has over 332 miles of waterways and has combined water storage of 152,723-acre-feet in reservoirs and lakes. Significant waterways include the headwaters of the Rio Grande River, the Lake Fork of Gunnison River, Cebolla Creek, and Henson Creek.

The County is made up of almost 96.5% of public land with only 3.5% in private ownership. Most of the private land is associated with creeks, rivers or lakes and reservoirs. Many mining claims are scattered across the mountains, usually at higher elevations. The four wilderness areas mentioned above dominate 47% of the land area within the county. Most of the land in Hinsdale County is managed by the US Forest Service (USFS) or the BLM as parts of the San Juan, Rio Grande, Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests.

Hinsdale County's elevation ranges from 14,309 feet at Uncompahgre Peak to 8,000 feet on the southern county line. The five peaks over 14,000 feet are Uncompahgre Peak, Handies Peak, Wetterhorn Peak, Redcloud, and Sunshine Peaks. The county is also the location of the Slumgullion Earth Flow that slid and dammed the Lake Fork of the Gunnison River creating Lake San Cristobal. This landslide was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1983.

Figure 3-2 shows the continental divide, rivers, and roads while Table 3-2 depicts the terrain difficulty levels throughout the county, with areas surrounding and within the three national forests having extremely difficult terrain. Terrain difficulty is defined in the COWRA report as an indicator of the difficulty of accessing an area and extinguishing wildfires.

Table 3-2 Land Ownership in Hinsdale County

Ownership	Acres	%
Private Lands	30,251	4.2
US Forest Service	557,948	78
Bureau of Land Management	125,541	17.5
State Lands	1,995	0.3
Total	**715,735**	**100**

Source: Headwaters Economics

3.3.2 Climate

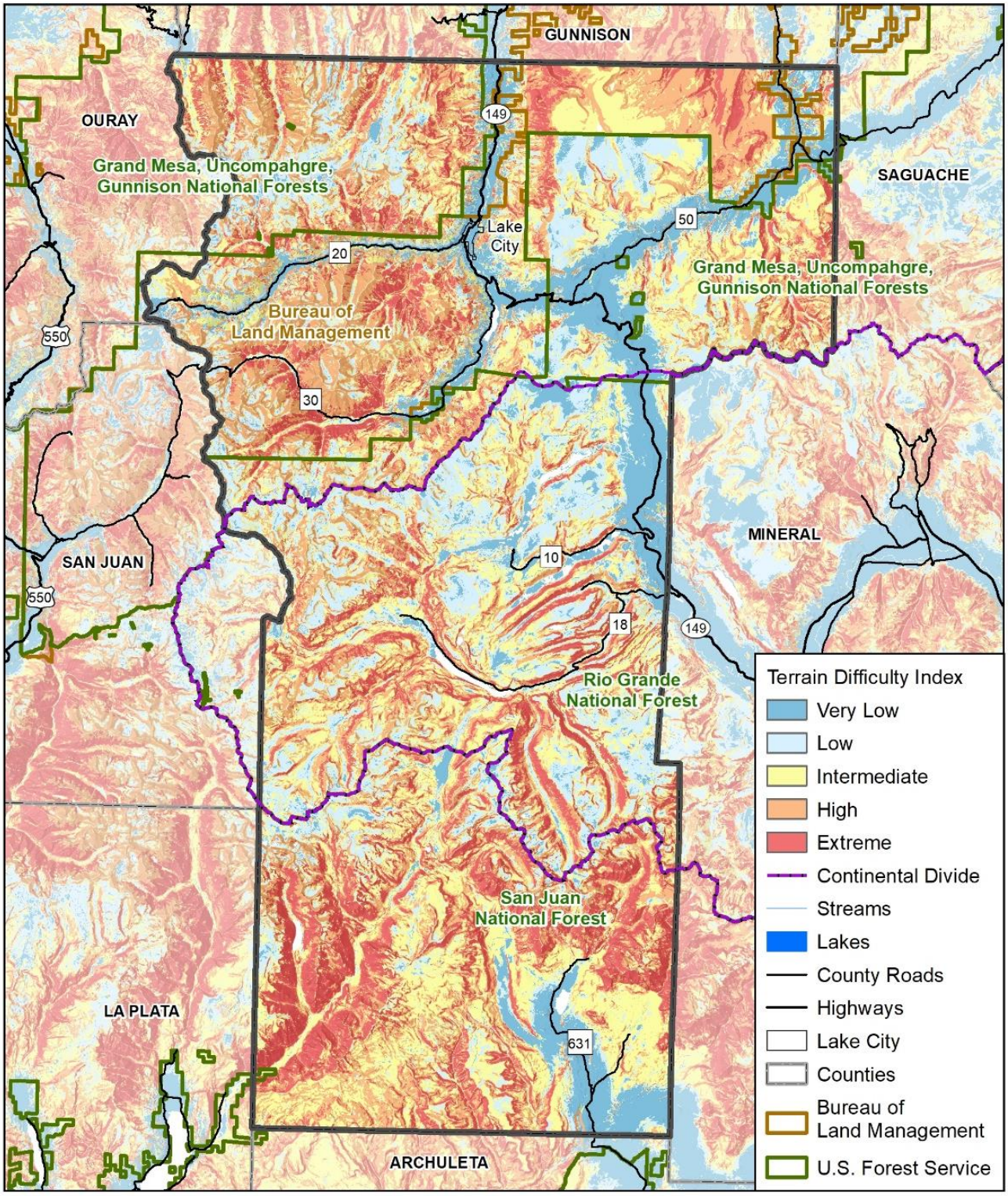
Hinsdale County's geographic location and variations of elevation are the primary weather influencing factors. With 272 sunny days in an average year and a temperature spread of 77°F to -2°F during that same period. The average annual maximum temperature is 55°F, with the highest temperatures of 76°F felt in the month of July. The average annual minimum temperature is 22°F and the coldest temperatures are felt in January with an average of -1.4°F. Precipitation averages 14 inches of rain per year and 93 inches of snow. The county's vast forested areas are well adapted to the local climate; however, a combination of environmental and forest composition factors has aligned to support an epidemic outbreak of the spruce bark beetles, a blight that will alter the landscapes for decades to come. These factors include consecutive drought years, large dense stands of mature Engelmann spruce, and an endemic population of the spruce bark beetles. The history of fire suppression and marginal forest land management has defined the local forest composition and vulnerability.

This climate supports a variety of outdoor activities and Hinsdale County is a popular recreation spot year-round, from hiking and fishing in the summer to skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. This climate also attracts those who want to build seasonal homes, driving the wide temporary fluctuations in population that Hinsdale County sees.

3.3.3 Natural Environment

The natural environment boasts a diverse range of wildland vegetation with over 700,000 acres of national forest. The area is mostly made up of spruce fir, as shown in Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2 in the next section, but also has dense areas of quaking aspen along both the southern and northern borders. Additionally, it also has areas with high desert grass and shrublands that are adapted to drier conditions. Figure 4-1 also shows the diverse wildland vegetation of Hinsdale County.

Figure 3-2 Hinsdale County Terrain Difficulty Index



The county also has multiple aquatic plant and animal species within the Rio Grande River and Rio Grande Reservoir. The Rio Grande River provides a habitat for many species, such as the Rio Grande cutthroat trout and the Rio Grande Silvery Minnow. Other species rely on the Rio Grande River and its reservoir for water and protection, including the bighorn sheep, elk, pronghorn, and mule deer. There are also many sensitive and rare habitats, such as wetlands and riparian areas in Hinsdale County. A field study session conducted by the Colorado Department of Natural Resources (CDNR) in 2006/2007 identified 37 wetland and riparian Potential Conservation Areas (PCAs) in Hinsdale County, 10 of which hold very high biodiversity significance. According to this study, there are one amphibian, two birds, three fish, one mollusk, 45 wetland or riparian communities, and one imperiled wetland plant species on CNHP's Tracking List found in Hinsdale County

3.3.3.1 Endangered Species

To further understand natural resources that may be particularly vulnerable to a hazard event, as well as those that need consideration when implementing mitigation activities, it is important to take into account identified at-risk species (threatened and endangered species) in the planning area. A threatened species is a species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. An endangered species is any species of plant life or wildlife (birds, fish, mammals, etc.) that is in danger of extinction throughout all or most of its range. Both endangered and threatened species are protected by law and any future hazard mitigation projects are subject to these laws. Candidate species are plants and animals that have been proposed as endangered or threatened but are not currently listed.

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service there are 16 Federal endangered, threatened, recovering, or candidate species in Hinsdale County. These species are listed in Table 3-3.

3.4 Values at Risk

According to the 2023 U.S. Census estimate, there are approximately 1,360 housing units in Hinsdale County. The median home value in 2024 was $422,553, which is up 1.2% over the previous year. Given wildfire's destructive potential and the Study Area's direct exposure to intense wildfire, all values in the Study Area are at risk from wildfire. The CWPP is unequivocal in identifying human life as the most important value at risk in the Study Area, and the preservation of life as the main goal of the CWPP.

Identifying and exploring other values at risk in the Study Area enables the CWPP to develop and recommend wildfire risk reduction actions that offer protection to those values. There are many historical buildings, ghost towns, and former mining operations scattered throughout the county that are a treasured and imperiled resource. Most have shake shingle roofs in keeping with the architectural norm of the times and predispose the structures to destruction during the next major wildfire in their vicinity. County residents are reluctant to change the roofing material because it will compromise historical authenticity. Fortunately, most historical structures are in vegetative gaps and there are several techniques available to protect them. They can be wrapped in fire shelter material, fire resistant foam sprayed on them, or a sprinkler system can be set up to shroud them in water. All of these approaches take time and preplanning.

Table 3-3 Endangered Species Found in Hinsdale County

Common Name	Scientific Name	Type of Species	Status
Boreal toad	Anaxyrus boreas boreas	Amphibians	Resolved Taxon
Gunnison sage-grouse	Centrocercus minimus	Birds	Threatened
Mexican spotted owl	Strix occidentalis lucida	Birds	Threatened
Southwestern willow flycatcher	Empidonax traillii extimus	Birds	Endangered
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Coccyzus americanus	Birds	Threatened
Rio Grande cutthroat trout	Oncorhynchus clarkii virginalis	Fishes	Not Listed
Monarch butterfly	Danaus plexippus	Insects	Proposed Threatened
Silverspot	Speyeria nokomis nokomis	Insects	Threatened
Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee	Bombus suckleyi	Insects	Proposed Endangered
Uncompahgre fritillary butterfly	Boloria acrocnema	Insects	Endangered
Canada Lynx	Lynx canadensis	Mammals	Threatened
Gray wolf	Canis lupus	Mammals	Experimental Population
Gunnison's prairie dog	Cynomys gunnisoni	Mammals	Resolved Taxon
Little brown bat	Myotis lucifugus	Mammals	Under Review
Long-eared myotis	Myotis evotis	Mammals	Species of Concern
New Mexico meadow jumping mouse	Zapus hudsonius luteus	Mammals	Endangered

Source: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

There is no aggregate data available on the number or percentage of structures in the county which have applied structural mitigation measures or on the number/percentage of structures with combustible/non-combustible roofing materials.

The GIS analysis identified 1,067 buildings located in a WUI risk zone, with 478 buildings (45%) in Lake City and 589 (55%) in the unincorporated County. Of the 1,067 buildings in the planning area, 54% of which (575 structures) are at highest risk, 27% (292 structures) are at high risk, and 19% (200 structures) are at moderate risk. The total value of properties at risk is estimated at $406,624,782 including contents. Table 3-4 summarizes properties at risk of wildfire, while Table 3-5 through Table 3-7 break the structures down by level of risk and property type.

Table 3-4 Hinsdale County WUI Risk Summary

Jurisdiction	Improved Parcel Count	Building Count Highest	Building Count High	Building Count Moderate	Total Building Count	Improved Value	Total Value	Population At Risk
Lake City	460	254	154	70	478	$107,370,131	$170,414,442	452
Unincorporated	558	321	138	130	589	$153,452,370	$236,210,341	339
Total	**1,018**	**575**	**292**	**200**	**1,067**	**$260,822,501**	**$406,624,782**	**791**

Source: Hinsdale County Assessor Data 2024, Colorado Forest Atlas, WSP GIS Analysis

Table 3-5 Hinsdale County Structures at Highest WUI Risk

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Improved Parcel Count	Building Count	Improved Value	Total Value	Buildings At Risk %	Population At Risk
Lake City	Commercial	14	17	$2,818,589	$5,637,178	22.7%	
	Exempt	10	10	$3,028,860	$6,057,720	52.6%	
	Improved Vacant	1	2	$15,000	$30,000	100.0%	
	Residential	219	225	$54,216,881	$81,325,322	55.4%	258
	Total	**244**	**254**	**$60,079,330**	**$93,050,220**	**50.6%**	**258**
Unincorporated	Commercial	18	22	$4,529,403	$9,058,806	8.9%	
	Improved Vacant	2	2	$52,500	$105,000	14.3%	
	Residential	284	297	$72,251,966	$108,377,949	42.6%	190
	Total	**304**	**321**	**$76,833,869**	**$117,541,755**	**31.8%**	**190**
Grand Total		**548**	**575**	**$136,913,199**	**$210,591,975**	**38.0%**	**447**

Source: Hinsdale County Assessor Data 2024, Colorado Forest Atlas, WSP GIS Analysis

Table 3-6 Hinsdale County Structures at High WUI Risk

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Improved Parcel Count	Building Count	Improved Value	Estimated Content Value	Total Value	Buildings At Risk %	Population At Risk
Lake City	Commercial	26	29	$5,035,962	$5,035,962	$10,071,924	38.7%	
	Exempt	6	7	$4,534,090	$4,534,090	$9,068,180	36.8%	
	Residential	115	118	$23,732,434	$11,866,217	$35,598,651	29.1%	135
	Total	**147**	**154**	**$33,302,486**	**$21,436,269**	**$54,738,755**	**30.7%**	**135**
Unincorporated	Agricultural	2	2	$291,990	$291,990	$583,980	4.3%	
	Commercial	7	11	$4,305,552	$4,305,552	$8,611,104	4.5%	
	Residential	123	125	$36,075,367	$18,037,684	$54,113,051	17.9%	80
	Total	**132**	**138**	**$40,672,909**	**$22,635,226**	**$63,308,135**	**13.7%**	**80**
Grand Total		**279**	**292**	**$73,975,395**	**$44,071,495**	**$118,046,890**	**19.3%**	**215**

Source: Hinsdale County Assessor Data 2024, Colorado Forest Atlas, WSP GIS Analysis

Table 3-7 Hinsdale County Structures at Moderate WUI Risk

Jurisdiction	Property Type	Improved Parcel Count	Building Count	Improved Value	Estimated Content Value	Total Value	Buildings At Risk %	Population At Risk
Lake City	Commercial	16	16	$2,487,169	$2,487,169	$4,974,338	21.3%	
	Exempt	2	2	$798,820	$798,820	$1,597,640	10.5%	
	Residential	51	52	$10,702,326	$5,351,163	$16,053,489	12.8%	60
	Total	**69**	**70**	**$13,988,315**	**$8,637,152**	**$22,625,467**	**13.9%**	**60**
Unincorporated	Agricultural	6	6	$1,518,469	$1,518,469	$3,036,938	12.8%	
	Commercial	7	14	$1,231,877	$1,231,877	$2,463,754	5.7%	
	Exempt	1	1	$119,210	$119,210	$238,420	25.0%	
	Improved Vacant	1	1	$14,570	$14,570	$29,140	7.1%	
	Residential	107	108	$33,061,466	$16,530,733	$49,592,199	15.5%	69
	Total	**122**	**130**	**$35,945,592**	**$19,414,859**	**$55,360,451**	**12.9%**	**69**
Grand Total		**191**	**200**	**$49,933,907**	**$28,052,011**	**$77,985,918**	**13.2%**	**129**

Source: Hinsdale County Assessor Data 2024, Colorado Forest Atlas, WSP GIS Analysis

Critical facilities are those community components that are most needed to withstand the impacts of disaster. Wildfire impacts to critical facilities can include structural damage or destruction, risk to persons located within facilities, and interruption of facility operations and critical functions. Table 3-8 lists those facilities at risk. Please refer to the 2025 Hinsdale County HMP for more detailed information on Critical Facilities.

Table 3-8 Summery of Critical Facilities at Moderate to Highest WUI Risk

Jurisdiction	Communications	Energy	Food, Hydration, Shelter	Hazardous Material	Health and Medical	Safety and Security	Transportation	Water Systems	Total Count
Lake City	4	0	0	3	2	9	2	3	**23**
Unincorporated	1	0	0	1	0	1	3	4	**10**
Total	**5**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**2**	**10**	**5**	**7**	**33**

Source: CSFS Forest Atlas, Hinsdale County, CDOT, HIFLD, Division of Water Resources, National Bridge Inventory, National Registry, WSP Analysis

Water Supply

The Lake Fork of the Gunnison River and Piedra Rivers along with many of their tributaries provide reliable sources of water year-round. However, during dry spells, other creeks in the area may have reduced flows to the point that they are difficult to draft out of. The region also features numerous springs, ponds, ditches and a few lakes. Accessing these water resources to draft water can be problematic with large fire apparatus but drafting is possible using the right equipment. Portable pumps can be used to fill fire apparatus as needed. Pressurized hydrants are commonly found near Lake City, and there are also dry hydrants available in at least one WUI area, specifically Lower Lake Fork.

Lake City Area Fire Protection District maintains a list and map of dry hydrants in their response district.

3.4.1 Economy

The unique landscape and outdoor recreation opportunities provide a strong tourism base in Hinsdale County, drawing tourists from the neighboring states of Texas and Oklahoma. BLM Traffic Counts on the Alpine Loop, a high elevation 4x4 scenic byway, and increases in sales tax and lodging tax over the last six to eight years indicate an increasing number of visitors and tourists from Colorado as the statewide tourism base and economy grows. Accordingly, the industries that employ the most people in Hinsdale County arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services (10.4%), and retail trade (10.8%). In addition to tourism, ranching is also an important component of Hinsdale County's economy. While the remoteness and ruggedness of the county are a large part of what drives these economic assets, the remoteness and inaccessibility can become a major problem in emergency planning and search and rescue. The backcountry's steepness and remoteness also present a major problem in communication. Cell-phone service and internet service are often hard to receive in the County along with other forms of communication which can make mitigation and response efforts a difficult task.

Wildland fires can have a direct impact on agricultural lands and the County's scenery, adversely affecting the ability of the County's residents to earn a living from these industries. Lower air quality and smoke might also deter tourists who want to do outdoor recreation as well as pose health problems for residents and visitors. Hinsdale County's scenic beauty is a main draw for tourism, so the County could suffer economic losses from tourists not coming to the area due to wildfires. Fire suppression may also require increased costs to local and state government for water acquisition and delivery, especially during periods of drought when water resources are scarce.

3.4.2 Environmental and Cultural Resources

The entire downtown Lake City Historic District could be vulnerable to wildfires and wind-driven firebrands. In addition, there are historic mines and ghost towns throughout the county that are vulnerable to wildfires.

Wildfires are a common and naturally occurring phenomenon in forested areas and can benefit forest health in many respects. But the trend for hotter, more widespread and destructive fires can make it more difficult for the environment to recover, and lead to increased flood hazards. This can severely impact water quality and watershed health for years after the fire. Additionally, impacts from wildfires could be severe and widespread for people, property, and natural resources.

Watersheds

Due to the Continental Divide crossing Hinsdale County twice, the county is split across three primary river basin watersheds: The Rio Grande, Gunnison, and Dolores-San Juan, with the latter two being sub-basins of the Colorado River watershed. Most domestic water in Hinsdale County is sourced from wells. In areas that experience low-severity burns, fire events can serve to eliminate competition, rejuvenate growth and improve watershed conditions. But in landscapes subjected to high, or even moderate-burn severity, the post-fire threats to public safety and natural resources can be extreme. After a large fire, watershed health issues can arise, leading to stream sedimentation that affects fisheries, reduces reservoir capacity, and causes flooding. This type of flooding may impact individual residences, businesses, roads, bridges and culverts. Given the rocky, heavily forested, narrow drainages common to several of the WUIs, significant flooding can be expected following any large wildfires in the County.

According to the COWRA report for Hinsdale County, 55.2% of the county's watershed area are at Moderate or High Risk to negative impacts from wildfire, as shown in Figure 3-3.

3.5 Wildfire Policies, Programs, and Protection Capabilities

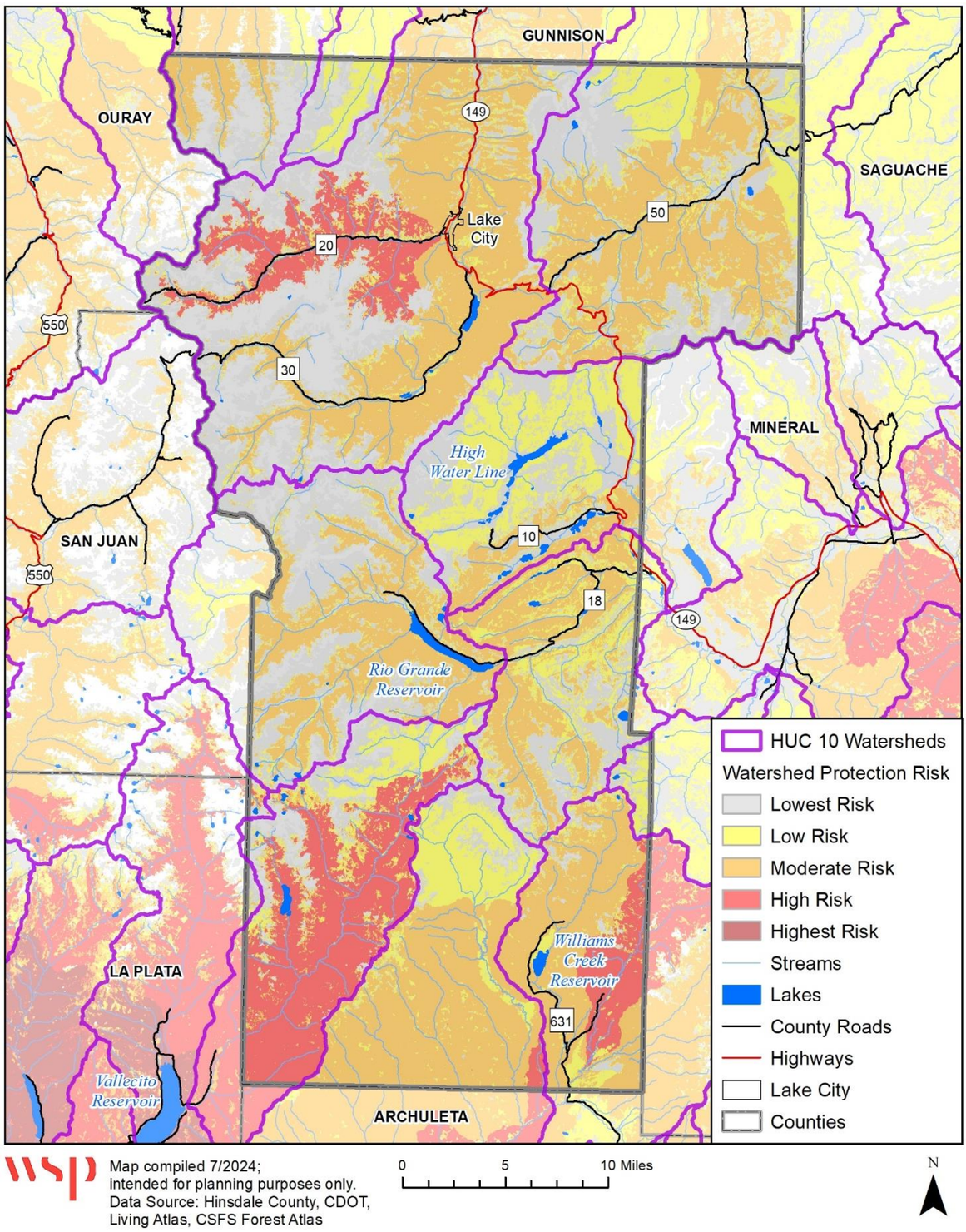
3.5.1 Fire Protection Overview

Many WUIs within Hinsdale County are not within a fire protection district (FPD). Fire protection is provided by adjacent protection districts on a fee basis. When a structure fire occurs in the WUI, the homeowner is charged for whatever services the responding FPD provides. When a wildfire threatens a WUI outside the Lake City Area Fire Protection District (LCAFPD), emergency personnel and equipment respond, as available, and bill the County Sheriff for the services provided. Refer to Section 3.5.3 for more background on the FPDs in Hinsdale County.

This arrangement leaves many landowners with no formal commitments for fire protection. Forming a new district or joining an adjacent fire protection district are both options to solve this problem. However, both options require substantial, broad based community support and people willing to be trained and serve as volunteer firefighters. Another approach is to formalize interagency cooperation for assistance with response in areas of the county not currently within a fire protection district. Currently the County Sheriff does not have any agreements with Lake City, Mineral County, or Pagosa FPDs for mutual aid or assistance. In the future, the Sheriff may develop memorandums of understanding with all three fire protection districts providing services within the County and outlining services they are willing to make available outside their FPD boundaries.

All emergency response agencies in Hinsdale County implement the Incident Management System (ICS) for on-scene coordination, command, and control. The Hinsdale County also implements ICS in the Emergency Operations center (EOC) for the coordination of support activities with the on-scene emergency agencies. Both the on-scene emergency response agencies and the EOC personnel coordinate and collaborate for effective management of the incident. The standard operating procedures for on-scene activity coordination is developed and maintained by each individual emergency response agency. A description of EOC activities is documented within the Hinsdale County Emergency Operations Plan, 2023.

Figure 3-3 Hinsdale County Watershed Protection Risk



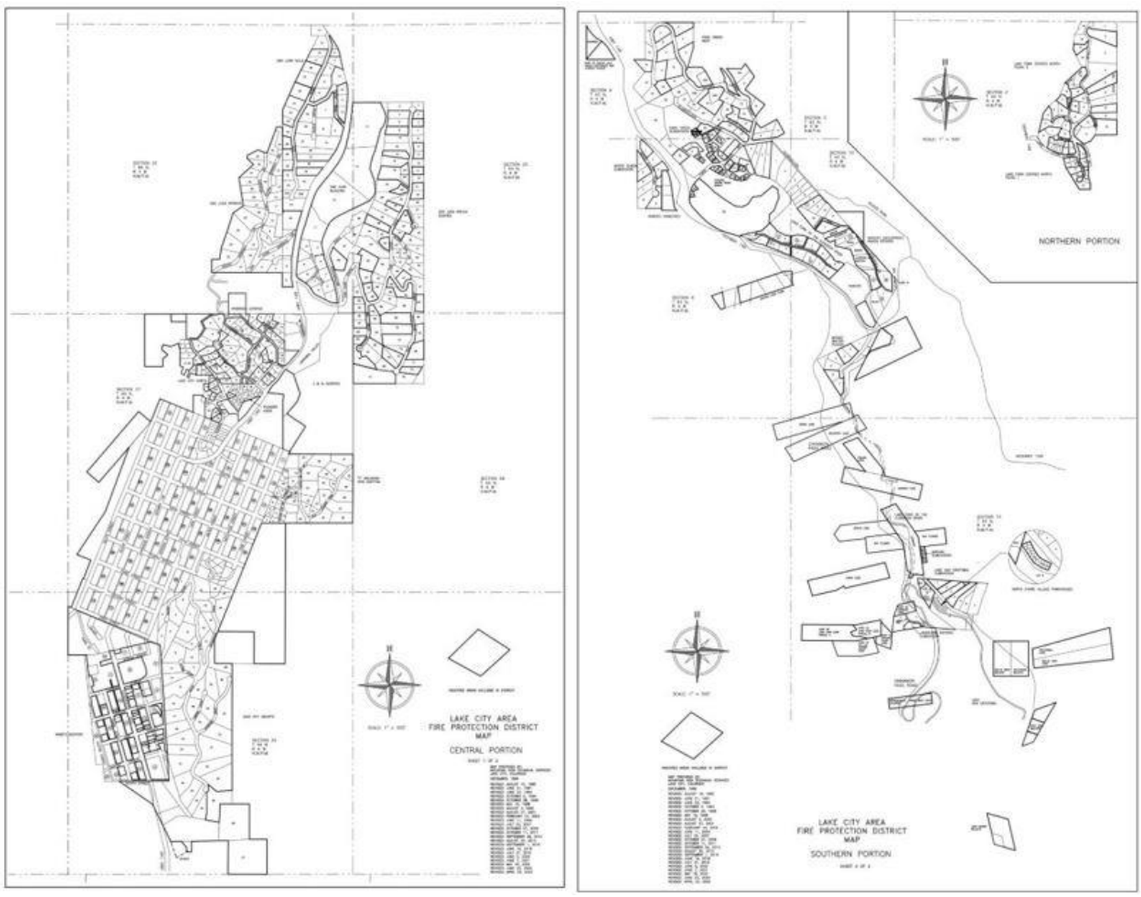
3.5.2 Fire Agency Background

The LCAFPD was first established in 1982 and serves a crucial role in safeguarding the community of Hinsdale County, from the threat of wildfires. LCAFPD is committed to minimizing and preventing property loss and providing a range of essential services including fire suppression, rescue operations, fire prevention, code enforcement, and community education.

In collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies, the LCAFPD coordinates efforts to manage fuel loads and implement strategic fire mitigation measures. This includes the establishment and maintenance of fuel breaks around critical infrastructure and residential areas, as well as conducting prescribed burns and mechanical removal of combustible vegetation. The district also emphasizes the importance of community involvement, encouraging residents to create defensible spaces around their properties, and to participate in volunteer programs aimed at reducing wildfire risks.

Additionally, the LCAFPD provides up-to-date information on local fire restrictions and wildfire conditions, ensuring that residents are well-informed and prepared for potential fire emergencies.

Figure 3-4 Lake City Area Fire Protection District Maps



3.5.3 ISO and Fire Agency Capacity

Insurance Services Office (ISO) provides data for property and casualty insurers. As part of the data it provides to insurers, ISO rates the community building processes with the Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS), which assesses building codes and how they are enforced. The BCEGS ratings are surveyed, audited, and updated every five years. The ratings are based on categories including which edition of code is adopted, building department staff qualifications, inspection procedures, code enforcement, and more. Communities with good enforcement practices can expect reductions in property insurance rates.

An overall fire services rating was developed for use in determining insurance premiums for residential and commercial property. Factors such as fire alarm systems, equipment, training, availability of water (hydrants), etc. are used to develop the rating. The rating is based on a scale of class 1 to class 10, with class 1 providing the best public protection and class 10 providing the lowest public protection.

Currently the Lake City Area FPD has a split classification rating of 03/3Y. The 03 applies to properties that are located within 1000 feet of a fire hydrant and the 3Y applies to properties that are located beyond 1000 feet of a hydrant but within 5 miles of the fire station. See https://www.verisk.com/insurance/ for more details.

3.5.4 Local Policies and Programs

Hinsdale County currently has wildfire hazard mitigation requirements in their Unified Land Development Code, Section 5.5.3 (Wildfire Hazard Areas). The development code directs landowners to apply to the Hinsdale County Fire Protection District (HCFPD) for determination of the wildfire hazard severity on the parcel they plan to develop. If the wildfire hazard is medium or above, the HCFPD is to provide recommendations or specific appropriate mitigation measures. This development code also requires residential construction in areas covered by woods, brush, or grasslands to minimize the potential for the structures to be ignited by fire or for the structure to ignite surrounding structures or vegetation. It goes on to describe vegetation

management around the structure. It also states that all property owners with structures in an area with wildfire hazard rating of medium or above are responsible for proper maintenance of defensible spaces. This includes modifying landscaping or removing flammable vegetation (leaves, pine needles) and removing other dead vegetative material from roofs of structures.

In the 2024 revision of the Hazard Mitigation Plan, a recommendation was provided for the Town of Lake City to become a Firewise community. Planning resources and a program tool kit can be referenced at https://www.nfpa.org/Education-and-Research/Wildfire/Firewise-USA.

Private land development in fire prone areas needs to accommodate road and driveway standards that facilitate emergency vehicle access and turnaround. Land development without access for fire apparatus and other emergency vehicles exacerbates the fire hazard management challenge and perpetuates the expenditure of public funds to protect structures in a wildfire situation.

Hinsdale County Unified Land Development Code establishes road and driveway standards for new construction; however, it does not address those facilities constructed prior to the adoption of the code. The standards do a good job of describing reasonable road widths, grades and cul-de-sacs for public roads. The driveway standards allow for 16% grades and do not require adequate turnaround space and may further impair emergency vehicle mobility.

Many of the basic wildfire hazard issues such as poor access (i.e., one way ingress and egress), steep/narrow road grades, cul-de-sac diameter, vegetative flammability, building construction, roofing materials, and survivable space were not in effect when the majority of the structures in Hinsdale County were constructed. Encouraging improvements in older developments and structures is an important function of this plan.

The Hinsdale County Community Chipping Program offers residents reduced fees at the transfer station when dropping off landscape mitigation waste (trees, shrubs, etc.). The county then chips these materials and offers the chips and mulch for free back to the community. The county plans to scale this program to offer more mitigation incentives, however those efforts are funding dependent.

The County can take a significant step in reducing structure losses from wildfire from following suggested improvements in the building permit process from the NFPA standards:

- At least two ways into and out of a subdivision
- Adequate driveways with turn-arounds suitable for use by firefighting equipment
- Street signs constructed of non-flammable materials
- Addresses that are posted at the intersection of the main road and the driveway
- Fire resistant siding and roofing materials
- Chimneys and stove pipes with caps and spark arrestors

These few suggestions would have substantial impacts on survivable space and first responder efficiency.

3.5.5 Education and Community Outreach

Hinsdale County OEM coordinates disaster planning, preparedness, response, and recovery for Hinsdale County’s unincorporated areas and supports Lake City's Town Manager, who serves as the town's Emergency Manager. OEM's mission is to assist the public before, during, and after disasters by coordinating with various government levels and other entities to minimize disaster impacts and help communities recover quickly. OEM is responsible for public outreach on hazards, educating on preparedness and mitigation, and managing public alert and notification systems during emergencies.

The following table identifies the County personnel responsible for activities related to mitigation and loss prevention in Hinsdale County and the Town of Lake City.

Table 3-9 Hinsdale County &Town of Lake City Public Education and Outreach Capabilities

Education & Outreach	Hinsdale County	Town of Lake City
Local citizen groups that communicate hazard risks	Yes	Yes
Firewise	No	No
Storm Ready	No	No
Other	Yes	No

Hinsdale County hosts an annual wildfire preparedness event called “Let’s Talk About Wildfire.” The event features briefings and discussions with experts from the Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service, and Colorado State Forest Service on proposed projects and homeowner resources. Attendees also receive updates on recent local studies, and county officials, along with wildfire professionals, are available to answer questions and provide guidance.

Additionally, Hinsdale County and Lake City can leverage the Silver World Newspaper and Facebook for outreach and education. The newspaper can feature articles on hazard and wildfire mitigation best practices, success stories, and upcoming preparedness events, keeping the community informed about risks and resources. Facebook can also serve as a real-time engagement platform for sharing alerts, hosting discussions, and posting educational content. Together, these channels can enhance community awareness and encourage proactive participation in preparedness.

The following paragraphs provide a description of stakeholders and districts that implement public education and outreach efforts in the planning area.

Lake City Area Fire Protection District

Lake City Fire & Rescue is an all-volunteer department within the Town of Lake City’s Area Fire Protection District. Lake City Fire & Rescue, in conjunction with the Sheriff’s Office & Emergency Management, conduct community workshops and a county-wide “Ready, Set, Go!” mail-out. The Sheriff’s office regulates all open fires in the county through burn permit issuance and burn bans. Fuels inspections, weather inspection, weather advisories, cooperation with the fire district, and public service announcements and postings have proven to be very effective in wildfire prevention.

Lake City Community School District

Lake City Schools and the Sheriff’s office conduct an annual lock down exercise at the school in conjunction with other local emergency response personnel. This event incorporates evacuations plans, coordinated emergency response, and secures communication capabilities.

West Region Wildfire Council

The West Region Wildfire Council is a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing wildfire risk and increasing resilience throughout Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel counties. Through education, mitigation, and strategic partnerships, they empower residents, landowners, and stakeholders to take proactive steps in protecting lives, property, and natural resources from the growing threat of wildfire.

Silver Thread Public Health District

The Silver Thread Public Health District provides health information, programs, services, and resources to the residents and visitors to Hinsdale and Mineral counties. This District provides emergency information on their website for both counites including a link to the Hinsdale County Evacuation Plan and Alert and Warning Guide.

The San Juan Ranch Estates

The San Juan Ranch Estates subdivision is a homeowner’s association has a strong interest and capacity for hazard mitigation. Dense, overcrowded forests within and around the subdivision heighten the risk of significant property and life loss in the event of a wildfire. For over fifteen years, its residents have actively collaborated with the Colorado State Forest Service to implement effective forest management techniques that reduce wildfire risks.

3.5.6 Protection Capabilities & Infrastructure Protection

The following sections describe the wildland fire suppression resources available throughout Hinsdale County, including facilities, personnel, and equipment.

Mineral County does respond to fires in Hinsdale County on a cooperative basis when resources are available. Due to the remoteness of both counties, initial attack times can sometimes be as much as two hours

Table 3-10 Fire Resources

TYPE RESOURCE	TYPE	# ON	#HAND DESIRED
Lake City Fire Rescue			
Personnel		14	
Wildland firefighters (Red Carded)		0	1 squad
Engine 93 1,000 gal - 1,500 g.p.m.	1	1	
Engine 91 500 gal - 1,250 g.p.m.	1	1	
Engine 95 250 gal - 250 g.p.m.	6	1	1
Tender 3,500 gal		1	
Wildland fire tool cache			
Colorado State Forest Service			
Wildland Firefighters (Red Carded)		2	
Power saw kit		1	1
Wildland fire tool cache	10-person	1	
Bendix / King handheld radios		3	
Drip Torches		2	
USFS (North End) Gunnison RD			
Wildland Firefighters (Red Carded)		19	
Engine 671	6	1	
Sentinel, 10 person 1A Squad		1	
Power saw kit		2	
Portable pump kits	Mark III	4	
Portable holding tanks	1,000 gal	2	
USFS - San Juan NF			
Wildland Firefighters (Red Carded)		11	
Type 4 Engine		1	
Type 6 Engine		1	
Pagosa Fire Protection District			
Wildland Firefighters (Red Carded)		6-8	
Type 6 engine w/ Type 1 Tender	6 & 1		
USFS – Rio Grande NF (1.5 hour Response Time)			
Wildland Firefighters (Red Carded)		3	
Type 6 Engine		1	

Source: HCFPD

Table 3-11 Mineral County FPD Resources

Item	# On Hand
Total Volunteers	20
Wildland Firefighters	0
1975 Type 6 Brush Truck 250 gal.	1
1984 Ford Tender 4,000 gal.	1
CSFS Water Tender 1,000 gal.	1
Engine Type 1	2
1990 Portable Pump Truck 500 g.p.m.	1
Portable Tanks (4,000 gal)	1
Portable Pumps (High Pressure) Floto Pumps	0
Floating Strainers	0
1” CJRL Fire Hose	500’
VHF Radios (hand / mobile)	20 / 7
DTR Radios (hand / mobile)	23 / 7
Fire Wells	0

Source: MCFPD.

4 CURRENT WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 Understanding Wildfire

A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels, posing danger and destruction to lives and property. Wildfires are a natural process for the rejuvenation of landscapes and forests and are a critical element in the health of ecosystems. Most wildfires, including the most destructive wildfires, are caused by accidental or intentional ignition by humans through activities such as unattended or improperly extinguished campfires or sparking from electrical lines in contact with tree limbs. Not all wildfires are catastrophic, and most are suppressed or extinguish naturally before growing into large incidents; however, most wildfires have immense catastrophic potential.

Hinsdale County is exposed to a variety of wildfire hazard conditions based on fuels, topography, weather, and human behavior. Although wildlands need to burn periodically to naturally maintain viable environments, fuel maintenance (controlled burns, forest thinning, forest harvesting, mowing, cattle grazing, and other means) is a necessary replacement to uncontrolled wildland fires when there are threats to human habitation. Section 4.4 describes the current vegetative conditions in the study area, as they relate to wildland fire risk.

Generally, there are three major factors that sustain wildfires and predict a given area's potential to burn. These factors are fuel, topography, and weather.

1) **Fuel**—Fuel is the material that feeds a fire and is a key factor in wildfire behavior. Fuel is generally classified by type and by volume. Fuel sources are diverse and include forest floor litter such as dried tree leaves, twigs, downed branches, on standing dead trees, live trees, brush, and cured grasses. Human-made structures, such as homes and other associated combustibles, are also fuel sources for wildfires. The type of available fuel directly influences the behavior of wildfire. Of the three major factors that sustain wildfires, fuel is the only factor that can be modified by humans. See Figure 4-1 and Figure 4-2 for the various fuel types in the county.

2) **Topography**—Physical features of an area, including terrain and slope, affect the susceptibility of that area to wildfire spread. The fire intensity and the rate of flame spread increase as slope increases due to the upslope movement of heat from a fire through convection. The arrangement and types of vegetation throughout hillsides can also contribute to increased fire activity on slopes.

3) **Weather**—Weather components such as temperature, relative humidity, wind, and lightning also affect the potential for wildfire. High temperatures and low relative humidity effectively dry out fuels that more readily ignite and burn more intensely. Consequently, the threat of wildfire increases during periods of drought. Wind is the most influential weather factor due to its ability to increase rates of flame spread regardless of the ambient temperature and current relative humidity. Additionally, lightning strikes, particularly without rain, frequently are the primary cause of naturally occurring wildfires in Hinsdale County.

Figure 4-1 Surface Fuels Distribution

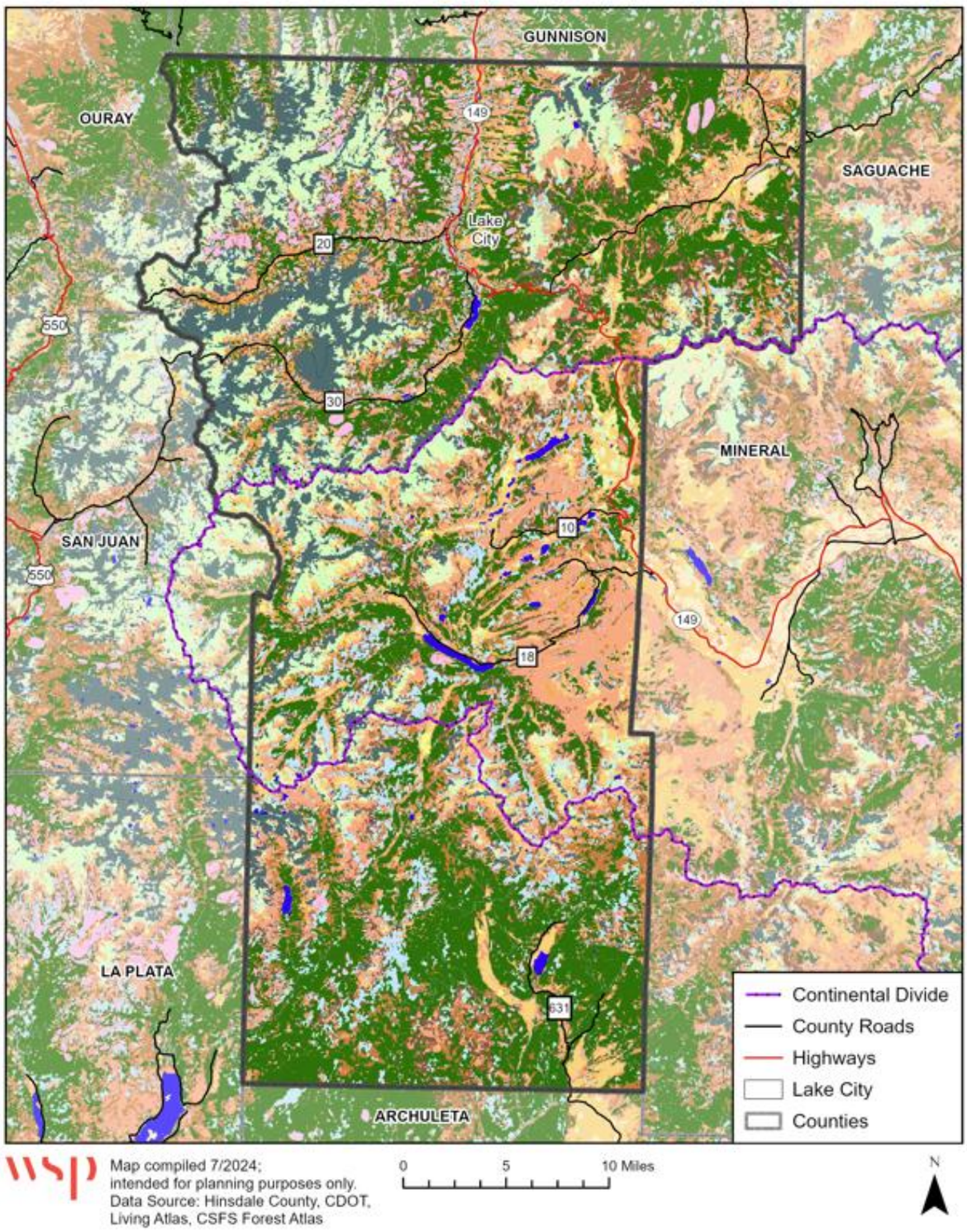


Figure 4-2 Surface Fuels Legend

4.2 Regional and Local Wildfire History

Fires have been a part of the landscape of Hinsdale County since lightning and dry biomass have been present on the landscape. An astute observer will note the many old fire scars in forested areas. Charred stumps, snags, and large aspen stands date back to the late 1800s when lightning combined with drought to create the vegetative mosaic we enjoy today.

According to the 2010 Hinsdale County CWPP, from 1999 to 2008 there were 66 wildfires in Hinsdale County. Updated data from the Federal Wildland Fire Occurrence database referenced for the 2025 Hinsdale County HMP recorded 71 wildfires affecting Hinsdale County from 2014 to 2023. However, the vast majority of those are small fires that are quickly extinguished or that burn out; only 14 fires burned one acre or more. Between 2000 and 2023, there have only been six significant wildfires of at least 1,000 acres burned recorded in Hinsdale County, listed in Table 4-1. The West Fork Complex Fire, which included both the West Fork and Papoose fires, impacted both Hinsdale and Mineral County These fires were started from lightning strikes that hit areas affected by beetle infestation and drought. The Bear Creek Fire in 2023 also started by a lightning strike hitting an area of very dead timber, ultimately burning 1,103 acres. The Little Sand Fire burned over 24,900 acres in both Hinsdale and Archuleta County. This fire was caused by a lightning strike in the Piedra area Northwest of Pagosa Springs.

All fires noted occurred in years of severe or extreme multi-year drought in Colorado and were caused by natural reasons, except for the 2002 Missionary Ridge Fire, which was a human-caused fire and burned mostly in La Plata County. The Missionary Ridge fire burned a total of 81,852 acres and destroyed 83 structures. Data from the Federal Wildland Fire Occurrence database indicates that approximately 18% of wildfires in Hinsdale County have been human caused, while 21% have an undetermined/unknown cause and the remaining fires have been natural.

Table 4-1 Hinsdale County Fire History, 2000-2024

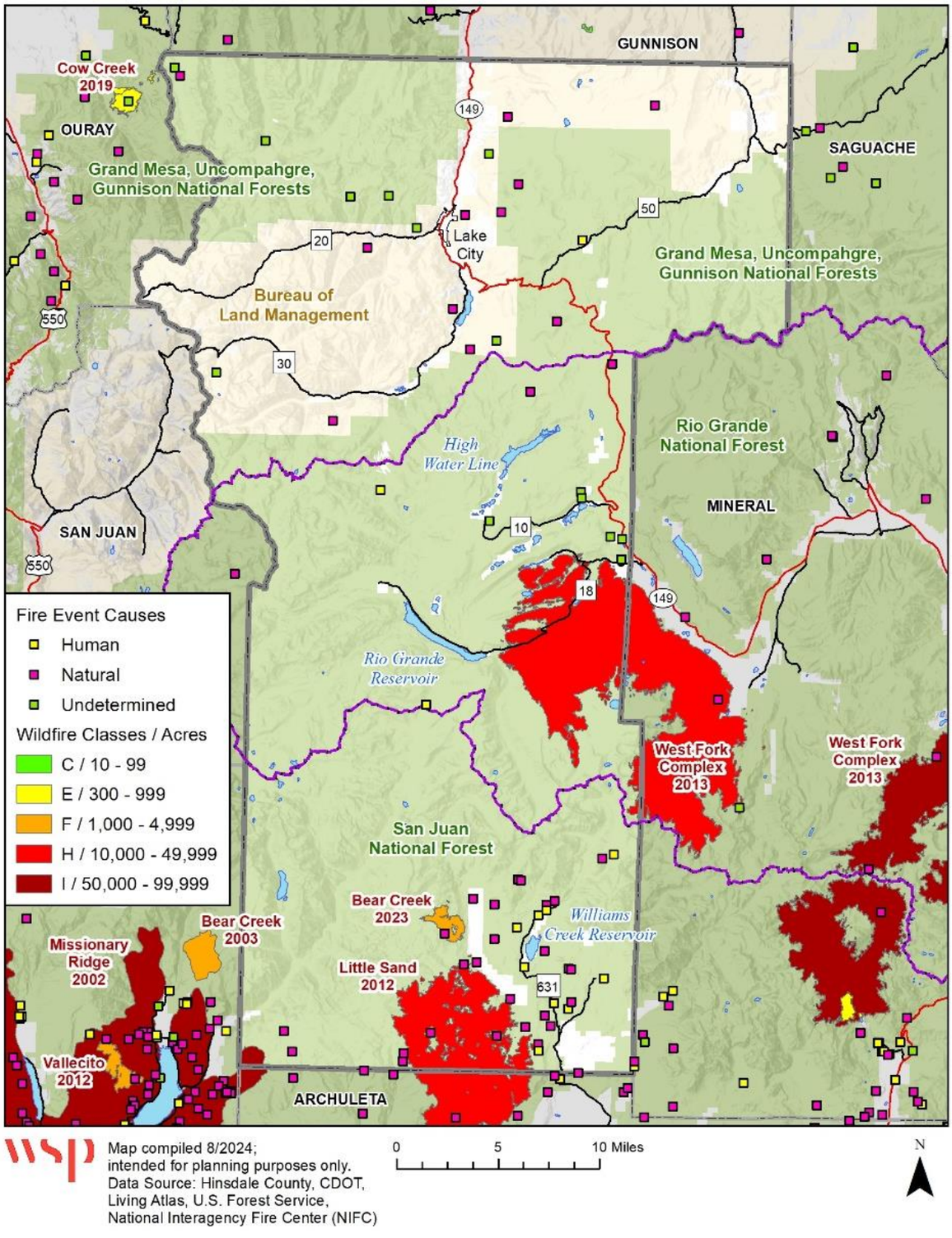
Fire Name	Year of Occurrence	Fire Cause	Acres Burned
Missionary Ridge	2002	Human	81,852*
Bear Creek	2003	Natural	1,869
Vallecito	2012	Natural	1,400
Little Sand	2012	Natural	24,931
West Fork Complex**	2013	Natural	49,317
Bear Creek	2023	Natural	1,103
TOTAL			**159,369**

Source: Federal Wildland Fire Occurrence database, BIA, BLM, USFS, NPS from the GeoMAC portal

**most of the burned area was in La Plata County*

*** The West Fork Complex was the Papoose, the West Fork and Windy Gap Fires*

Figure 4-3 Hinsdale County Wildfire History (2002-2024)



4.3 Regional Risk Situation

According to the Fifth National Climate Assessment, the southwestern United States has experienced unprecedented wildfire events, driven in part by climate change, in recent years. In the southwest, fires have become larger, more frequent, and, in many areas, more severe, with clear evidence of climate change as a major cause. Seven (7) of the ten (10) largest wildfires in the country in 2020-2021 were in the southwest region, and all three of Colorado's largest wildfires on record occurred in 2020. According to the State of Colorado Enhanced State HMP, wildfire intensity is projected to increase throughout the region due to additional dry vegetation building up that adds more fuel to wildfires. Total area burned per year is projected to increase substantially through the 21st century in the Rocky Mountain West, including Colorado. Hinsdale County is no exception to these trends and is likely to see an increased wildfire occurrence and intensity along with the rest of the State.

Figure 4-4 displays the current county-wide burn probability as developed in the county's COWRA report. Burn probability is the annual probability of any given location burning due to wildfire. Figure 4-5 and Figure 4-6 display the CSFS Fire Intensity Scale for the southwestern Colorado region and Hinsdale County, respectively, illustrating the overall wildfire risk situation.

Figure 4-4 Hinsdale County Burn Probability

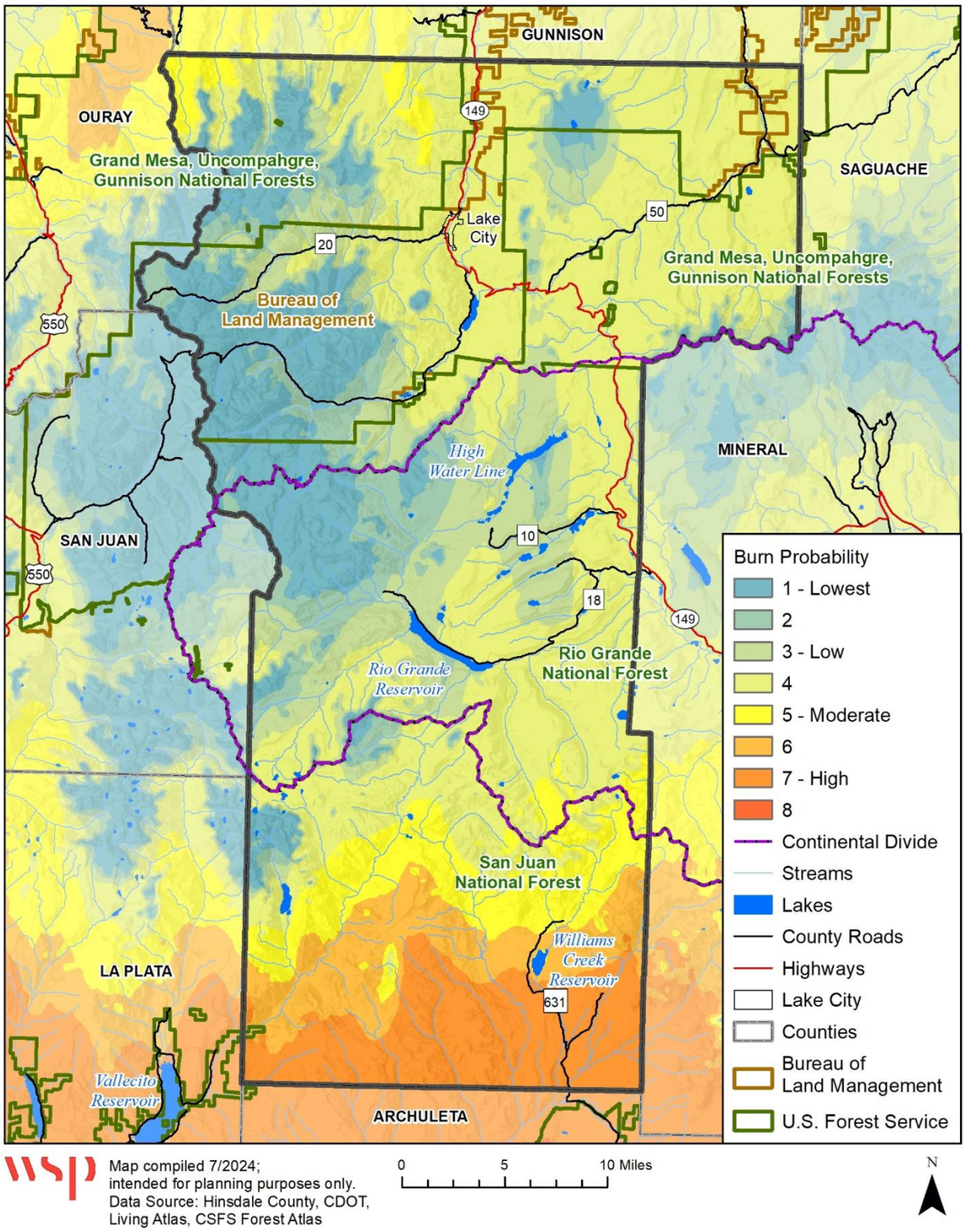
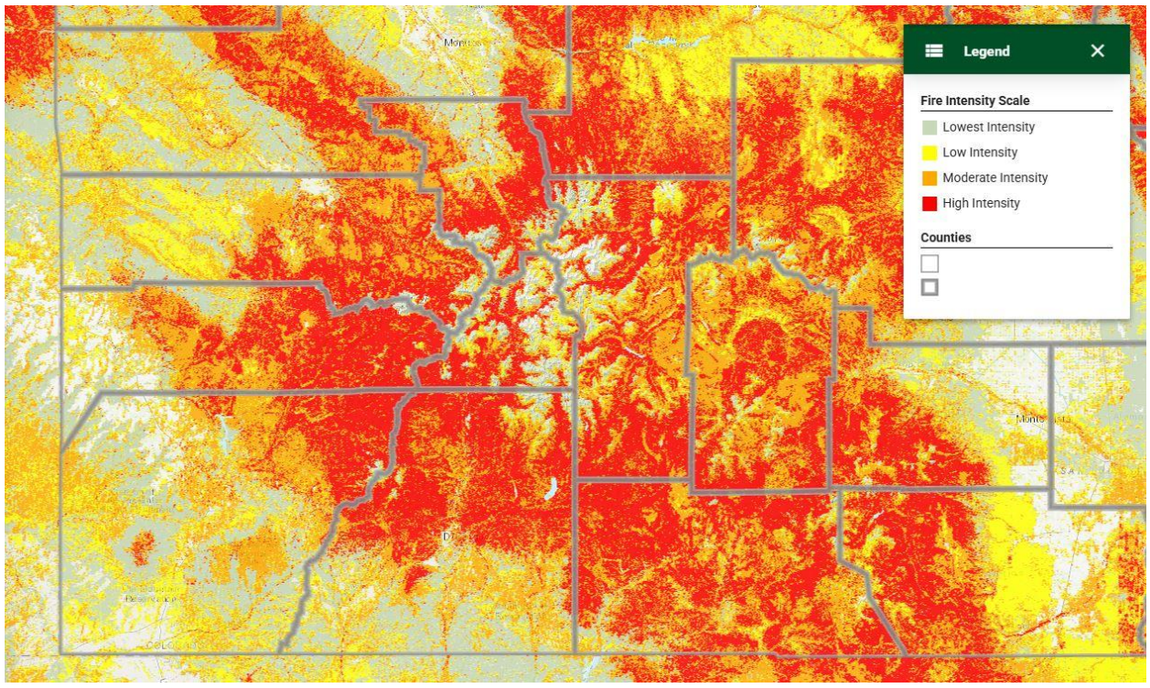


Figure 4-5 Southwestern Colorado Fire Intensity Scale



Source: Colorado State Forest Service Wildfire Risk Viewer, https://co-pub.coloradoforestatlas.org/#/

4.4 Study Area Risk Assessment

Hinsdale County vulnerability to wildfires is of significant concern, with some areas of the planning area being at greater risk than others. High fuel loads in the planning area along with geographical and topographical features create the potential for both natural and human-caused fires that can result in the loss of life and property. These factors, combined with natural weather conditions common to the area, including periods of drought, low relative humidity, and periodic winds can result in frequent and sometimes catastrophic fires. Even the relatively flat parts of the county are not immune to fire; hot and sometimes windy weather combined with dry vegetation and population clusters can result in an increase in the number of ignitions. The following risk assessment relies on data and methodology developed by the Colorado State Forest Service 2022 Wildfire Risk Assessment (COWRA) Report and explores the numerous factors that comprise the overall risk and vulnerability of the county to wildfire.

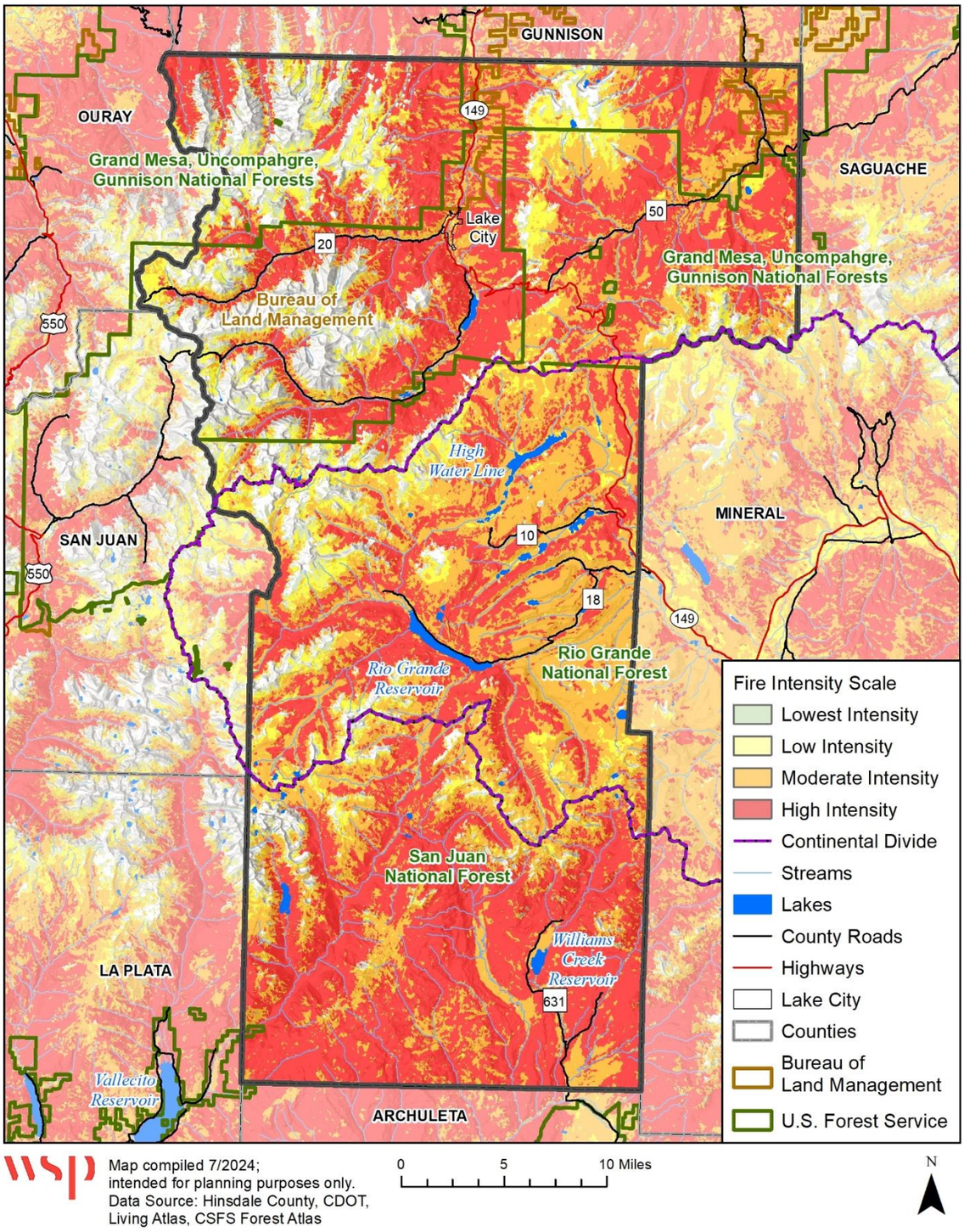
Hinsdale County, Colorado, faces significant wildfire risk due to its dense forests, including aspen, spruce-fir, mixed conifer, and ponderosa pine, which provide ample fuel for fires. Beetle infestations have increased the amount of dead and dying trees, driving up the fuel load in the county and further elevating the risk (see Figure 4-7). The county's rugged terrain can facilitate the rapid spread of fires, making them more challenging to control. Additionally, dry, windy conditions common in the region exacerbate fire behavior and increase the likelihood of ignition and rate of spread. 47% of Hinsdale County, or 302,860 acres is estimated to have a >60 chains/hour rate of spread, the highest rating score for this indicator (see Figure 4-8). See Appendix C - Glossary for description of chains/hour.

There are two primary fire types – surface fire and canopy fire. Canopy fire can be further subdivided into passive canopy fire and active canopy fire. A short description of each of these terms, as defined in CO-WRA, is provided below. Figure 4-9 displays fire type across the county.

- **Surface Fire** - A fire that spreads through surface fuel without consuming any overlying canopy fuel. Surface fuels include grass, timber litter, shrub/brush, slash and other dead or live vegetation within about 6 feet of the ground. 43.8% of the total study area is exposed to this type of fire.

- **Passive Canopy Fire** – A type of crown fire in which the crowns of individual trees or small groups of trees burn, but solid flaming in the canopy cannot be maintained except for short periods (Scott & Reinhardt, 2001). 34.2% of the total study area is exposed to this type of fire.

Figure 4-6 Hinsdale County Fire Intensity Scale



- **Conditional Crown Fire** – A type of crown fire in which an active crown fire is possible but one would not be predicted to initiate. Two outcomes are possible in that situation: surface fire if the fire starts in the stand as a surface fire, or active crown fire if fire enters the stand as an active crown fire. 1.6% of the total study area is exposed to this type of fire.

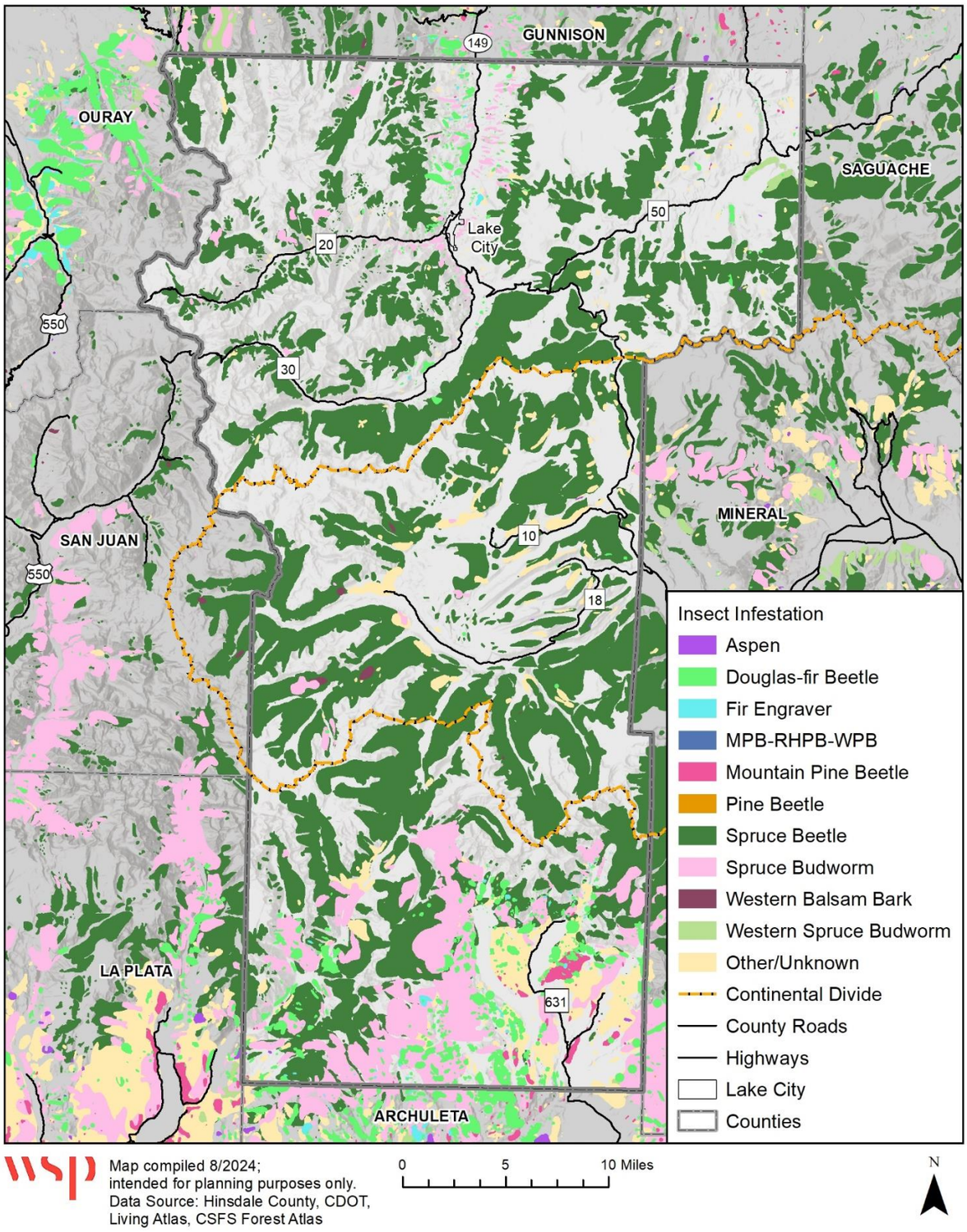
- **Active Canopy Fire** - A crown fire in which the entire fuel complex (canopy) is involved in flame, but the crowning phase remains dependent on heat released from surface fuel for continued spread (Scott & Reinhardt, 2001). 20.4% of the total study area is exposed to this type of fire.

4.4.1 Wildland Urban Interface Risk

Hinsdale County's wildfire vulnerability is increased by existing development, which encroaches into forested and annual grassland areas, typically referred to as the wildland-urban interface (WUI). While the extent of the WUI is rather limited compared to other mountain counties given the county's low population totals and slow rate of development, the overwhelming majority of development in the county is at increased risk to wildfire. Figure 4-10 displays the extent and

density of development in the WUI throughout Hinsdale County, with a focused view of Lake City in Figure 4-11.

Figure 4-7 Hinsdale County Insect Infestation by Species



As indicated above, all but 529 acres of the 5,055 acres in the WUI are in the Moderate to Highest Risk categories. The Fire Intensity Scale (FIS) quantifies potential fire intensity based on high to extreme weather conditions, fuels, and topography. It is similar to the Richter scale for earthquakes, providing a standard scale to measure potential wildfire intensity by magnitude (shown in Figure 4-6). Hinsdale County has 326,992 acres, 50.9% classified as high intensity which could produce very large flames, up to 150 feet high, and cause great potential for harm or damage to life and property (Hinsdale COWRA Report, 2022).

The phrase ‘wildfire risk to assets’ is a composite value created by combining the Burn Probability data with the actual value of what is at risk of destruction by fire. In this document, value is a measurement of the monetary worth of building and critical facility losses combined with the potential negative impacts to forested areas, riparian areas (wetlands, riverbanks, and their ecosystems), and watershed areas (land that drains water to rivers, lakes, etc.). Essentially, it assists in summarizing the overall risk that wildfire presents to the structural,

critical facility, and environmental assets present in Hinsdale County. Figure 4-12 and Figure 4-13 display the wildfire risk to assets for the County and the Town of Lake City, respectively.

Figure 4-8 Hinsdale County Rate of Wildfire Spread

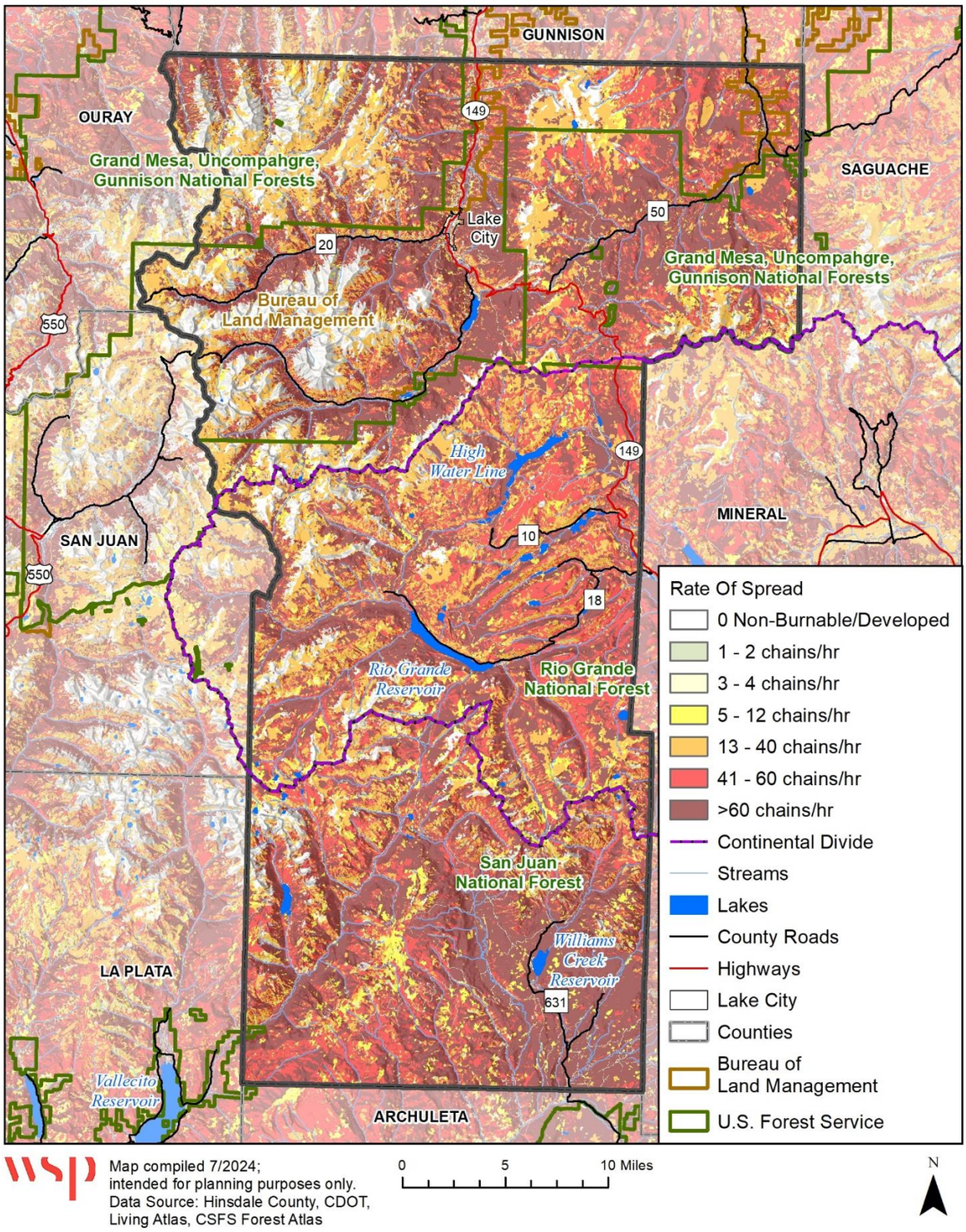


Figure 4-9 Hinsdale County Fire Type

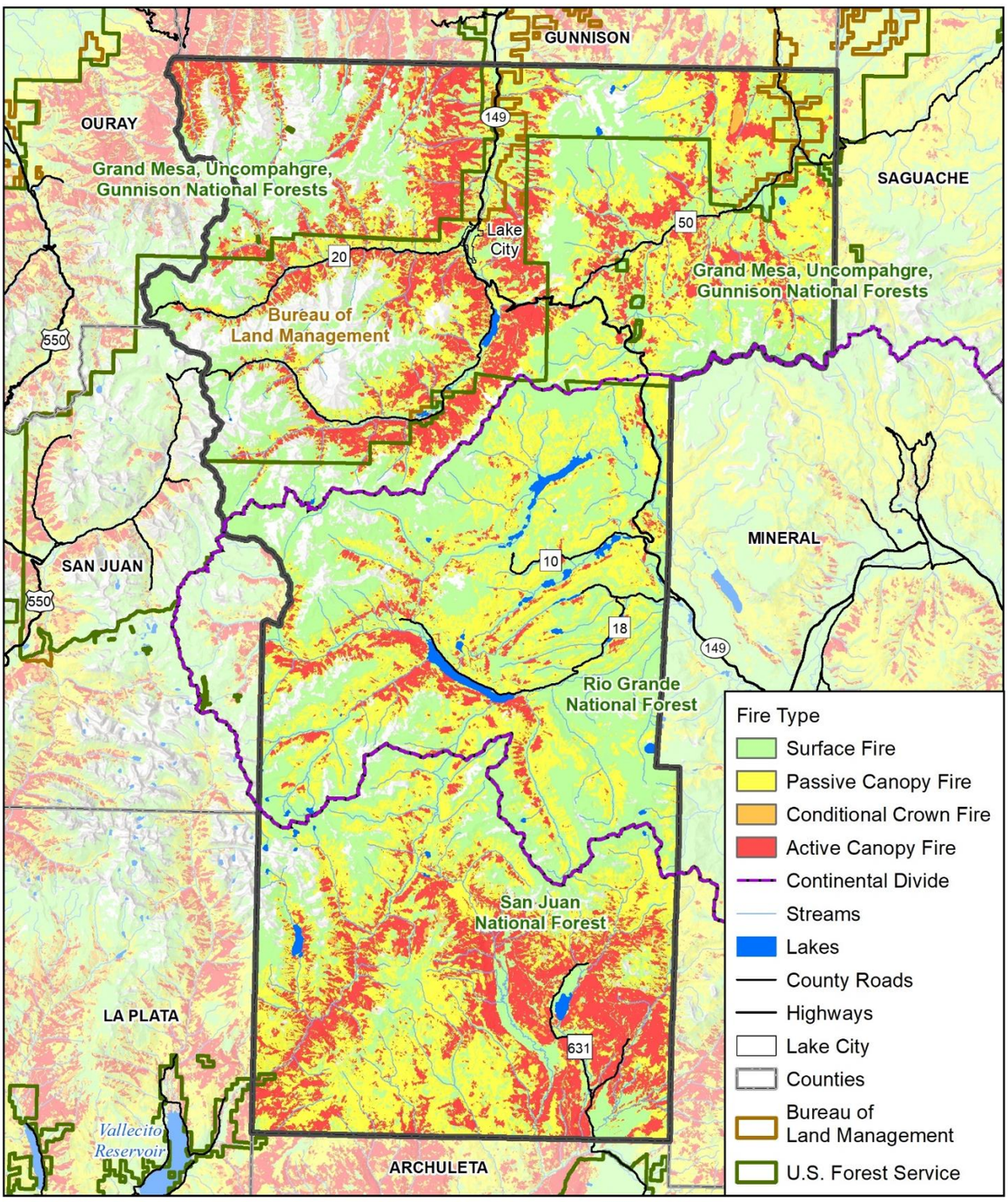


Figure 4-10 Hinsdale County Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

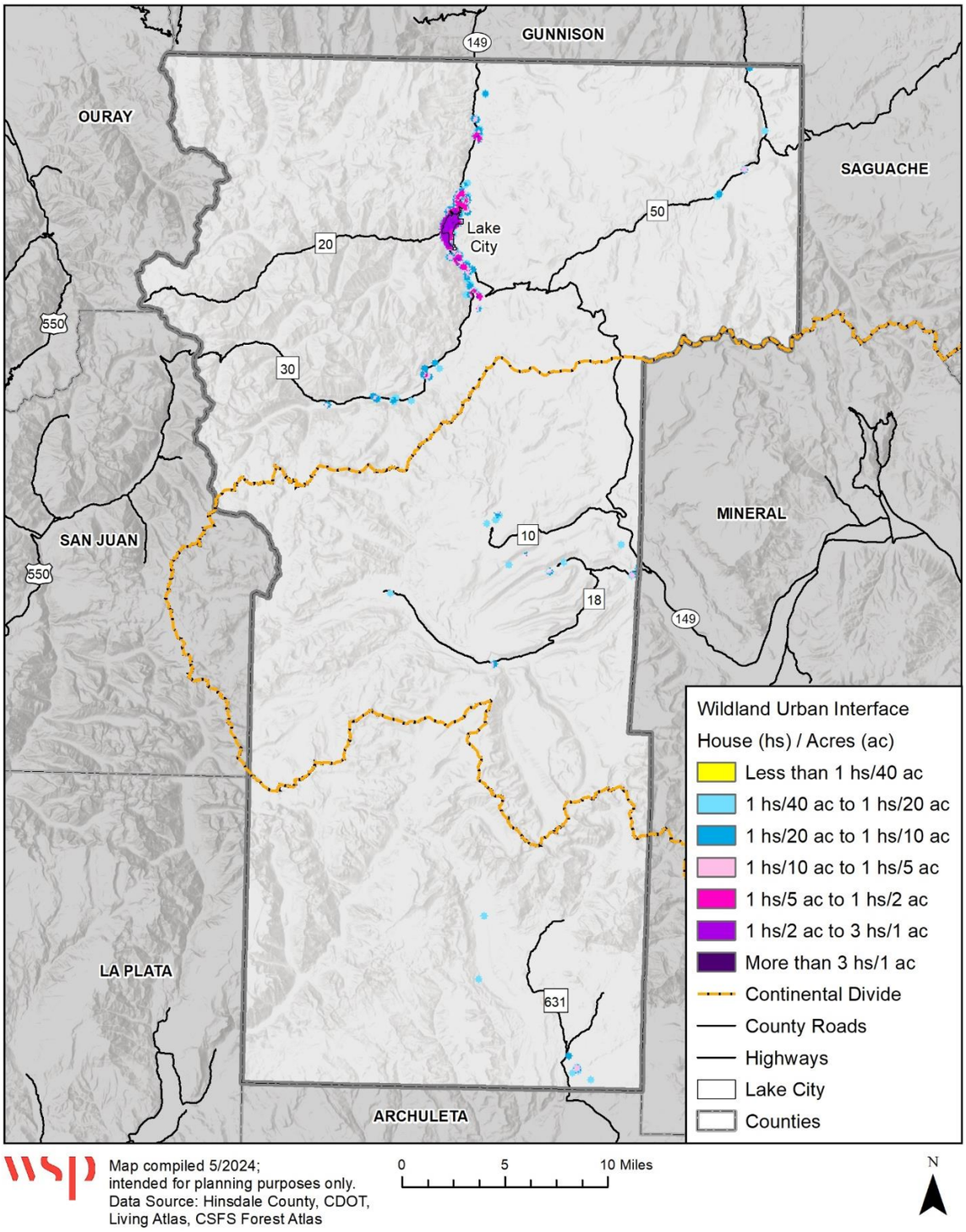


Figure 4-11 Lake City Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)

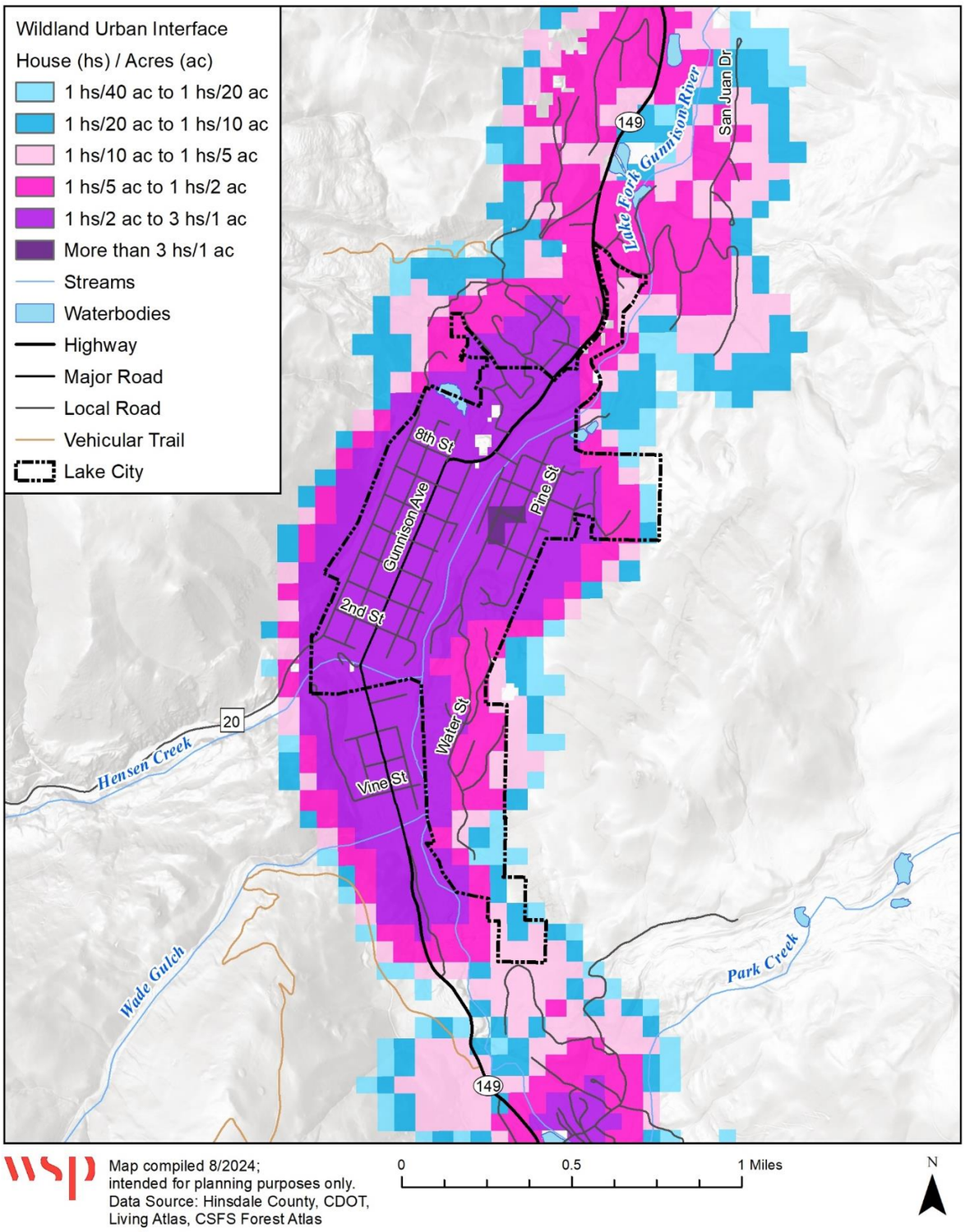


Figure 4-12 Hinsdale County Wildfire Risk to Assets

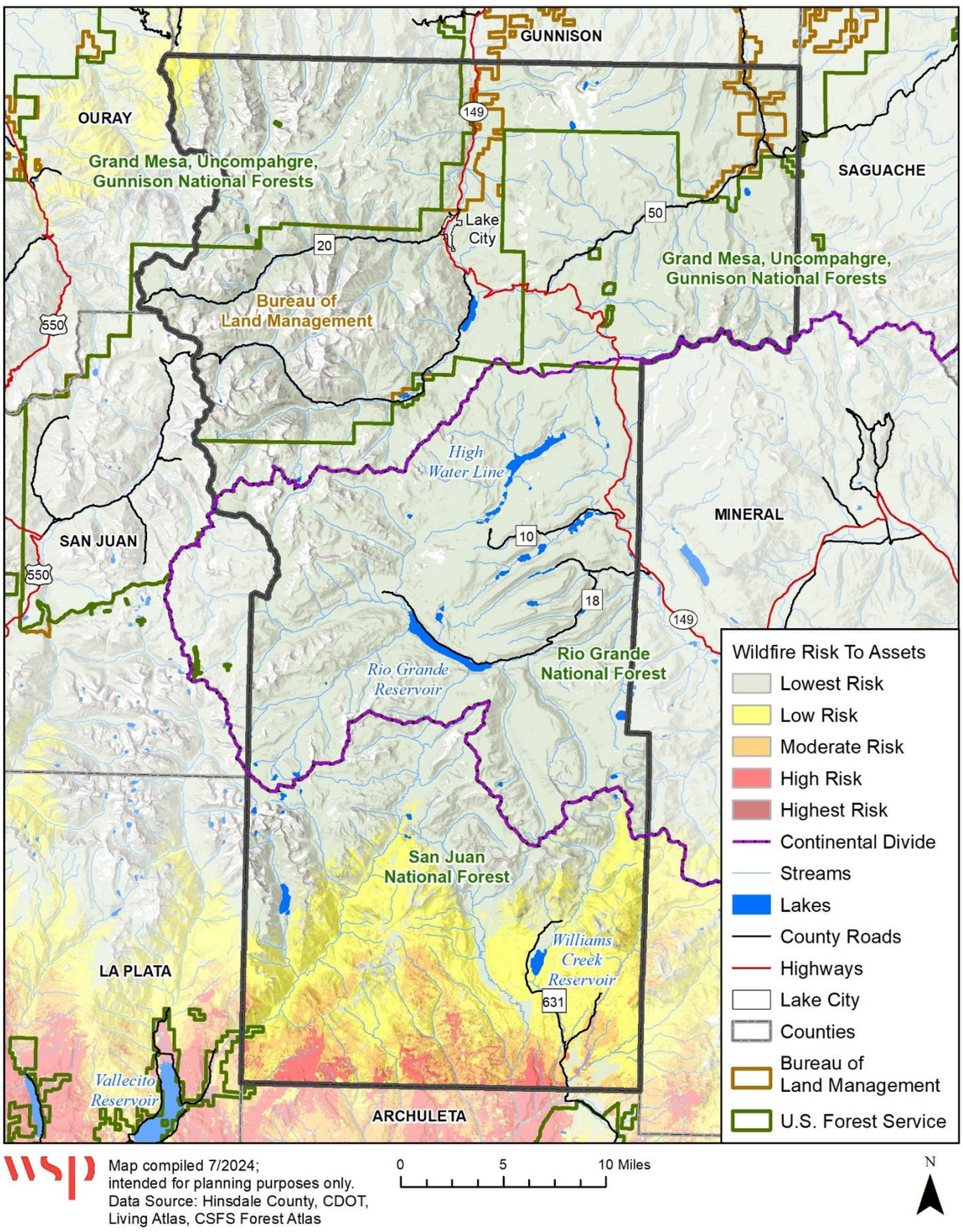


Figure 4-13 Lake City Wildfire Risk to Assets

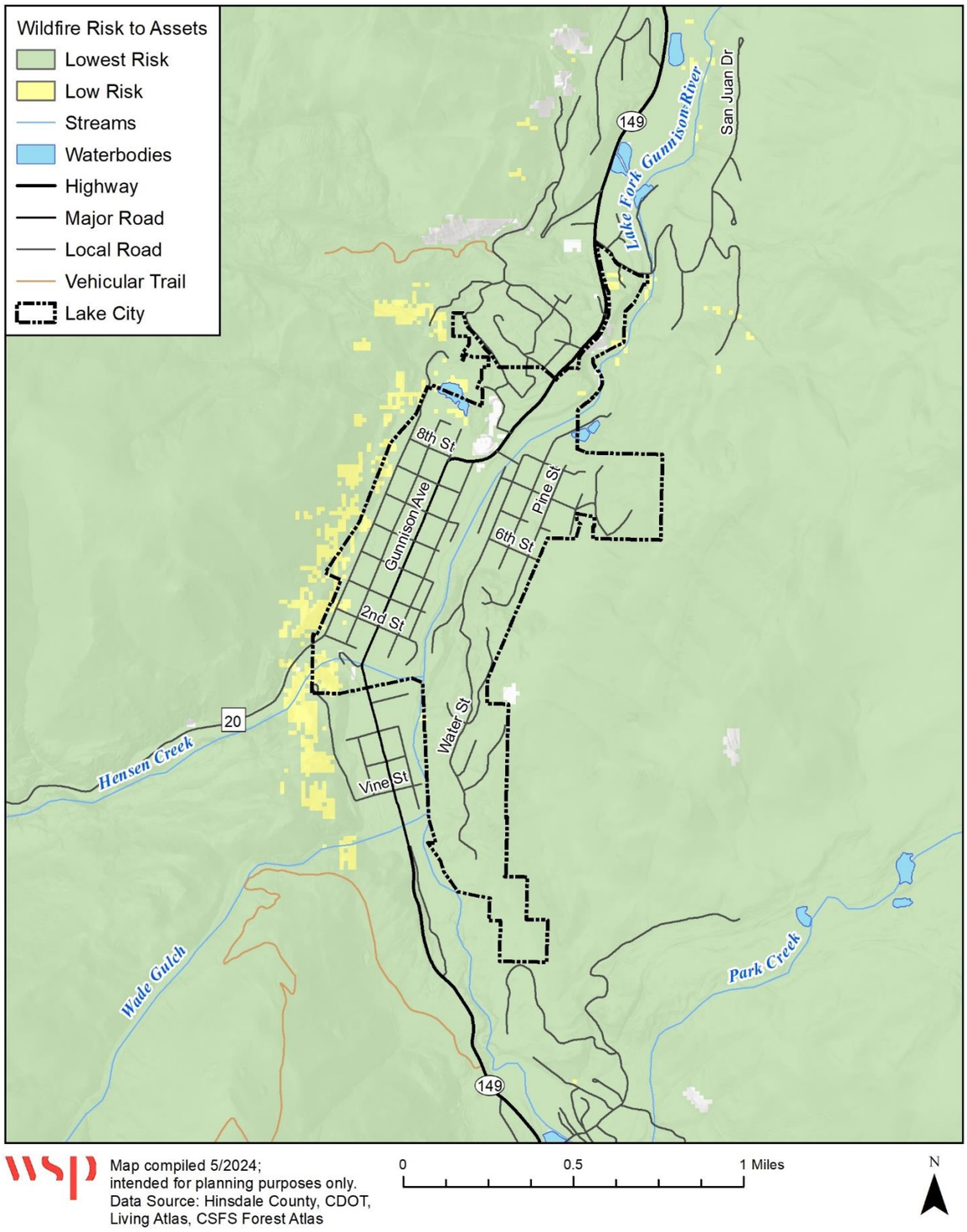


Figure 4-14 Hinsdale County Wildland Urban Interface Risk

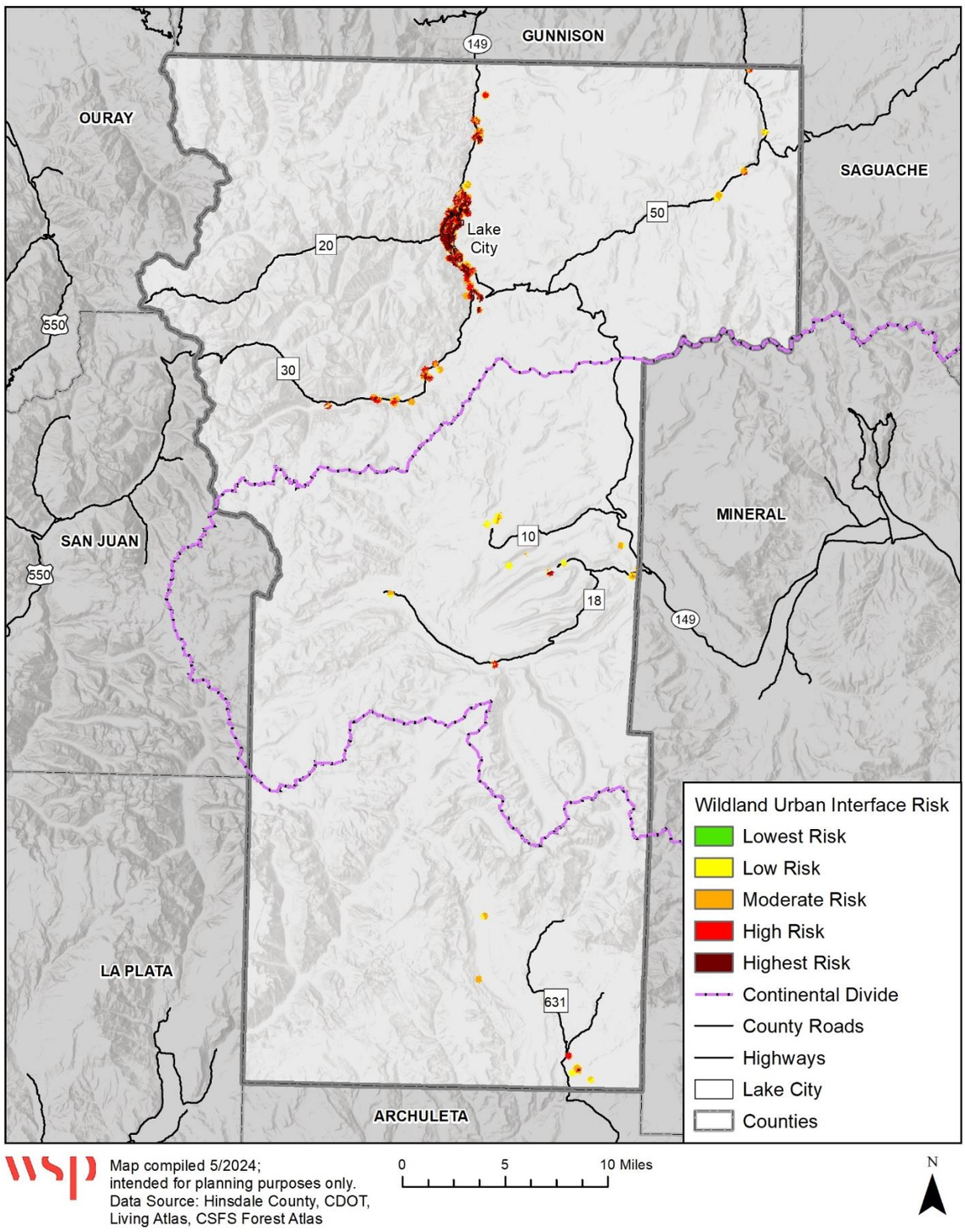


Figure 4-14 and Figure 4-15 show the WUI risk for the County and Lake City, which is a rating of the potential impact of a wildfire on people and their homes. The data used for this map combines the housing density data from the identified WUI areas with the predicted fire activity data (what the fire can do) and the capabilities of emergency response resources (what the fire agencies can do with the personnel and equipment they have or quickly obtain). According to CO-WRA, defensible space is another important factor in the overall risk situation for Hinsdale County. The defensible space within the WUI analysis context refers to the space that surrounds a specific building and can be used to define the hazard, or the exposure, to a wildfire occurrence. In this defensible space area, natural and manmade fuels are treated, cleared or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire near structures and thereby seek to lessen the likelihood that structure will burn. This rating is shown for Lake City in Figure 4-16.

Based on all evaluated data described above and within the 2025 Hinsdale County HMP, the CWPP Study Area Risk Assessment indicates that wildfire risk in the county is high. Historically the county experiences relatively smaller wildfires every three or four years, with a major damaging fire every 8-10 years or longer. Past wildfires in the County have not resulted in

fatalities, however they are always a possibility. Significant evacuation and sheltering planning and efforts may be required if a fire occurs in the vicinity of Lake City, in the future.

4.5 Accomplishments Since Previous CWPP

The County put a greater focus on wildfire education to the community, reduced fees for wildfire mitigation debris to encourage work, rented a tub grinder to reduce debris pile (2021), recruited more wildland fire volunteers, created program to incentivize debris management for wildfire mitigation (2022), secured funding to update CWPP, presented a “Wildfire 101” class to the community, increased the Wildland Fire Response Team by 2 members (2023), Initiated update of HMP, Refine, update, and develop plans and exercises to enhance the resiliency of Hinsdale County, Fire mitigation and trail work on Red Mountain Trail (2024). New projects were developed in coordination with the 2024 Hazard Mitigation Plan revision and broader planning process and are described in Section 5.

Figure 4-15 Lake City Wildland Urban Interface Risk

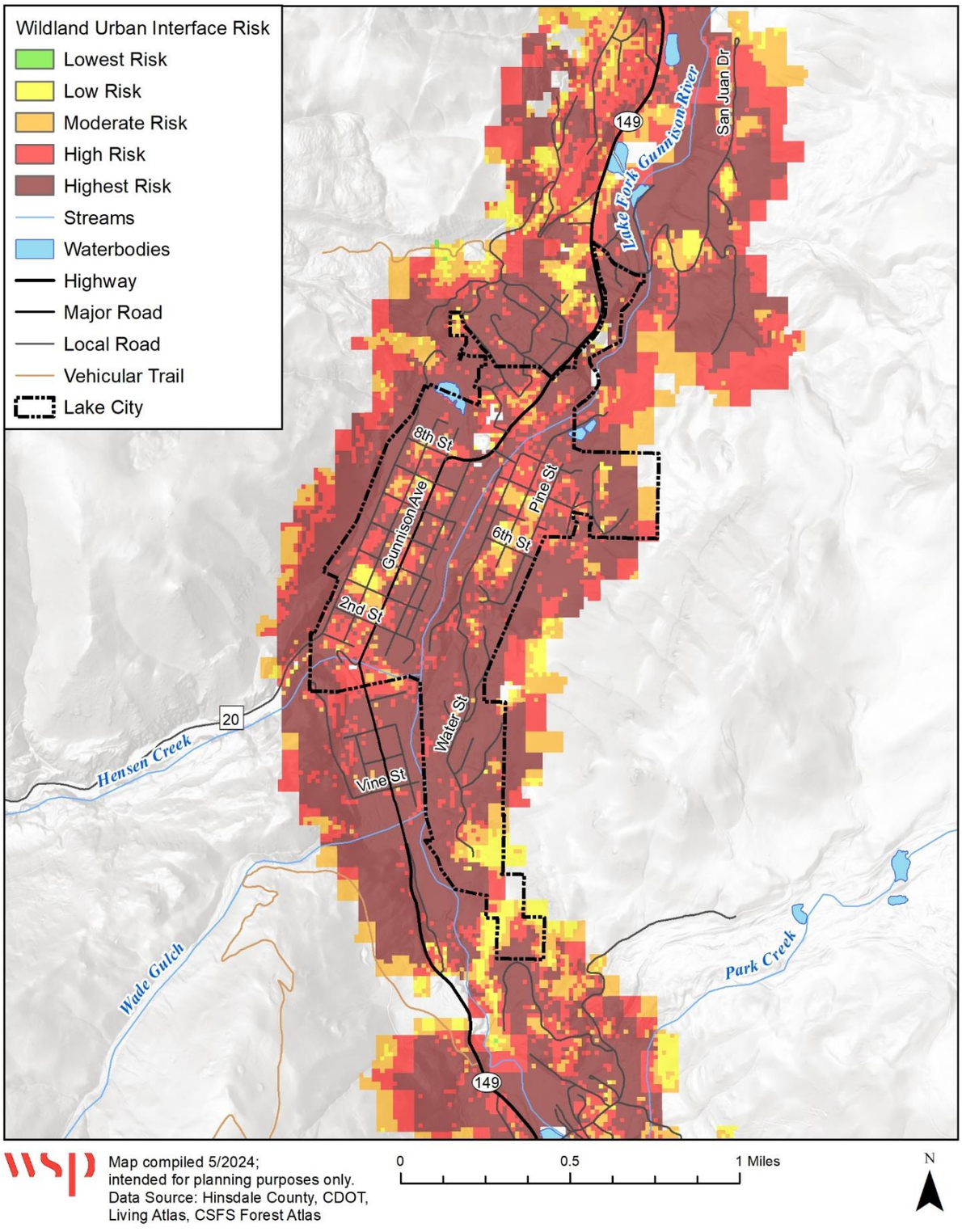
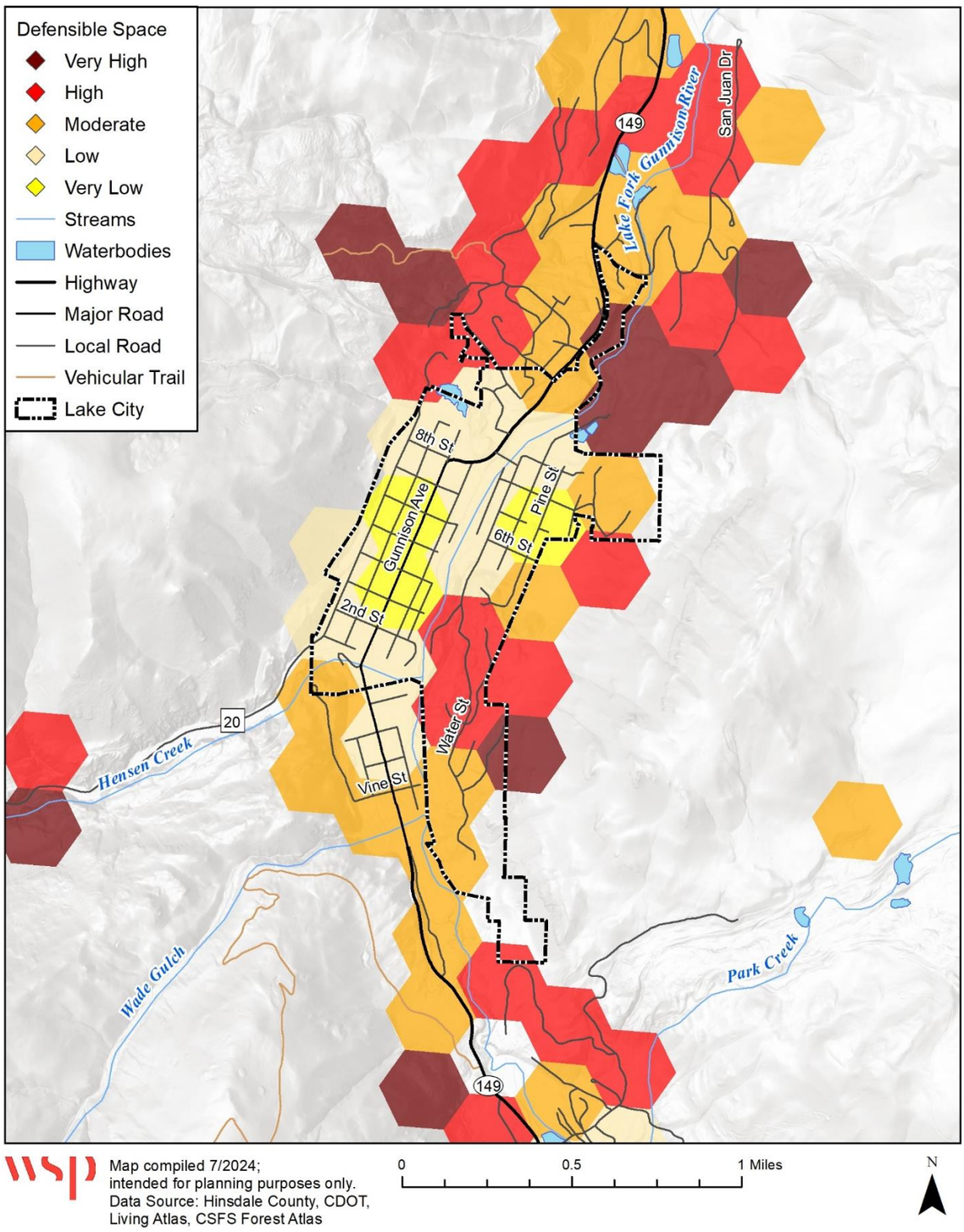


Figure 4-16 Lake City Wildfire Defensible Space



5 RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

The CWPP is aimed to carefully explore the main drivers of destructive wildfire, and the main risk factors associated with wildfire in the Study Area. The extent and impacts of wildfire will depend significantly on contributing influences such as ignition source, different drivers, and human factors, such as wildfire preparedness efforts that have reduced overall risk and suppression and response efforts that influence how quickly a wildfire is brought under control.

Projects and programs described in this section will seek to reduce the probability of human-caused ignitions and improve detection time for both natural and human-caused ignitions. By addressing these human factors, wildfire risk can be mitigated. Recommendations in this section will seek to improve emergency response and suppression capacity as broadly as possible, while also improving community awareness of and engagement with wildfire risk.

While the primary drivers of wildfire behavior are weather, topography, and fuels, only fuels can be meaningfully modified. Projects and programs to reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health are pursued in this section along with fuels modification surrounding residential property, including the construction materials of the structures themselves. Many of the basic wildfire hazard issues such as poor access (i.e., one way ingress and egress), steep/narrow road grades, cul-de-sac diameter, vegetative flammability, building construction, roofing materials, and survivable space were not in effect when the majority of the structures in Hinsdale County were constructed. Encouraging improvements in older developments and structures is an important function of this plan.

During the development of the CWPP, regular public meetings were held to solicit input. Some of the recommendations were conceived by community members, and the Core Team credits those participating community members for many valuable ideas. Conceptual projects were presented to community members, which were refined and developed into projects with their input.

Table 5-1 Wildfire Mitigation Projects - 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan

Project No.	Action Description	Lead and Partner Agencies	Estimated Cost & Potential Funding	Timeline	2025 Status & Implementation Notes
2	Based on a wildfire vulnerability assessment, encourage home hardening and coordinate private lands hazardous fuels reduction projects identified in Hinsdale County CWPP.	**Hinsdale County Emergency Services,** Colorado State Forest Service, West Region Wildfire Council, Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council, Wildfire Adapted Partnership (WAP)	Cost variable by project. Funding RWEACT, CSFS, WRWC, WAP, FEMA HMA	Annual	Continuous. Annual public information meetings for homeowners (with partners); Hinsdale County sponsors reduced cost debris mitigation chipping pile (partially funded by CSFS); individuals and specific subdivisions working directly with partners; updating CWPP as part of the 2024-2025 process.
3	Coordinate and partner on fire mitigation projects on public, private, and federal lands identified in the CWPP and federal forest management plans.	**Hinsdale County Emergency Services,** Colorado State Forest Service, U.S. Forest Service, BLM, WRWC, Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative	Low cost. County staff time, funding RWEACT, CSFS, WAP, USFS, BLM	Annual	Continuous. The Powderhorn EA is completed. Lake San Cristobal Fuels Reduction EA is in progress.
4	Utilize Emergency Management and Fire District Management and regional partners to educate local governments, builders, architects and other stakeholders about home hardening construction techniques, materials, and private contractors who are able to complete mitigation projects on homeowners' properties. Coordinate with programs such as Firewise and WRWC's Wildfire Ready Home.	**Hinsdale County Emergency Services & Lake City Fire District,** Colorado State Forest Service and regional nonprofit organizations (WRWC, GBC, WAP)	Cost variable by project. West Region Wildfire Council, Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council, Wildfire Adapted Partnership, CSFS	Annual	Continuous. Have held 2 or 3 public meetings (at theatre); published preparedness booklet (2019). The Colorado State Forest Service and WRWC have capabilities to provide parcel-based risk assessments and work with HOAs on recommended improvements to reduce risk. WRWC actively engages with Site Visits and provides Wildfire Ready Home Reports for residents.
14	Obtain a chipper for the landfill and establish a chipping program to reduce wildfire fuel loads and encourage defensible space	**Hinsdale County Administration**	$5-10k. Town general fund, CSFS	2-3 years	In Progress. Community chipping pile located at Transfer Station; annual tub grinder brought in to address pile
29	Outreach for West Region Wildfire Council's new Wildfire Ready Home Program. The WRH program includes a free site visit for home/landowners and a list of recommendations to reduce wildfire risk. If homeowners complete required tasks, they get a certificate they can share with their insurance agent. Also people can see if they qualify for WRWC's vegetation management program. It's a cost-share program, or WRWC can pay 100% of the cost in some cases.	**WRWC,** Hinsdale County Emergency Services	$1,000. WRWC, County general fund	2-3 years	New in 2025. Integrate with Hinsdale County's own site visits

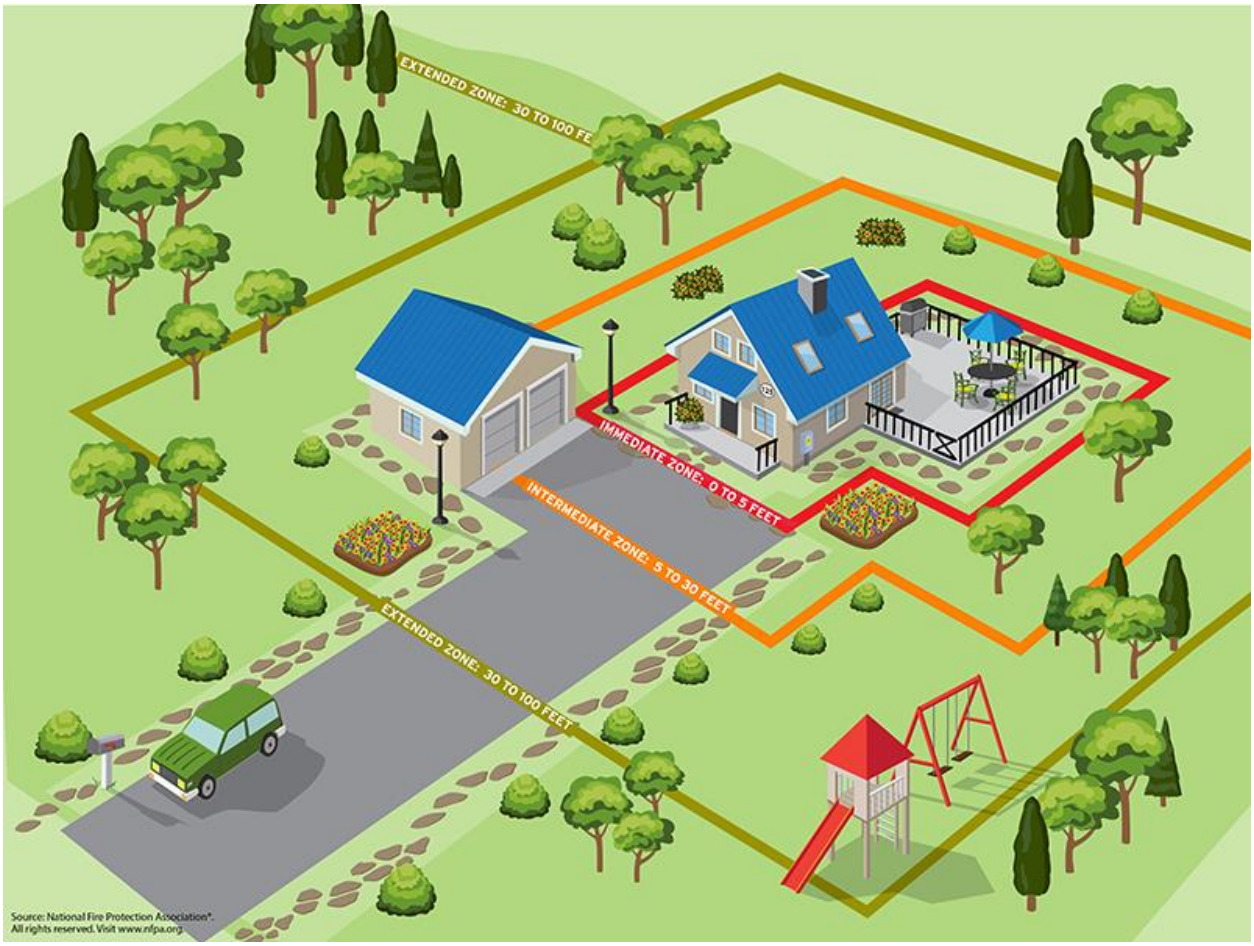
Project No.	Action Description	Lead and Partner Agencies	Estimated Cost & Potential Funding	Timeline	2025 Status & Implementation Notes
32	PODS lines - Slumgullion Pass. Identify future treatment on existing fuel treatments on slumgullion pass that will continue to provide fuel mitigation along identified PODS lines as a secondary escape route to the south of Lake city as the forest regenerates. Coordinate with road and bridges to mitigate snow drifting issues.	**Hinsdale County Emergency Services,** USFS, CSFS		3-20 years	New in 2025.
38	Mitigate Hazardous fuels on Ingress/Egress Routes. 1. Fuels management along evacuation routes 2. fuels management along PODs lines	**Hinsdale County Road & Bridge,** CSFS, WRWC, CDOT, USDOT	High. CSFS, FEMA, WRWC	2-3 years	New in 2025.

5.1 Home Ignition Zone

Recent research into the cause for loss of homes during wildfires indicates that home ignitability and immediately adjacent wildland fuels, are the principal causes of home losses during wildland/urban interface fires. Key items are flammable roofing materials (e.g. cedar shingles) and the presence of burnable vegetation (e.g. ornamental trees, shrubs, wood piles, and pine needle accumulation) immediately adjacent to homes (Cohen, 1999).

The home ignition zone (Figure 5-1) includes a home and its immediate surroundings within 100 to 200 feet of the structure. Fuel conditions within this zone, to a large degree, will determine whether a home will survive a wildfire. Firebrands lofted from extreme wildfires must land on a structure to be an effective ignition source. How far firebrands travel, a home's exterior materials, design and fuels in the home ignition zone determine its ignition potential from firebrands. However, high intensity fire behavior beyond the home ignition zone generally does not transfer enough energy directly to ignite a wooden structure.

Figure 5-1 Home Ignition Zone



Source: National Fire Protection Association (www.nfpa.org)

The factors influencing structural ignitability in the WUI include the following (hyperlinked to external information sources):

- **Structural Materials**: The type of materials used in the construction of a structure, such as wood, metal, or other materials, can significantly affect ignitability.
- **Design and Layout**: The design and layout of a structure, including its height, orientation, and proximity to flammable materials, can influence its ignitability.
- **Exposure to Flames and Firebrands**: The distance and angle of exposure to flames and firebrands from wildfires can determine the likelihood of ignition.
- **Home Ignition Zone (HIZ)**: The area around a home that is susceptible to ignition from wildland fires, including flammable vegetation and embers, is crucial for understanding structural ignitability.
- **Homeowner Actions**: Homeowners can take proactive measures to reduce the risk of ignition by improving their homes' design, using fire-resistant materials, and maintaining a defensible space around their property.

By understanding these factors, property owners can implement strategies to reduce the risk of structural ignitability in the WUI, thereby enhancing the safety of their homes and communities.

The primary and ultimate responsibility for home wildfire protection lies with private homeowners, not public land management agencies. Home Ignition Zone mitigation, or defensible space and home hardening, entails efforts to reduce flammable materials and vegetation surrounding structures, modify building features and materials, and promote good residential maintenance practices. This includes insuring that there are no combustible materials like concentrations of pine needles, dry grass, hay or straw, firewood, deck furniture, open windows, open vents, household trash, flammable materials such as gasoline, diesel or paint thinners, paper boxes, and fabrics near the structure or in the home ignition zone for fire brands to land on. In the past few years research has found that a significant number of homes destroyed in wildfires burned as the result of the presence of combustible materials within the home ignition zone.

In addition to promoting the creation and maintenance of hardened homes and defensible space, users of the CWPP should aim to educate the public on what quality defensible space consists of, to correct this gap between residents' estimation of their own defensible space, versus the observations of trained professionals.

Establishing defensible space around private residences is a high priority recommendation for all residents living in Hinsdale County, as it can improve the probability of structures surviving wildfire flame impingement, radiant heat, and ember cast.

5.2 Hazardous Fuels Reduction

Implementing a comprehensive fuels reduction plan in Hinsdale County is crucial for mitigating wildfire risks and protecting communities. By engaging residents, managing vegetation, establishing fuel breaks, and collaborating with agencies, Hinsdale County can enhance its resilience to wildfires while maintaining the health of its forest ecosystems.

When a wildfire grows, the primary factors of that growth are fuels, weather, and topography. Of these factors, only fuels (availability, arrangement, and condition) can be effectively modified to impact wildfire behavior. Hazardous fuels reduction and forest restoration efforts are activities undertaken to alter the quantity, structure, and continuity of vegetation with the goal of reducing wildfire intensity and overall burn severity.

Community engagement and input throughout the CWPP process and via the community survey signaled strong support for hazardous fuels reduction projects Road are accessible and effective locations for fuels reduction treatments. During fuels reduction implementation, subject matter experts should be consulted. Research has shown that large-scale thinning in forests can produce unintended results when fuel reductions are poorly planned or executed. Other negative impacts may include harming landscapes by introducing non-native species during project implementation. Scaling down the scope of work or dividing a project into smaller projects to be pursued over a longer timeline may serve as an effective project management approach.

5.3 Community Engagement and Education

The West Region Wildfire Council (WRWC) is a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing wildfire risk and increasing resilience throughout Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray, and San Miguel counties. Through education, mitigation, and strategic partnerships, they empower residents, landowners, and stakeholders to take proactive steps in protecting lives, property, and natural resources from the growing threat of wildfire. By engaging with the community, Hinsdale County can enhance the safety of residents and properties with strategic fuels management.

Mitigation Action 29 in Hinsdale County HMP aims to conduct outreach for the WRWC's new Wildfire Ready Home Program (WRH). The WRH program includes a free site visit for home/landowners and a list of recommendations to reduce wildfire risk. If homeowners complete required tasks, they get a certificate they can share with their insurance agent. Community members can inquire if they qualify for WRWC's vegetation management program. It's a cost-share program, or WRWC may pay 100% of the cost in some cases.

5.4 Recommendations for Fuel Treatments and Ecological Restoration Objectives

RECOMMENDATION – FUEL TREATMENTS

The BLM Gunnison Field Office proposes to address the hazardous fuels around the town of Lake City, Colorado. The proposed treatment area covers 14,821 total acres including 12,560 acres of BLM lands. The proposed action is to develop an umbrella vegetation management program that will cover a wide range of vegetation treatment types. Fuel treatments within the planning area would be implemented over the next 15 years. In the planning area, approximately 6,000 acres will be targeted for treatments over 15 years. The number of acres treated over the life of the project will maintain 'sufficient mapped habitat' for Canada lynx (Lynx canadensis) so that at least 70 percent of mapped lynx habitat is retained within the Whitecross Mountain Lynx Analysis Unit (LAU) and that no more than 15 percent of mapped lynx habitat in the LAU will be changed to unsuitable condition within a decade. These thresholds would be determined based on treatments that are implemented as a result of this project and by wildfire

or other actions that convert forests to 'stand initiation structural stage'* within the LAU. Planned treatment acres may not exceed 2,000 acres of treatments per year. Two thousand acres of treatment is 16 percent of the BLM lands in the project area. Unplanned vegetation disturbance (e.g., wildfire, natural fire, and blowdowns) would not be incorporated into this 2,000-acre ceiling. https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2025398/570

* During the stand initiation stage, the forest may be dominated by smaller growth where shrubs may grow the fastest, often outcompeting trees for sunlight until the trees grow taller than the shrubs.

RECOMMENDATION – FUEL TREATMENT METHODS FOR HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

Ensure that fuel reduction practices support the long-term health and resilience of forest ecosystems. Vegetation Management will be accomplished using these three methods:

- **Thinning**: Reduce tree density in forested areas, forest harvesting, and focusing on removing dead and dying trees affected by spruce bark beetle and mountain pine beetle infestation.
- **Prescribed Burns**: Implement controlled burns to safely reduce accumulated vegetation and mimic natural fire cycles.
- **Mechanical Removal**: Use manage flammable brush, undergrowth, and trees in high-risk zones, particularly near residential areas and critical infrastructure.

5.4.1 Priority Project Areas for Land Managers (location specific)

The County's Federal partners in mitigation activities are managing an area specific list of fuels treatment projects for future implementation in the county. The projects that may occur include brush and forest thinning, forest health reduction, low intensity burning and pile burning. The identified project areas include Cebolla, Henson, Hermit Lakes, Lost Trail, Lower Lake Fork, Oleo, Pearl Lakes, Piedra/Palisades, Ptarmigan Meadows, Upper Lake Fork, and S Lazy U.

5.4.2 Roadway Fuels Reduction Prioritization

Prioritizing roadways for roadside fuel break treatment may be a challenging endeavor. Primary roads are critical in facilitating the safe movement of high volumes of evacuees and first responders, and they represent effective strategic opportunities for wildfire containment and control than community roads. Non-survivable environments on primary roads pose serious risks to life; however, depending on the location and direction of spread of a wildfire, there may be viable, alternative routing options for evacuees and first responders.

Community roads serve a different but equally critical importance. Although they usually facilitate the safe movement of lower numbers of evacuees and first responders, community roads often represent smaller-scale strategic opportunities for wildfire containment and control. Community roads are often the sole egress and access route for evacuees and first responders. Thus, non-survivable community roads represent a more finite, but more profound life safety risk.

Given the distinct risk factors associated with road types, the CWPP does not factor road types into its prioritization methodology. Instead, roadway treatments are categorized by the three

roadway types. These categories are given equal prioritization in the CWPP, and individual roadways are prioritized within their category.

5.4.3 Recommendations for Roadside Fuel Treatments

Fuel maintenance utilizing strategies such as controlled burns, forest thinning, forest harvesting, mowing, forest thinning, cattle grazing, and other means is a necessary replacement to uncontrolled wildland fires when there are threats to human habitation. Fuel is the only factor that can be modified with human intervention. Continuing to monitor and identify treatment on Slumgullion Pass is a mitigation action listed in the 2025 Hinsdale HMP. Further, it is recommended that Hinsdale County develops a method and schedule for the prioritization of roads identified for fuels reduction treatments.

5.4.4 Logistics of Fuel Treatments

Implementing fuel treatments in Hinsdale County involves several logistical considerations to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. The planning and coordination phase is crucial, requiring the engagement of local stakeholders, including residents, the Colorado State Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, and local fire districts. Using GIS technology to map high-risk areas and prioritize treatment zones based on risk assessments is essential for targeted treatments. A fuel treatment schedule includes risk assessments conducted from January to March using GIS tools and assessment teams. Thinning operations take place from April to September, utilizing equipment and trained personnel. Prescribed burns are scheduled for October to November, involving fire management teams and weather monitoring. Mechanical removal is carried out year-round with chippers and brush cutters. Community education and monitoring are continuous efforts.

5.4.5 Fuels Reduction

Improving survivable space within the home ignition zone will create significant amounts of slash and combustible residue. Larger material may be used as firewood and smaller slash material can be disposed of in the Hinsdale County Landfill. Tub grinding the slash on site at the landfill can significantly reduce the volume before the slash is buried or used for landscaping purposes such as mulch. The Ptarmigan Meadows POA has established a slash disposal concentration point for wildfire hazard mitigation waste. The large pile will be burned during the winter following a heavy snowfall.

Other communities in the State have created locations where wildfire mitigation slash was concentrated and then chipped for mulch. These options should be considered along with more local site-specific opportunities to provide reasonable means for slash disposal following wildfire mitigation work.

It is recommended that Hinsdale County develop approximate timelines for the implementation and completion of fuels reduction activities.

5.5 Recommendations for Fire Agency and Partner Organizations

Many WUIs within Hinsdale County are not within a fire protection district (HCFPD). This arrangement leaves many landowners with no formal commitments for fire protection. Forming a new district or joining an adjacent fire protection district are both options to solve this challenge.

Additionally, the Fire Protection agencies in Hinsdale County, partner organizations (including non-governmental organizations, volunteer groups, and faith-based organizations), local businesses, and other stakeholders are encouraged to leverage existing and develop new partnerships to deepen local collaboration and work toward greater resilience and self-sufficiency for the prevention and mitigation of future wildland fires. An example project includes the identification of needed improvements in older developments and structures that includes specific mitigation actions.

5.6 Evacuation Planning and Capacity

Please see the Hinsdale County Evacuation and Re-Entry Plan, 2019. This evacuation and re-entry plan is an Annex to the County's Emergency Operations Plan and describes provisions being made to ensure the safe and orderly evacuation of people threatened by hazards the jurisdiction might face. Hinsdale County utilizes the Genesys mass communication and notification system to alert residents about evacuations and provide critical wildfire information.

5.7 Accessibility and Navigability for Firefighters

Hinsdale County has two major routes for ingress and egress and most of the neighborhoods only have one means of ingress/egress. Firefighters create tactical plans on an incident-by-incident basis to manage the fire in areas with limited ingress and egress. Additionally, the firefighters use flagger's colored tape attached to posts, rocks, and tree branches to indicate travel routes in areas with limited or no road signs.

5.8 Project Funding and Grants

Hinsdale County routinely seeks out funding opportunities and grants to support fuels reduction projects and community preparedness initiatives such as the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation (FRWRM) grant, administered by the Colorado State Forest Service and the Wildfire Mitigation Outreach Grant Program, established by the Colorado General Assembly in 2022.

Hinsdale County recently received a grant award from the Colorado Natural Disaster Mitigation Enterprise (NDME) for wildfire mitigation projects. Part of this funding will sustain the Community Chipping program for three years and will also allow for some additional mitigation projects on county lands (road clearance, hazard tree reduction).

6 Plan Implementation and Maintenance

The CWPP is a strategic planning document that is developed and approved by the Core Planning Team. An important component of the development process includes efforts by a CWPP Implementation Team that will move the plan forward, implement the mitigation recommendations, and maintain the plan as the characteristics of the WUI areas change through time and vegetation fuel projects are completed.

The CWPP will be updated periodically and revised on a five (5) year cycle or whenever an incident or exercise has occurred that results in the identification of planning gaps, policy changes, or major operational changes.

6.1 Plan Implementation

Implementing the CWPP involves a collaborative and strategic approach to reduce wildfire risks and enhance community safety. Through a proactive approach, this CWPP may significantly reduce wildfire risks and enhance resilience. Hinsdale County uses a five (5) step implementation process:

1. Engage the Community
    - Collaboration: engaging with local governments, fire departments, land management agencies, and residents.
    - Education: Raise awareness about wildfire risks and the importance of mitigation efforts.
    - Inclusivity: Ensure diverse community voices are heard to address unique local needs.

2. Assess Risks and Priorities
    - Risk Mapping: Identify high-risk areas through fire behavior models and historical data.
    - Asset Identification: Highlight critical infrastructure, homes, and natural resources that need protection.
    - Prioritization: Focus on areas with the greatest risk and potential impact.

3. Develop and Finalize the Plan
    - Mitigation Strategies: Include actions such as creating defensible spaces, fuel reduction, and improving building codes.
    - Emergency Preparedness: Outline evacuation routes, communication plans, and emergency response protocols.
    - Community Input: Review and refine the plan with feedback from stakeholders.

4. Implement Mitigation Actions
    - Fuel Management: Conduct controlled burns, vegetation and forest thinning, forest harvesting, and debris removal.
    - Infrastructure Improvements: Harden homes and critical facilities against fire.
    - Volunteer Programs: Encourage community participation in fire prevention activities.

5. Monitor, Evaluate, and Update
    - Regular Reviews: Assess the effectiveness of implemented measures and adjust as needed.
    - Adaptation: Incorporate new technologies, data, and lessons learned from recent wildfires.

- Ongoing Engagement: Keep the community informed and involved in updates.

6.2 Monitoring

The CWPP will be continuously monitored for effectiveness. Hinsdale County and the local Fire Protection Districts share responsibility for observing various conditions and risks in the County that may signify the need to implement activities or broad elements of the CWPP on different timelines. Additionally, these agencies share responsibility for identifying and documenting the effectiveness of CWPP strategies and activities measured against performance metrics, and to share that information with the Core Planning Team. Further, the Core Planning Team will support on-going engagement with communities and stakeholders to gather feedback on mitigation effectiveness through open communication channels.

6.3 Evaluating

The CWPP will be evaluated for its effectiveness to reduce wildfire risk and increase community safety through performance metrics established by the Core Planning Team. The performance metrics are refreshed during each CWPP formal revision to meet the current needs of the communities in the County and changes to local or regional wildfire risks.

Additionally, elements in the CWPP may be included in periodic exercises conducted to evaluate other plans and processes, such as the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). Tabletop exercises that have a wildfire scenario lend particularly well to creating opportunities for discussion on CWPP strategies and mitigation activities. After-Action Reports and Improvement Plans (AAR/IP) created following real world incidents and exercises may serve as sources of insightful information about the performance of CWPP-based strategies.

6.3.1 Lessons Learned

Fortunately, the only large fire that has occurred recently in Hinsdale County was the West Fork Complex in 2013 that impacted the south end of the county. Lessons learned from that incident informed the process for the development of an alert and warning plan and an evacuation plan, as well as the property assessments program.

6.4 Updates and Revisions

The CWPP will be updated and revised whenever an incident or exercise has occurred that results in the identification of planning gaps, policy or regulation changes, or major operational changes for the CWPP. Informal updates will occur as needed for minor changes. Formal reviews and revisions of the CWPP will occur on a five (5) year schedule and will be performed by the Core Planning Team. Following updates or revisions, recipients on the CWPP distribution list will be notified of changes made and provided with updated information.

6.5 Training and Exercises

CWPP-based training and exercises are scheduled and facilitated according to the County's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Program (MYTEP) and at the discretion of the Core Planning Team, OEM, and other partner agencies.

APPENDIX A - REFERENCES

American Community Survey (ACS) https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) https://www.bls.gov/

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/home

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) https://www.cdc.gov/

Community and Parcel Level Wildfire Risk Assessment (2018) https://research.fs.usda.gov/rmrs/centers/wire

Community Wildlife Protection Plans https://csfs.colostate.edu/wildfire-mitigation/community-wildfire-protection-plans

Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) https://www.codot.gov/

Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management https://dhsem.colorado.gov/

Colorado Division of Water Resources https://dwr.colorado.gov/

Colorado Forest Action Plan (2020) https://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-action-plan/

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Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) https://csfs.colostate.edu/

Colorado State Forest Service 2022 Wildfire Risk Assessment (CO-WRA) https://csfs.colostate.edu/trees/co-wra/

Colorado Parks and Wildlife https://cpw.state.co.us/

Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy https://www.doi.gov/wildlandfire/policy

Federal Wildland Fire Occurrence Database https://www.nifc.gov/fire-information

Hinsdale County Assessor Data https://hinsdalecounty.colorado.gov/assessors-office

Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-1123/pdf/COMPS-1123.pdf

Hinsdale County Office of Emergency Management https://hinsdalecounty.colorado.gov/emergency-management-8

Hinsdale Hazard Mitigation Plan (2025) TBD

Hinsdale Hazard Mitigation Plan (2019) https://hinsdalecounty.colorado.gov/sites/hinsdalecounty/files/documents/Hazard%20Mitigation%20Plan%20Jan%202020.pdf

Hinsdale County Evacuation and Re-Entry Plan (2019) https://hinsdalecounty.colorado.gov/sites/hinsdalecounty/files/documents/Appendix_D_Evacuation_Planning_Guidelines.pdf

Homeland Infrastructure Foundation Level Data (HIFLD) https://www.dhs.gov/gmo/hifld

Lake City Area Fire Rescue https://www.lakecityfiredept.org/

National Bridge Inventory https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/bridge/nbi.cfm

National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/

National Fire Danger Rating System https://research.fs.usda.gov/firelab/projects/firedangerrating

National Fire Protection Association www.nfpa.org

Pagosa Fire Protection District https://www.pagosafire.org/

Ptarmigan Meadows https://www.ptarmiganmeadows.com/

San Juan Ranch Estates Subdivision Community Wildfire Protection Plan https://hinsdalecounty.colorado.gov/sites/hinsdalecounty/files/documents/Appendix_M_SJRECWPP_final%281%29.pdf

West Region Wildfire Council https://www.cowildfire.org/

Wildland Fire Susceptibility Index https://www.usgs.gov/fire-danger-forecast/wildland-fire-potential-index-wfpi

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Mountain-Prairie Region https://www.fws.gov/about/region/mountain-prairie

US Forest Service https://www.fs.usda.gov/

APPENDIX B - ACRONYMS

BLM – Bureau of Land Management

BTU – British Thermal Unit

CSFS – Colorado State Forest Service

CWPP – Community Wildfire Protection Plan

DFPC – Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

FPD – Fire Protection District

GIS – Geographical Information System

HFRA – Healthy Forests Restoration

HMP – Hazard Mitigation Plan

ISO – Insurance Services Office

NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act

EFF – State Emergency Fire Fund

USFS – United States Forest Service

VCC – Vegetation Condition Class

WUI – Wildland-Urban Interface

APPENDIX C - GLOSSARY OF WILDFIRE TERMS

Aerial Fuels - Standing and supported live and dead combustibles not in direct contact with the ground and consisting mainly of foliage, twigs, branches, stems, cones, bark, and vines.

Aspect - Cardinal direction towards which a slope faces.

Backfire - Also called backburing or blacklining, is a firefighting technique where fire crews deliberately set fires along a man-made or natural firebreak in front of an active fire. Once all the fuel is burned by the intentionally set fires the wildfire is no longer able to spread.

Chain - Unit of measure in land survey, equal to 66 feet (20 M) (80 chains equal 1 mile). Commonly used to report fire perimeters and other fireline distances, this unit is popular in fire management because of its convenience in calculating acreage (e.g., 10 square chains equal one acre).

Chimney - A steep gully or canyon conducive to channeling strong convective currents, potentially resulting in dangerous increases in rates of fire spread and fireline intensity.

Crown Fire - A fire that advances from top to top of trees or shrubs more or less independent of a surface fire. Crown fires are sometimes classed as running or dependent to distinguish the degree of independence from the surface fire.

Dead Fuels - Fuels with no living tissue in which moisture content is governed almost entirely by absorption or evaporation of atmospheric moisture (relative humidity and precipitation).

Defensible Space - An area either natural or manmade where material capable of causing a fire to spread has been treated, cleared, reduced, or changed to act as a barrier between an advancing wildland fire and the loss of life, property, or resources. In practice, “defensible space” is defined as an area a minimum of 30 feet around a structure that is cleared of flammable brush or vegetation.

Direct Attack - Any treatment applied directly to burning fuel such as wetting, smothering, or chemically quenching the fire or by physically separating the burning from the unburned fuel.

Fire Behavior - The manner in which a fire reacts to the influences of fuel, weather, and topography.

Fire Danger Sum of constant danger and variable danger factors affecting the inception, spread, and resistance to control, and subsequent fire damage; often expressed as an index.

Fire Front - The part of a fire within which continuous flaming combustion is taking place. Unless otherwise specified, the fire front is assumed to be the leading edge of the fire perimeter. In ground fires, the fire front may be mainly smoldering combustion.

Fire Hazard - A fuel complex, defined by volume, type condition, arrangement, and location, that determines the degree of ease of ignition and of resistance to control.

Fire Intensity - A general term relating to the heat energy released by a fire.

Fire Regime - Description of the patterns of fire occurrences, frequency, size, severity, and sometimes vegetation and fire effects as well, in a given area or ecosystem. A fire regime is a generalization based on fire histories at individual sites. Fire regimes can often be described as cycles because some parts of history usually get repeated, and repetitions can be counted and measured, such as fire return interval.

Fire Risk - The chance of fire starting, as determined by the presence and activity of causative agents.

Fire Severity - Degree to which a site has been altered or disrupted by fire; loosely, a product of fire intensity and residence time.

Fire Weather - Weather conditions that influence fire ignition, behavior, and suppression. Flame Length The distance between the flame tip and the midpoint of the flame depth at the base of the flame (generally the ground surface), an indicator of fire intensity.

Flaming Front - That zone of a moving fire where the combustion is primarily flaming. Behind this flaming zone combustion is primarily glowing or involves the burning out of larger fuels (greater than about 3 inches in diameter). Light fuels typically have a shallow flaming front, whereas heavy fuels have a deeper front.

Fuel - Any combustible material, especially petroleum-based products and wildland fuels. Combustible material that includes vegetation such as grass, leaves, ground litter, plants, shrubs, and trees that feed a fire. Not all vegetation is necessarily considered fuel. Deciduous vegetation such as aspen actually serves as a barrier to fire spread and many shrubs are only available as fuels when they are drought-stressed.

Fuel Break - A natural or manmade change in fuel characteristics that affects fire behavior so that fires burning into them can be more readily controlled.

Fuel Loading - The amount of fuel present expressed quantitatively in terms of weight of fuel per unit area. This may be available fuel (consumable fuel) or total fuel and is usually dry weight.

Fuel Type - An identifiable association of fuel elements of a distinctive plant species, form, size, arrangement, or other characteristics that will cause a predictable rate of fire spread or difficulty of control under specified weather conditions.

Ground Fire - Fire that consumes the organic material beneath the surface litter ground, such as a peat fire.

Ground Fuel - All combustible materials below the surface litter, including duff, tree or shrub roots, punky wood, peat, and sawdust that normally support a glowing combustion without flame.

Indirect Attack - A method of suppression in which the control line is located some considerable distance away from the fire's active edge. Generally done in the case of a fast-spreading or high-intensity fire and to utilize natural or constructed firebreaks or fuel breaks and favorable breaks in the topography. The intervening fuels are usually backfired; but occasionally the main fire is allowed to burn to the line, depending on conditions.

Intensity - A measure of the rate of heat released by a fire. It includes both radiant and convectional heat.

Initial Attack - A planned response to a wildfire given the wildfire's potential fire behavior. The objective of the initial attack is to stop the fire and put it out in a manner consistent with firefighter and public safety and values to be protected.

Ladder Fuels - Fuels which provide vertical continuity between strata, thereby allowing fire to carry from surface fuels into the crowns of trees or shrubs with relative ease. They help initiate and ensure the continuation of crowning.

Live Fuels - Living plants, such as trees, grasses, and shrubs, in which the seasonal moisture content cycle is controlled largely by internal physiological mechanisms, rather than by external weather influences.

One-Hour Fuels - Fuels consisting of dead herbaceous plants and roundwood less than about ¼ inch (6.4 mm) in diameter. Also included is the uppermost layer of needles or leaves on the forest floor.

One-Hundred Hour Fuels - Dead fuels consisting of roundwood in the size range of 1 to 3 inches (2.5 to 7.6 cm) in diameter and very roughly the layer of litter extending from approximately ¾ of an inch (1.9 cm) to 4 inches (10 cm) below the surface.

One-Thousand Hour Fuels - Dead fuels consisting of roundwood 3 to 8 inches in diameter and the layer of the forest floor more than about 4 inches below the surface.

Prescribed Fire - Any fire ignited by management actions to meet specific objectives. A written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist, and NEPA requirements (where applicable) must be met, prior to ignition.

Rate of Spread - The relative activity of a fire in extending its horizontal dimensions. It is expressed as a rate of increase of the total perimeter of the fire, rate of forward spread of the fire front, or rate of increase in area, depending on the intended use of the information. Usually, it is expressed in chains or acres per hour for a specific period in the fire's history.

Surface Fire - Fire that burns loose debris on the surface, which includes dead branches, leaves, and low vegetation.

Surface Fuel Fuels lying on or near the surface of the ground, consisting of leaf and needle litter, dead branch material, downed logs, bark, tree cones, and low stature living plants.

Ten-Hour Fuels - Dead fuels consisting of roundwood ¼ to l inch (0.6 to 2.5 cm) in diameter and, very roughly, the layer of litter extending from immediately below the surface to ¾ inch (1.9 cm) below the surface.

Topography - The configuration of the earth's surface including its relief and the position of its natural and man-made features.

Torching - The burning of the foliage of a single tree or a small group of trees, from the bottom up.

Wildfire - An unplanned, unwanted wildland fire including unauthorized human-caused fires, escaped wildland fire use events, escaped prescribed fire projects, and all other wildland fires where the objective is to put the fire out.

Wildfire Susceptibility Index - A metric that defines the probability of wildfire occurrence and its predicted rate of spread once an ignition occurs.

Wildfire Intensity Index - A measure for the potential for high-intensity wildfire occurrence as defined by flame length and crown fire.

Wildland Fire - Any non-structural fire that occurs in the wildland. Three distinct types of wildland fire have been defined and include wildfire, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire.

Wildland Fire for Resource Benefit - The application of the appropriate management response to naturally ignited wildland fires to accomplish specific resource management objectives in pre-defined designated areas outlined in Fire Management Plans.

APPENDIX D - COMMUNITY RISK ASSESSMENT AND MODELING METHODOLOGY

The risk assessment and modeling methodology used to determine an approximate level of risk in the Study Area of Hinsdale County. The process enables the CWPP to describe the relative risk profile of communities within the CWRA produces a wildfire risk rating for each community and assigns a numeric score corresponding to a descriptive attribute. The process informs the development and prioritization of wildfire risk reduction projects throughout the Study Area.

This process used a geographic information system (GIS) platform to define Study Area boundaries. Wildfire risk data analysis, emergency response operational assessments, and community field surveys were conducted for each community Study Area, focused primarily Lake City.

Further, the Risk Assessment in the revised Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) Section 4, was substantially revised to incorporate recent events and expand on information, including a GIS-based risk assessment. Information. Applicable information from the HMP served as the foundation for this CWPP.

The assessment included two sections and five risk categories with each category containing a scoring range. A higher score indicates a higher degree of risk in that category and scoring ranges weighted according to the prominence of the risk factor(s) considered in that category. Additional factors identified through this effort and based on anecdotal and historic data were further evaluated and considered for making modifications to risk scores.

The Community Wildfire Risk Rating is assigned a total score and depicted with a community map and a narrative that provides context and supplemental information. The rating score ranges correspond to a risk attribute assigned to a community:

Risk Level	Points
Highest	161-200
High	121-160
Moderate	81-120
Low	41-80
Lowest	1-40
No Risk	0

Section 1 – Baseline Wildfire Risk

Methodology: Data and descriptions of the Wildfire Risk Theme and Fire Intensity Theme were obtained from the CO-WRAP and informed the CWPP GIS Project. Wildfire Risk relates burn probability to a partial values-at-risk data set, whereas, Fire Intensity describes flame length and potential wildfire behavior without relating to values-at-risk.

GIS geoprocessing tools were used for raster data and to calculate aggregate baseline scores for the Study Area. Buffer boundaries were identified to ensure areas and features relevant to wildfire influences in the Study Area are reflected in the baseline risk scores.

The CO-WRA 2022 Final Report details the datasets and processes used to produce these themes.

Category 1 of 5 – CO-WRAP Composite Wildfire Risk (60 point maximum)
Highest Risk +60
High Risk +48
Moderate Risk +36
Low Risk +24
Lowest Risk +12
No Risk +0

Category 2 of 5 – CO-WRAP Fire Intensity (40 point maximum)
Highest Intensity +40
Moderate-High +32
Moderate +24
Low-Moderate +16
Lowest +8
Unburnable +0

Section 2 – Supplemental Analysis

Methodology: Supplemental data was analyzed to evaluate risk factors that are not reflected in the CO-WRAP themes. These data are obtained through a survey provided to contributing agencies was complemented with emergency response operational self-assessments. Data analysis was conducted in concert with an operational assessment by Wildland Firefighters with significant experience in wildfire response and incident management.

Category 3 of 5 – Evacuation Preparedness (50 point maximum)
(O)(F) Anticipated Reach of Evacuation Notification - Community and Telecommunications Situation (12 point maximum)
Community situation unconducive to evacuation awareness, cellular coverage (WEAS) not viable for evacuation notifications +12
Community is well-situated for evacuation awareness and cellular coverage is substantial +0
(SD)(F) Number of Egress Routes (12 point maximum)
One +12
Two +12
More than two +0

Note: if shared driveways servicing more than 2 residences are present, and driveway length exceeds 1/8-mile, +1 point for every shared driveway, up to a maximum of 12 points.

(SD)(F) Travel Times to Non-burnable Environment (8 point maximum)
- Longest travel time in Study Area +8
- Minimal or no travel time +0

(SD)(F) Roadside/Egress Vegetation (6 point maximum)
- Roadways heavily threatened by roadside fuels +6
- Roadways unthreatened by roadside fuels (survivable environment during active fire) +0

(SD)(F) Lanes (6 point maximum)
- All single lane/inadequate pull-offs +6
- All dual lane, good fire apparatus turnarounds +0

(SD)(F) Road Construction (6 point maximum)
- Majority Dirt + 6
- Majority Paved + 0

CATEGORY 4 OF 5 – Response and Suppression Resources (30 point maximum)
(O) Initial Attack Resources (10 point maximum)
No guarantee of initial attack resources +10
Multiple initial attack resources and coordination guaranteed (e.g., Officer, Brush Truck, Water Tender) within 20 minutes of incident notification +0
Note: this category is evaluated with representatives of service area(s) response resources
(O)(F) Road and Address Signage (8 point maximum)
Road, address, evacuation route and other useful signage is absent or misleading +8
Signage present for all roads, addresses and evacuation routes +0
(O)(SD) Water Sources/Cisterns (6 point maximum)
Less than 1,000 gal/residence within 10-minutes of majority of homes +6
2,000 gal/residence, or more, within 10-minutes of majority of homes +3
Positive pressure hydrants within 10-minutes of majority of homes +0

Note:
(1) Omit private/unverifiable cisterns.
(2) Many areas rely on water sources that are creek/pond fed. Due to the probability that severe wildfire risk would be accompanied by low creek/pond levels, a community that falls into the ranges above, but is serviced primarily by creek/pond established water sources should receive a score modification depending on quality of the water sources.

(SD)(F) Fire Station Response Radius (6 point maximum)
Majority of community falls outside a 2-mile radius of nearest fire station +6
Majority of community falls outside a 1-mile radius of nearest fire station +3
Majority of community is within a 1-mile radius of nearest fire station +0

CATEGORY 5 OF 5 – Home Ignition Zone (20 point maximum)
Note: Parcel-level analysis for large Study Areas is not practical. Field Surveyors should have experience in structural triage and prescriptive recommendations for defensible space. Scores in Category 4 should reflect general observations and impressions.
(F) Zone 1 (Based on CSFS key Zone 1 considerations) (12 point maximum)
Structure, roofs, decks and 5' vegetation non-compliant in more than 2/3s of homes +12
All or most homes Zone 1 compliant +0
(F) Zone 2 and 3 (based on current CSFS guidelines for defensible space) (8 point maximum)
More than 2/3s of homes are not Zone 2 and 3 compliant +8
Most homes Zone 2 and 3 compliant +0

Field Survey – Additional Observations

Risks are comprehensively measured in a dynamic set of categories and consideration is given for values or features not represented in the scoring methodology and that are helpful to include in the accompanying narrative, along with other relevant hazards. This activity may impact the community's overall risk score and/or may be informative in developing risk reduction projects specific to the community.

Examples of additional observations:

Hazards: untested/unmarked bridges, poorly maintained power/utility poles

Values: critical infrastructure, popular recreational areas, schools, livestock

Features: existing or possible last resort refuge areas, natural features available for fire containment (e.g., rivers)

Disclaimer and Acknowledgements

The details of this document reflect the risk profile of the Study Area(s) and is not intended for use in other Study Areas or for purposes other than CWPP development.

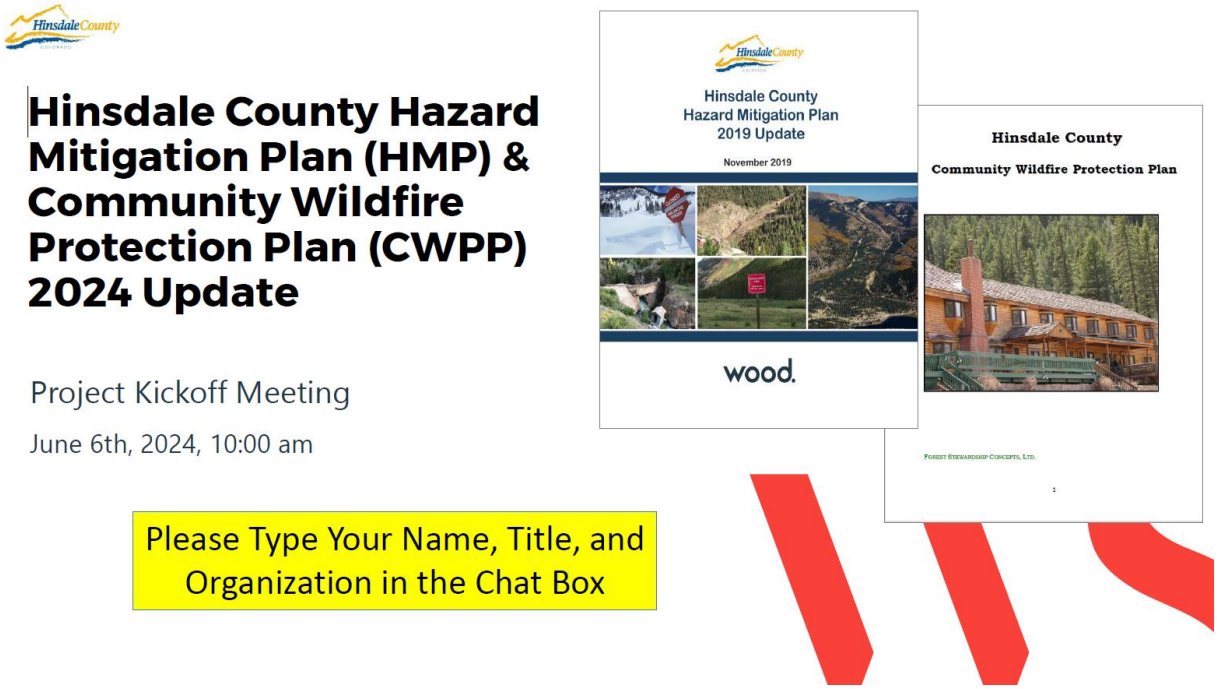
Subject matter experts and specialists vetted the methodology to ensure a comprehensive set of risk factors were appropriately considered.

Contributions for this document were sourced or provided by the Colorado State Forest Service, the United States Forest Service, the Division of Fire Prevention and Control, the Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office, the Hinsdale Office of Emergency Management, Coalitions and Collaboratives, Fire Adapted Colorado, other local firefighters, law enforcement officers and members of the community.

APPENDIX E: PLANNING PROCESS DOCUMENTATION

This CWPP was developed concurrently with the 2025 Hazard Mitigation Plan update process, ensuring consistency of goals, data, and strategies between the two plans. Planning efforts were initiated in the spring of 2024 under the coordination of the Hinsdale County Emergency Manager. Funding was secured through a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program HMGP) grant to enable a consultant to be hired to facilitate the process and develop the plan. WSP Environment and Infrastructure (WSP) of Denver, Colorado contracted with the County to provide professional planning services during the development of both plans. The development of the CWPP followed a structured planning process that involved various local government departments and other public and private stakeholders.

Core Planning Team Meetings



Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Hazard Mitigation Overview
3. Hazard Mitigation Planning Process and Requirements
4. CWPP Planning Process and Requirements
5. Project Schedule and Next Steps
6. Adjourn

3

Public Involvement

Three main opportunities for public engagement proposed

1. Public opinion survey (online and paper)
   - Experience with hazard events
   - Opinion on hazard significance
   - Suggestions for mitigation activities and priorities
2. One public meeting
3. Public comment on draft plan

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Community Wildfire Protection Plans – An Overview

- Comprehensive, community-specific plans that help identify and guide wildfire preparedness, risk analysis and mitigation projects
- Planning process and requirements defined by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) and State of Colorado
- Promotes and facilitates interagency communication and collaboration
- Provides a successful model for wildfire risk mitigation

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CWPP – Local Benefits

- Improves coordination between governing agencies, emergency response, and the community
- Helps to meet local management needs and successfully mitigate community wildfire risks
- Enables the community to define boundaries for localized wildland-urban interfaces (WUIs)
- Increases access to (and priority for) state and federal funding sources
- Provides opportunity to influence wildfire management projects on Federal lands

41

CWPP – HFRA Minimum Requirements

- Collaboration
  - Developed by local and state governments, in consultation with federal agencies and interested parties
- Prioritized Fuel Reduction
  - Identify and prioritize areas for treatment
  - Recommend types and methods
- Treatment of Structural Ignitability
  - Recommend reduction measures for homeowners and community
- Mutual Agreement for Final Plan
  - Applicable local government
  - Local fire department(s)
  - State forest management agency

42

CWPP – CSFS Minimum Requirements

- Definition of community's wildland-urban interface (WUI) with map and narrative
- Identification of adjacent landowners
- Community risk analysis
- Discussion of response preparedness
- Recommendations for structural ignitability reduction
- Implementation plan that includes:
  - Identification and description of fuels treatment projects
  - Project area maps
  - Project/Fuels treatment priorities

43

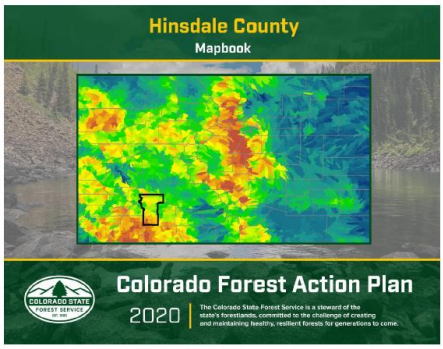
2024 Hinsdale County CWPP Update

- Integrated with HMP Update wherever possible
- Combined planning team
- Combined planning meetings
- CWPP Update Guide will be prepared (similar to HMP Update Guide)
  - Describe progress made and list all accomplishments since plan creation
  - Address demographic changes (e.g., population flux, new housing development, infrastructure)
  - Identify new risks that may have developed

45

Wildfire Risk Assessment

- Will build on the wildfire hazard profile in the HMP
  - Fuel hazards
  - Topography
  - Weather patterns
  - Fire history
  - Common structure vulnerability characteristics
  - Community values to be protected
    - Watershed
    - Infrastructure
    - Recreation features
    - Wildlife habitat
    - Others



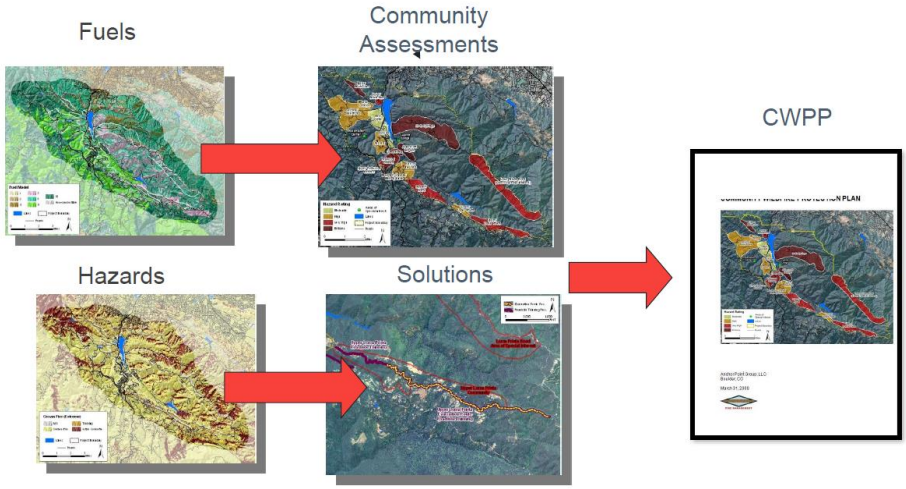
46

Community Assessments

- GIS-based assessments will be supplemented with an on-the-ground, windshield-level assessment.
- Based on NFPA 1144 Standards for Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards From Wildland Fire.
- Further identify areas at higher risk due to:
  - Presence of heavy fuels
  - Poor ingress and egress
  - Limited fire response resources
  - General composition of structures
  - Vulnerable Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CIKR) and other community lifelines, as identified in HMP

47

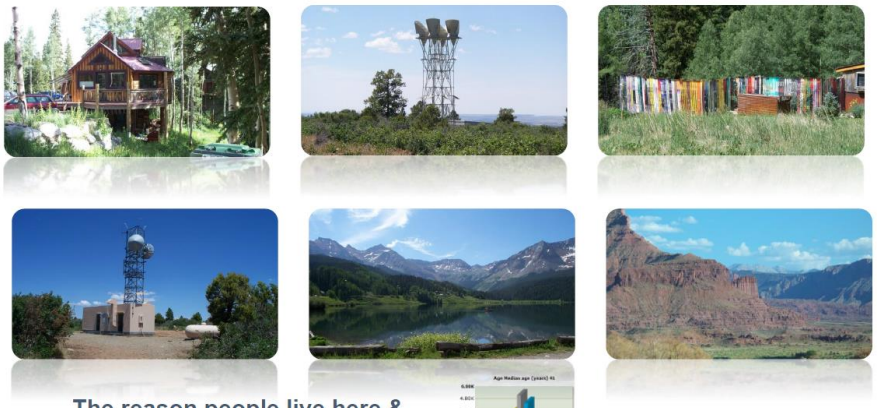
CWPP Development Process



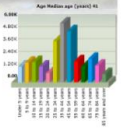
48

Identification of At-Risk Values

Community Values



The reason people live here & demographics



49

Colorado Forest Atlas – Data Products

Wildland Urban Interface	Rate of Spread
Wildland Urban Interface Risk	Surface Fuels
Wildfire Risk to Assets	Vegetation
Burn Probability	Watershed Protection Risk
Terrain Difficulty Index	Riparian Assets Risk
Characteristic Flame Length	Forest Assets Risk
Fire Intensity Scale	Building Damage Potential
Fire Type	Defensible Space Index

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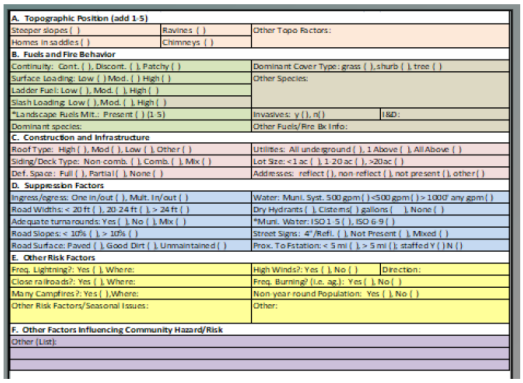
Community Hazard Factors

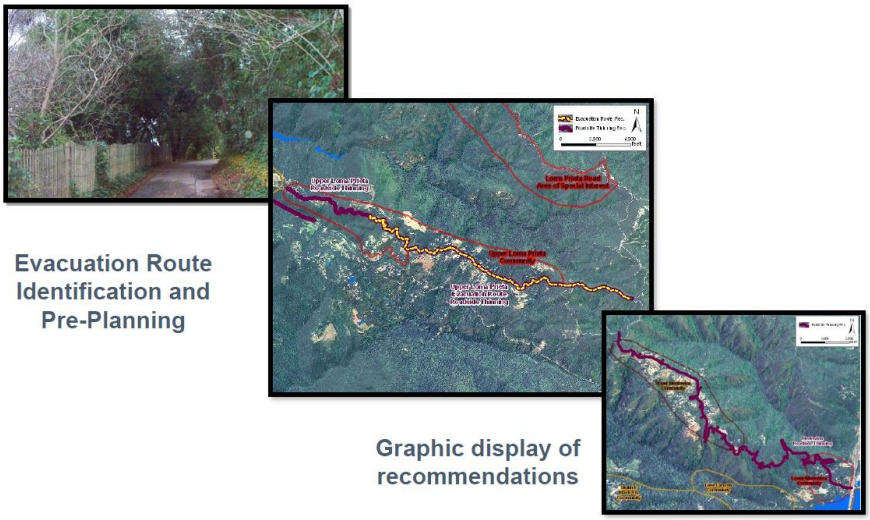
- Lot size/Density
- Access/Egress
- Fuels (type, continuity, loading)
- Topography (slope, aspect, elevation, dangerous features)
- Hazards
- Construction type
- Resources
- Previous fires



A. Topographic Position (add 1-5)		
Steeper slopes ( )	Ravines ( )	Other Topo Factors:
Homes in saddles ( )	Chimneys ( )	
B. Fuels and Fire Behavior		
Continuity: Cont. ( ), Discont. ( ), Patchy ( )		Dominant Cover Type: grass ( ), shurb ( ), tree ( )
Surface Loading: Low ( ) Mod. ( ) High ( )		Other Species:
Ladder Fuel: Low ( ), Mod. ( ), High ( )		
Slash Loading Low ( ), Mod. ( ), High ( )		
*Landscape Fuels Mit.: Present ( ) (1-5)		Invasives: y ( ), n( ) I&D:
Dominant species:		Other Fuels/Fire Bx Info:
C. Construction and Infrastructure		
Roof Type: High ( ), Mod ( ), Low ( ), Other ( )		Utilities: All underground ( ), 1 Above ( ), All Above ( )
Siding/Deck Type: Non-comb. ( ), Comb. ( ), Mix ( )		Lot Size: <1 ac ( ), 1-20 ac ( ), >20ac ( )
Def. Space: Full ( ), Partial ( ), None ( )		Addresses: reflect ( ), non reflect ( ), not present ( ), other ( )
D. Suppression Factors		
Ingress/egress: One in/out ( ), Mult. In/out ( )		Water: Muni. Syst. 500 gpm ( ) <500 gpm ( ) >1000' any gpm ( )
Road Widths: < 20 ft ( ), 20-24 ft ( ), > 24 ft ( )		Dry Hydrants ( ), Cistern( ) gallons ( ), None ( )
Adequate turnarounds: Yes ( ), No ( ), Mix ( )		*Muni. Water: ISO 1-5 ( ), ISO 6-9 ( )
Road Slopes: < 10% ( ), > 10% ( )		Street Signs: 4"/Refl. ( ), Not Present ( ), Mixed ( )
Road Surface: Paved ( ), Good Dirt ( ), Unmaintained ( )		Prox. To FStation: < 5 mi ( ), > 5 mi ( ); staffed Y ( ) N ( )
E. Other Risk Factors		
Freq. Lightning?: Yes ( ), Where:		High Winds?: Yes ( ), No ( ) Direction:
Close railroads?: Yes ( ), Where:		Freq. Burning? (i.e. ag.): Yes ( ), No ( )
Many Campfires ?: Yes ( ), Where:		Non-year-round Population: Yes ( ), No ( )
Other Risk Factors/Seasonal Issues:		Other:
F. Other Factors Influencing Community Hazard/Risk		
Other (List):		

52

Egress & Ingress



Evacuation Route Identification and Pre-Planning

Graphic display of recommendations

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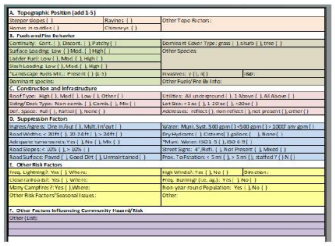
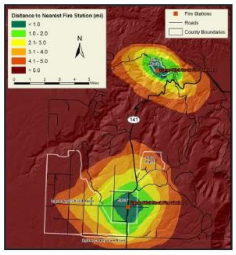
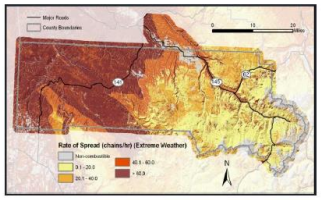
Community Hazard Rating





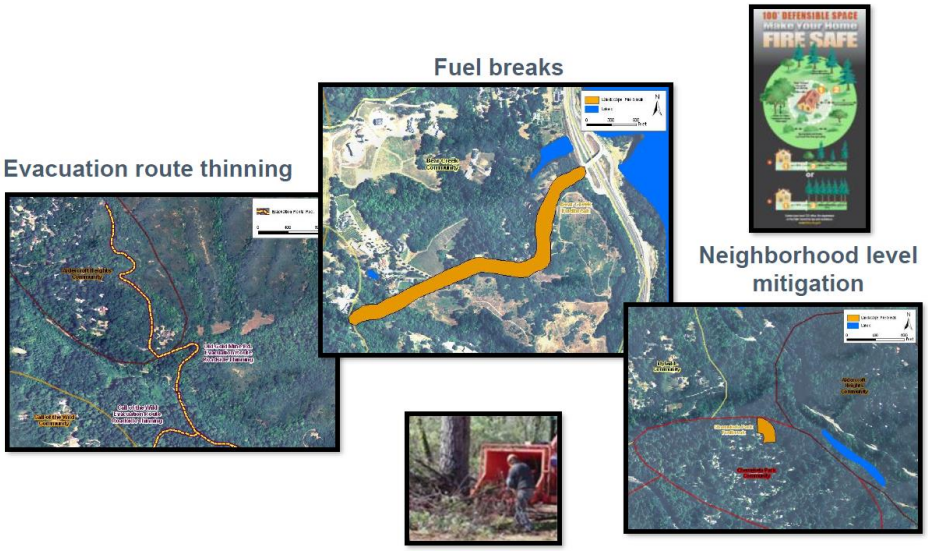


A combination of the site survey ratings, fire behavior potential, and zonal analysis of infrastructure.

Establishing Fire Management Priorities

- Addressing, Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place
- Public Education
- Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capabilities
- Fuels Modification Projects
- Water Supply
- Home Mitigation
- Emergency alert and warning capabilities

Solutions & Recommendations



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Plan Review and Adoption

Three drafts of CWPP

1. Internal review draft
2. Public review draft
3. CSFS review draft

Final signature and approval

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Project Schedule

Phase/Task	Apr 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025
Phase 1: Get Organized / CWPP Stakeholder Working Group												
Initial Coordination												
Stakeholder Outreach												
HMP/CWPP Kickoff Meeting		Mtg										
Data Collection and Review												
Public Survey												
Phase 2: Assess Risks / Wildfire Risk Assessment												
Hazard ID & Risk Assessment												
Wildfire Risk Assessment												
Capability Assessment												
CWPP Community Assessments												
Planning Meeting #2			Mtg									
Public Meeting			Mtg									
Phase 3: Develop HMP Mitigation Strategy / CWPPP Mitigation Recommendations												
HMP Mitigation Strategy												
CWPP Mitigation Recommendations												
Planning Meeting #3				Mtg								
HMP Preparation of Draft Plan												
HMP Planning Team Review												
HMP Public Comment Period												
CWPP Preparation of Draft Plan												
CWPP Planning Team Review												
CWPP Public Comment Period												
Phase 4: Plan Adoption, Monitoring & Evaluation												
HMP: DHSEM Review												
HMP: FEMA Review												
HMP: Local Adoptions												
HMP: Final Plan												
CWPP: CSFS Review & Approval												
CWPP: Final Plan												

Current HMP Expires March 11, 2025

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Participation Specifics – Local Governments

Requirements for Participating Jurisdictions

- Attend and participate in planning meetings/workshops
- Provide available data requested of the County coordinator
  - Plan Update Guides
- Advertise and assist with public input process
- Provide input on progress of local mitigation actions
- Identify new actions
- Review and comment on draft plan
- Coordinate formal adoption

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Participation Specifics – Other Stakeholders

Stakeholders & Partners

- Various options/level of participation
  - Attend HMPC meetings or stay in loop via email list
  - Provide data/information
  - Partner on mitigation efforts
  - Review draft plan

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Initial Information Needs

- Plan Update Guides will be developed for the County and Lake City
  - Capture details on:
    - Recent hazard impacts (last 5 years)
    - Changes in mitigation capabilities
    - Other mitigation activities
- Stakeholders
  - Provide additional information as applicable – hazards, plans, projects
  - Stay in loop via email group from County Coordinator

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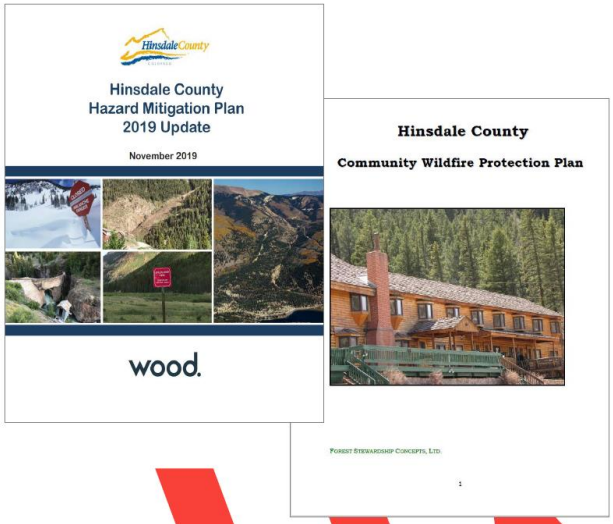
Hinsdale County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) & Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) 2024 Update



Planning Meeting #2 – Hazard Identification & Risk Assessment

August 6, 2024, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Please Type Your Name, Title, and Organization in the Chat Box

Agenda

1. Planning process update
2. Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) update
3. CWPP fire risk assessment update
4. Mitigation strategy introduction
5. Next steps

Progress So Far

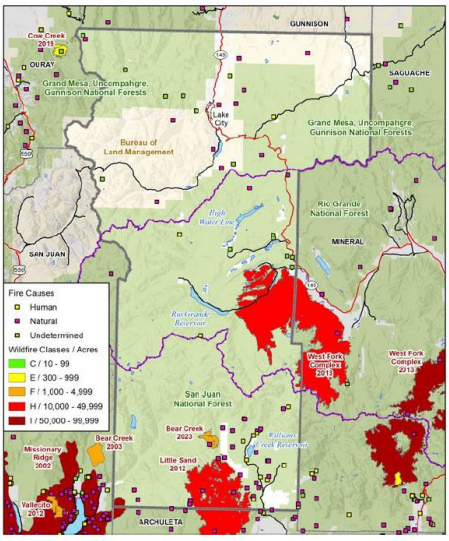
- Kickoff meeting: June 6th, 2024
- Critical Facilities list updated
- GIS mapping and analysis completed
- Risk assessments in progress by WSP
- Online public survey posted July 1st through 31st
  - 32 responses
  - Public Survey Link: https://forms.office.com/e/jsNmfrv2vX

Wildfire - CWPP

- Hinsdale County has a significant range in elevation, aspect, steep terrain, and dense forest. The WUI areas have the full spectrum of fuel hazards, which are affected by on-going drought conditions.
- There are nearly 719k acres in the planning area with 98% of total population (791) living within the WUI. The entire downtown Lake City Historic District is vulnerable to wildfires and wind-driven firebrands.
- Past events: 2012 Little Sand, 2013 West Fork Complex, 2023 Bear Creek – all lightning caused
- Potential Impacts: Injury or loss of life to people in the affected area; and the destruction of vegetation, property, wildlife.
- Magnitude/Extent:

Geographic Extent	Frequency	Severity	Significance
Extensive	Highly Likely	Catastrophic	High

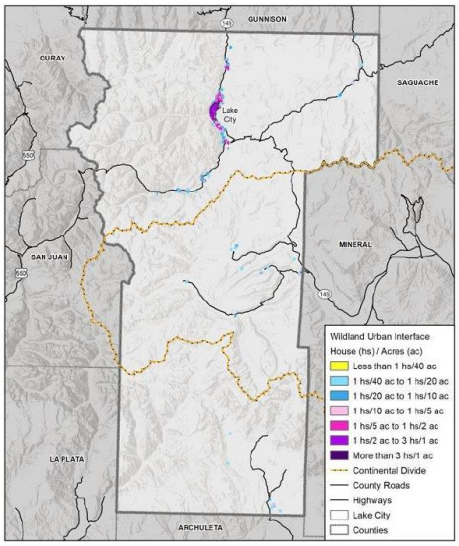
Hinsdale County
Wildfire History (2002-2024)



Wildfire - CWPP

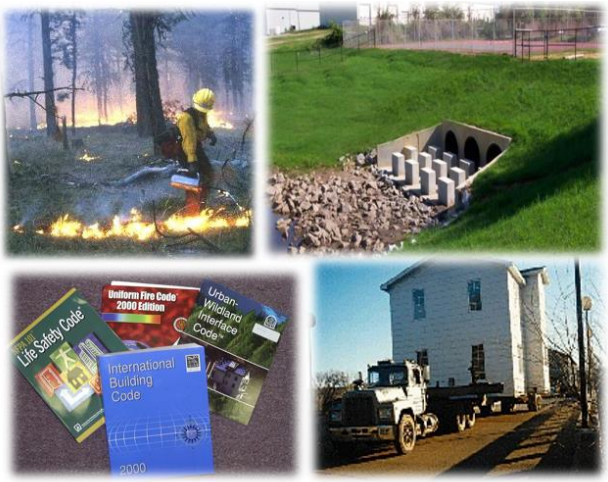
- Based on moderate to highest risk factors, the annual probability of future fire occurrences is 21.5%.
- 43% of acres are in High to Extreme terrain ratings that are areas with difficult access to fires and suppression activities from ground.
- The top 3 types of vegetation and landcover are 40% Spruce-Fir trees, 16.7% grassland; and 11.8% is sparse, vegetated land.
- 47% of acres have potential of horizontal fire rate of speed >3,960 ft per hour.
- Largest concentration of structures to acres is Lake City (478 of 1,067).

Hinsdale County
Wildland Urban Interface



Hinsdale County Hazard Mitigation Plan & Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2024 Update

Planning Meeting #3
Mitigation Strategy Update
September 23, 2024, 1:00 – 4:00 pm



Agenda

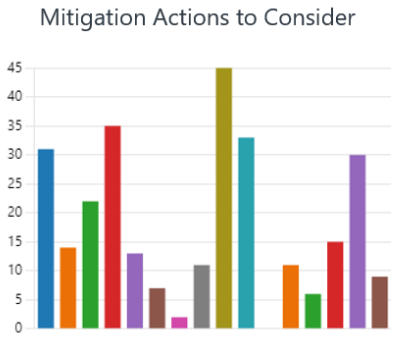
1. Introductions
2. Planning process update and progress to date
3. Mitigation goals & objectives
4. Progress on mitigation actions from 2019 HMP
5. Mitigation action categories and alternatives
6. Identification of new mitigation actions
7. Next steps

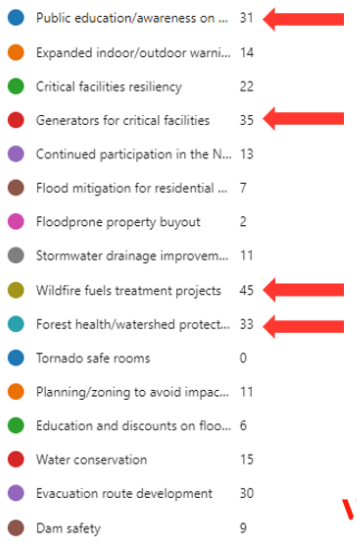
Projects Eligible for FEMA Funding - Wildfire

- Defensible space
- Structural protection through ignition-resistant construction activities
- Hazardous fuels reduction activities
  - Community level vegetation management
  - Vegetation removal
  - Vegetation clearing and/or thinning
  - Slash removal
  - Vertical clearance of tree branches

Public Survey Results

"Please indicate the types of mitigation actions you think should have the highest priority"





Suggested Mitigation Action – Public Survey

- Suggestions from Public Survey:
  - Evacuations plans for people, livestock, and pets
  - ICS Training for the community
  - Local food production, local electricity generation, community self-reliance
  - Have a representative from Wildfire Adapted Partnership come give free property risk assessments as some areas in Pagosa Springs are doing
  - Commit annual % of Tabor reserves towards mitigation strategies
  - Defensible space programs
  - Stormwater management along roads, maintaining culverts
  - Disaster relief facilities for displaced people
  - Communication in emergency situations

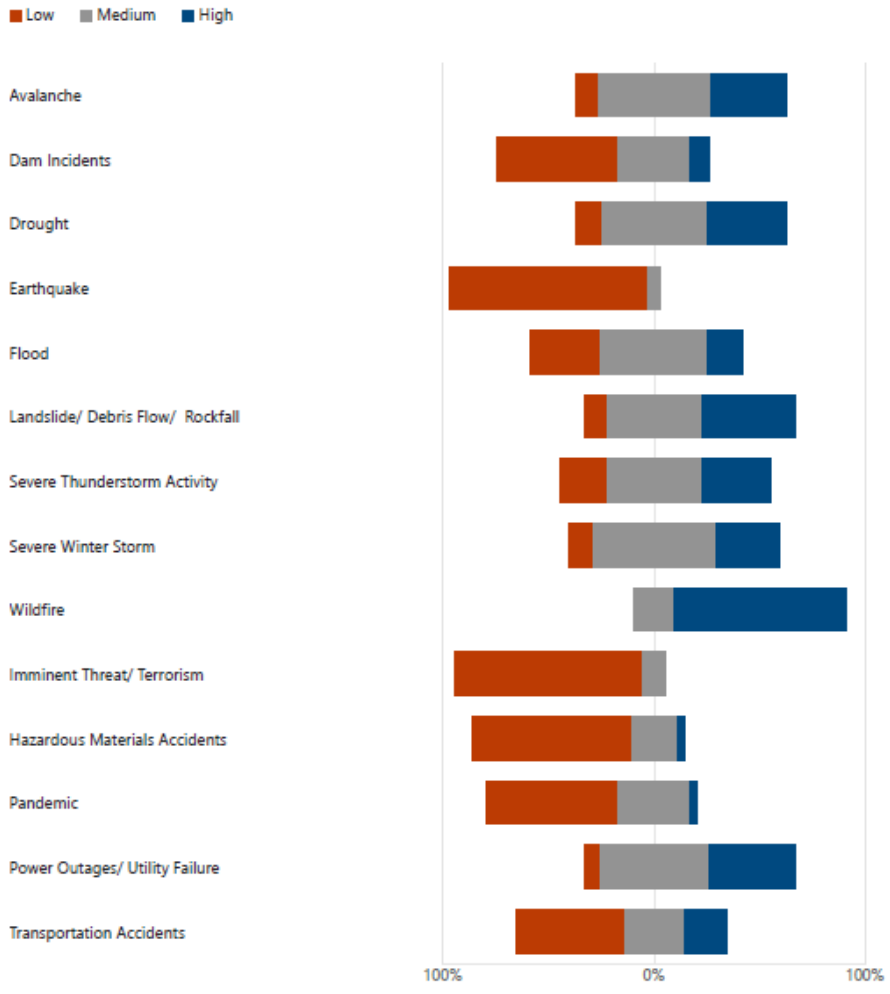
Organization	Name	Title	Mtg 1	Mtg 2	Mtg 3
Costilla County OEM	Chris Rodriguez	Deputy County Manager/Deputy EM		X	
Gunnison County Electric Association	Kendall Gardener	Lineman			X
Gunnison County Electric Association	Logan Rhodes	Lineman			X
Mineral County Sheriff's Office	Jordan Kaminski	Undersheriff	X		
Red Cross	Arden Anderson	Disaster Response Coordinator	X	X	
Red Cross	Mary Kay Wray	Disaster Response Coordinator	X		
Silverthread Public Health	Kristen Hartje	EPR Coordinator	X		
Silverthread Public Health	Tara Hardy	Director	X	X	
US BLM	Ryan Romero	Fire & Fuels Tech			X
US Forest Service	David Carr	FAO			X
US Forest Service	Helena Schwesinger	Volunteer			X
US Forest Service	Jack Starkebaum	Fuels Planner			X
West Region Wildfire Council	Leigh Robertson	Partnership & Collaboration Director	X		X
WSP Consulting Team	Carlie Hager	Mitigation Planner		X	
WSP Consulting Team	Jeff Brislawn	Project Advisor/QC	X	X	
WSP Consulting Team	Mack Chambers	GIS Analyst	X	X	
WSP Consulting Team	Pat Mialy	CWPP Lead Planner	X	X	X
WSP Consulting Team	Scott Field	Project Manager	X	X	X

Public Survey

Hinsdale County Hazard Planning Public Input Survey

55	08:04	Active
Responses	Average time to complete	Status

1. The Hinsdale County Hazard Mitigation Plan addresses the following hazards. Please rate how significant you feel each hazard is in Hinsdale County.



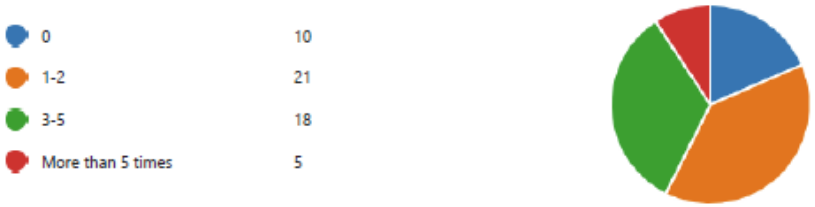
2. Are there other natural or human-caused hazards you feel the planning team should consider?

22
Responses

Latest Responses
" *Beatle kill fire hazard* "
"*No* "

3 respondents (14%) answered **Water** for this question.

3. How many times has a natural hazard disrupted your daily life in the last five years?

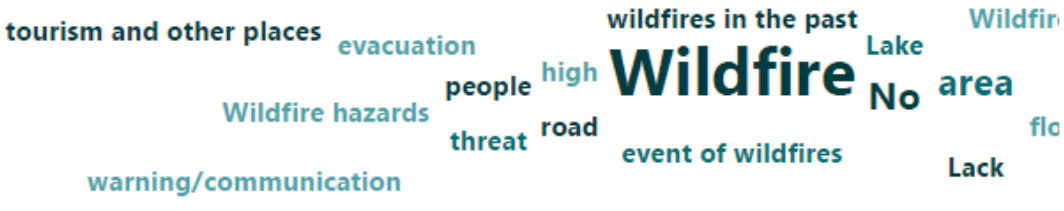


4. Are there any specific hazard issues or problem areas you would like the planning committee to consider? Please note the jurisdiction to which it applies.

18
Responses

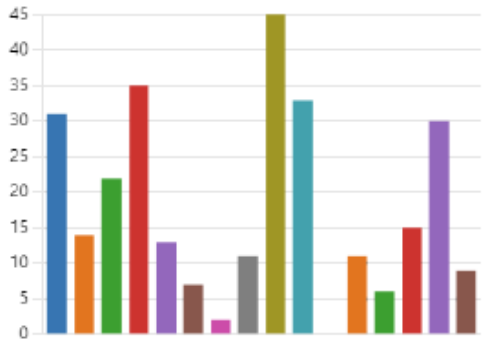
Latest Responses
"*No*"

5 respondents (28%) answered **Wildfire** for this question.



5. The following types of mitigation actions may be considered in Hinsdale County. Please indicate which actions you think should have the highest priority in Hinsdale County?

Public education/awareness on ...	31
Expanded indoor/outdoor warni...	14
Critical facilities resiliency	22
Generators for critical facilities	35
Continued participation in the N...	13
Flood mitigation for residential ...	7
Floodprone property buyout	2
Stormwater drainage improvem...	11
Wildfire fuels treatment projects	45
Forest health/watershed protect...	33
Tornado safe rooms	0
Planning/zoning to avoid impac...	11
Education and discounts on floo...	6
Water conservation	15
Evacuation route development	30
Dam safety	9



6. Please comment on any other pre-disaster strategies that the planning committee should consider for reducing future losses caused by natural disasters:

15
Responses

Latest Responses
"Communication in emergency situations "
"No"

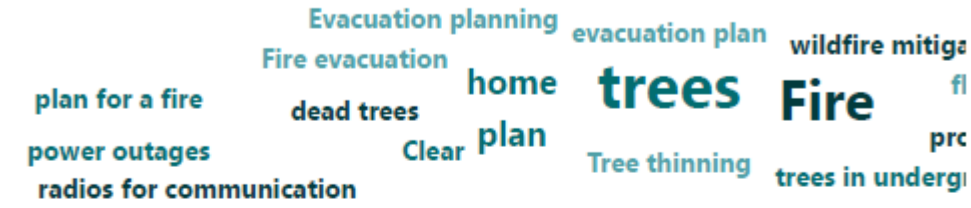
2 respondents (13%) answered **Local** for this question.

7. What have you personally done to protect yourself and your household from hazards?

37
Responses

Latest Responses
"Try to stay informed "
"Improved Resilience Plan"

9 respondents (**24%**) answered **trees** for this question.



8. Where do you live?

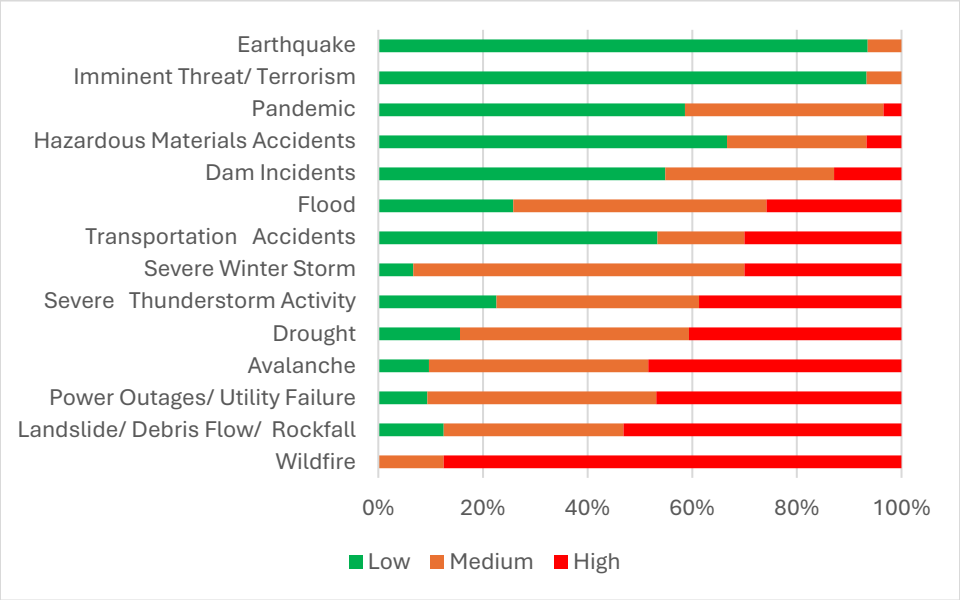
9. How long have you lived in this community?

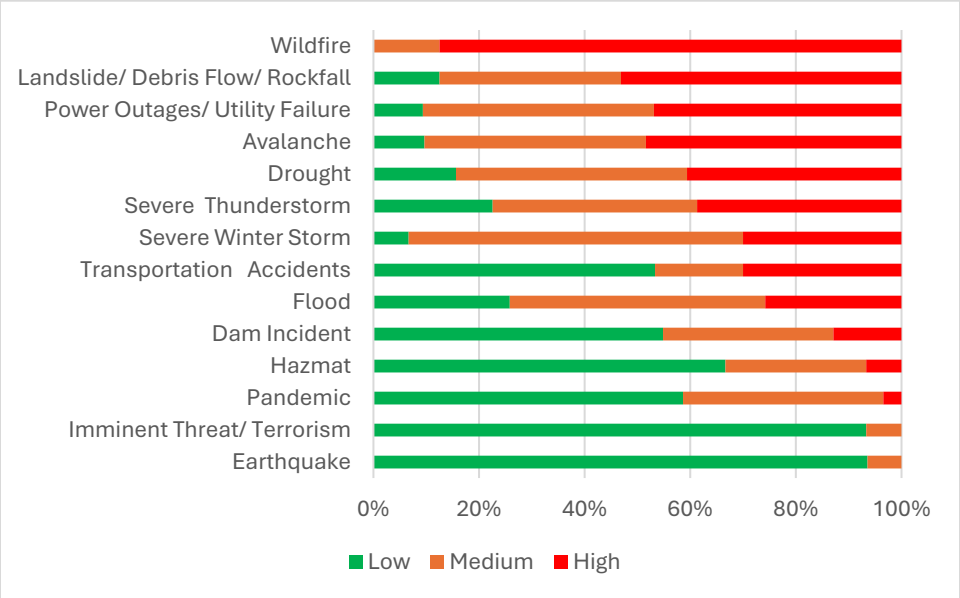
10. **Optional:** Provide your name and email address if you would like to receive future updates on this planning project.

14
Responses

Latest Responses
"RH Weeks histargazer01@yahoo.com"
"John Stoeber jstoeber@gcea.coop & Brent Boyce bboyce@gcea.coop & lrhodes...

2 respondents (**14%**) answered **John** for this question.


Earthquake
Imminent Threat/ Terrorism
Pandemic
Hazardous Materials Accidents
Dam Incidents
Flood
Transportation Accidents
Severe Winter Storm
Severe Thunderstorm Activity
Drought
Avalanche
Power Outages/ Utility Failure
Landslide/ Debris Flow/ Rockfall
Wildfire
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
Low
Medium
High


Wildfire
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Drought
Severe Thunderstorm
Severe Winter Storm
Transportation Accidents
Flood
Dam Incident
Hazmat
Pandemic
Imminent Threat/ Terrorism
Earthquake
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
Low
Medium
High