

Appendix III

Public Mail Survey

Public Letter #1

Sent on September 21, 2005 and included a survey and a return envelope.

Yellowstone County

COMMISSIONERS
(406) 256-2701
(406) 256-2777 (FAX)

P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107-5000
commission@co.yellowstone.mt.us



Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Survey

September 21, 2005

«Name»

«Address»

«City», ID «Zip»

Dear Yellowstone County Resident:

Thank you for taking fifteen minutes of your time to read and respond to this short inquiry. Yellowstone County has contracted with Northwest Management, Inc., through a Bureau of Land Management grant, to work with a host of fire protection and emergency service organizations in Yellowstone County to develop a **community wildfire protection plan** in your area. As an individual who lives in Yellowstone County, you know that the urban-rural interface is at very high risk to casualty loss due to wildland fires.

This year we are taking a proactive role in mitigating wildland fire-caused casualty losses in the County. We are inviting you to take a proactive role as well.

Northwest Management, Inc. is developing improved predictive models of where fires are likely to ignite, locating and identifying high risk landscape characteristics, advancing improved land management practices to reduce fire rate-of-spread on forestlands and rangelands, and working with rural landowners to create wildland fire

defensible zones around homes and buildings. It is with the last of these goals that your help is needed.

We would like you to complete the attached survey about your home's defensible space in the case of wildland fire. Your responses will be kept completely confidential and released only in aggregated form. This questionnaire will allow us to identify key criteria that may place your home and the homes of your neighbors at the greatest risk. We will use this information to develop mitigation activities that may lead to saving your home and the community you live in.

We have sent this letter and survey to only a select number of people living in Yellowstone County. Because of this, your response is very important to our efforts and the application of our findings to your home and to your community. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey and return it in the self addressed envelope.

We would like to thank you for your assistance on this project with a small token of appreciation. During the development of this project, Northwest Management, Inc. is completing some very advanced mapping of Yellowstone County. They have created detailed maps showing roads, rivers, elevation, fire prone landscapes, potential fire ignition locations, plant cover characteristics, and even orthophoto coverage (black and white images taken from high elevation) with features over them. These maps are printed at 8.5" x 11" sizes. If you give us a legal land description, they will make a high resolution map of this property and send it to you. The map might be the locale of your home, your property, or even your favorite recreation spot. When you complete your survey, please mark which map coverage you would like, and they will custom color print this map for you and send it at no charge. It is our way of thanking you for your input to this very important project.

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any questions about this project or this survey please contact Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Fire Warden at 406-256-2775 or at jkraft@co.yellowstone.mt.us or Bill Schlosser at Northwest Management, Inc. in Moscow, Idaho, at 208-883-4488 or at schlosser@consulting-foresters.com.

Sincerely,



John Ostlund, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners
Yellowstone County, Montana

**Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Public Survey**

1. Do you have a home in Yellowstone County?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Is this your primary residence?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Which community do you live closest to?

4. Does your area have 911 emergency telephone service?

☐ Yes

☐ No

5. Is your home protected by a rural fire department?

☐ No

☐ Yes, if yes what is the fire response time to your home?

☐ under 10 minutes

☐ 10 – 20 minutes

☐ 20 – 30 minutes

☐ 30 – 45 minutes

☐ more than 45 minutes

6. What type of roof does your home have (please mark one):

☐ Composite

☐ Wooden shake (shingles)

☐ Ceramic tiles

☐ Aluminum, tin, or other metal

☐ Other (please indicate: _____)

7. How many trees are within 250 feet of your home?

☐ None

☐ less than 10

- ☐ Between 10 and 25
- ☐ More than 25

8. How many trees are within 75 feet of your home?

- ☐ None
- ☐ less than 10
- ☐ Between 10 and 25
- ☐ More than 25

9. Do you have a lawn surrounding your home?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes, if yes is it kept green and trimmed all summer?
 - ☐ No
 - ☐ Yes

10. How long is your driveway, from the main road to your home parking area? Please indicate distance units in feet or miles.

_____ ☐ Feet
☐ Miles

11. If your driveway is over ½ mile long, does it have turnouts that would allow two trucks to pass each other?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

12. What type of surfacing does your driveway have?

- ☐ Dirt
- ☐ Gravel/rock
- ☐ Paved

13. If the primary access to your home were cut off because of a wildfire, would you have an alternative route to escape through?

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes

14. Please indicate which of the following items you have available at or near your home that could be used in fighting a wildland fire that threatens your home (mark all that apply)

- ☐ Hand tools (shovel, pulaski, etc.)
- ☐ Portable water tank

- Stationery water tank
- Pond, lake, or stream water supply close
- Water pump and fire hose
- Well or cistern
- Equipment suitable for creating fire breaks (bulldozer, cat, skidder, etc.)

15. Use this exercise below to assess your home's fire risk rating:
Circle the ratings in each category that best describes your home.

16.

Fuel Hazard Rating Worksheet		Rating
Fuel Hazard (within 200 feet of structures)	Small, light fuels (grasses, forbs, weeds, shrubs)	1
	Medium size fuels (brush, large shrubs, small trees)	2
	Heavy, large fuels (woodlands, timber, heavy brush)	3
Slope Hazard (within 200 feet of structures)	Mild slopes (0-5%)	1
	Moderate slope (6-20%)	2
	Steep Slopes (21-40%)	3
	Extreme slopes (41% and greater)	4
Structure Hazard	Noncombustible roof and noncombustible siding materials	1
	Noncombustible roof and combustible siding material	3
	Combustible roof and noncombustible siding material	7
	Combustible roof and combustible siding materials	10
Additional Factors	Rough topography that contains several steep canyons or ridges	+2
	Areas having history of higher than average fire occurrence	+3
	Areas exposed to severe fire weather and strong winds	+4
	Areas with existing fuel modifications or usable fire breaks	-3
	Areas with local facilities (water systems, rural fire districts, dozers)	-3

Calculating your risk

Fuel hazard _____ x Slope Hazard _____ = _____

 Structural hazard + _____
 Additional factors (+ or -) _____
 Total Hazard Points = _____

Extreme Risk = 26 + points
High Risk = 16–25 points
Moderate Risk = 6–15 points
Low Risk = 6 or less points

17. Do you conduct a periodic fuels reduction program near your home site such as grass or brush burning?

- ☐ No
☐ Yes

18. Do livestock (cattle, horses, sheep) graze the grasses and forbs around your home?

- ☐ No
☐ Yes

19. If offered in your area, would members of your household attend a free, or low cost, half-day training seminar designed to teach homeowners in the rural–urban interface how to improve the defensible space surrounding your home and adjacent outbuildings?

- ☐ No
☐ Yes

20. How do you feel Fire Mitigation projects should be **funded** in the areas surrounding homes, communities, and infrastructure such as power lines and major roads?

	Mark the box that best applies to your preference		
	100% Public Funding	Cost-Share (Public & Private)	Privately Funded (Owner or Company)
Home Projects Defensibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community Projects Defensibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Infrastructure Projects Roads, Bridges, Power Lines, Etc.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Thank you very much for completing this survey and sending it back to us. This information will be combined with other data to assess the greatest threats to defending homes and adjacent buildings in the rural–urban interface where Wildland fires are common.

Please place the completed survey and the Map Request Form in the self-addressed envelope and place it in the mail for return to us. Thank you!

Your name and address are printed here so we can remove you from our mailing list once we have received your completed survey.

Order Your Yellowstone County Area Map

FREE

As a token of appreciation for completing and returning this survey, we would like to send you a detailed map of your favorite area. Complete this form and return it to us with your survey and we will custom print a color map of your property and send it to you. Maps are produced by NMI during the winter months of December, January and February. Expect your maps to arrive in the mail during this time.

What is the legal land description of the property you want mapped (must be in Yellowstone County).

_____ T _____ N, R _____ E.

or describe the area _____

About how many acres is the parcel you want mapped? _____ acres

What would you like printed as the title of the map? (Five or less words, please print)

Please select which coverage (only one per map) you would like as the primary theme:

- ☐ Land Ownership Categories (over shaded relief map)
- ☐ Ortho photo (limited availability)

All maps include:

- Roads
- Streams & rivers
- Community locations
- Building locations (where available)
- Township, Range, and Sections (property lines are not included)
- Hillshade relief placed in the background to provide representation of slope and elevation.

Please verify your name and full address here so we can send your map to you:

Our records indicate that your address is:	If this is incorrect please correct it here: _____ _____ _____
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Public Letter #2

sent as a postcard on October 4, 2005

October 4, 2005

Dear Yellowstone County Resident:



About a week ago, we mailed you a letter and a brief survey concerning the wildfire situation in your community. That survey is instrumental to the success of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan we are developing in conjunction with Northwest Management, Inc. through a grant from the Bureau of Land Management. We have received responses from many families in the area and we wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to everyone who has participated. However, we still have not received completed surveys from many homes in the region. If you have not returned the completed survey to us yet, please take a few minutes to complete the survey and return it in the self-addressed envelope provided with the letter.

Your responses are very important to this effort which will recommend the location and type of fire mitigation projects to be implemented in the area of your home. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Jim Kraft, the Yellowstone County Fire Warden, at 406-256-2775 or Bill Schlosser at the Northwest Management, Inc. office in Moscow, ID at 208-883-4488. If you did not receive my original letter, or if you misplaced your survey, you can request a new one at one of the numbers above.

Thank you for your time and your assistance with this project!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Ostlund".

John Ostlund, Chairman
Yellowstone County Board of Commissioners

Public letter #3

Sent on October 11, 2005 and included a replacement survey and return envelope (not included here).

Yellowstone County

COMMISSIONERS
(406) 256-2701
(406) 256-2777 (FAX)

P.O. Box 35000
Billings, MT 59107-5000
commission@co.yellowstone.mt.us



Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

{{Date}}

«Name»

«Address»

«City», ID «Zip»

Dear Yellowstone County Landowner:

Thank you for taking some of your time to read and respond to this short inquiry. About two weeks ago, we sent you a letter and package of materials much like this one. In it, we asked if you would please assist our efforts by reading, filling out, and returning a survey concerning a **Community Wildfire Protection Plan** Yellowstone County is preparing through a grant from the Bureau of Land Management. We are working in cooperation with the natural resource consulting firm, Northwest Management, Inc., and a host of fire protection and emergency service organizations in Yellowstone County. While we have received excellent responses from many residents of the area, we have not received them from everyone. **If you have completed and returned your survey, please accept our sincere thanks!** If you have not returned the completed survey, please do so as soon as possible.

As an individual who owns property in Yellowstone County, you know that this area is at very high risk to casualty loss due to wildfires. We have all witnessed the images of fires over the past few years that ravaged the western states. However, today we are doing more than watching for wildland fires; we are taking a proactive role in reducing fire-caused casualty losses in Yellowstone County. We are inviting you to take a proactive role as well.

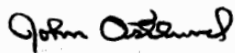
We would like you to complete the attached survey about your home's defensibility in the case of a wildland fire. Your responses will be kept completely confidential and released only in aggregated form. This questionnaire will allow us to identify key criteria that may place your home and the homes of your neighbors at the greatest risk. We will use this information to develop mitigation activities that may lead to saving your home and the community you live in.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Ostlund". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

John Ostlund, Chairman
Board of County Commissioners
Yellowstone County, Montana