

Chapter 2: Planning Process

2 Documenting the Planning Process

Documentation of the planning process, including public involvement, is required to meet FEMA's DMA 2000 (44CFR§201.4(c)(1) and §201.6(c)(1)). This section includes a description of the planning process used to develop this plan, including how it was prepared, who was involved in the process, and how all of the involved agencies participated.

2.1 Description of the Planning Process

The Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan was developed through a collaborative process involving all of the organizations and agencies detailed in Section 1.0 of this document. The County's local coordinator contacted these organizations directly to invite their participation and schedule meetings of the planning committee. The planning process included 5 distinct phases which were in some cases sequential (step 1 then step 2) and in some cases intermixed (step 4 completed though out the process):

1. **Collection of Data** about the extent and periodicity of wildfires in and around Yellowstone County. This included an area encompassing Big Horn, Treasure, Rosebud, Musselshell, Golden Valley, Stillwater, and Carbon Counties to insure a robust dataset for making inferences about fires in Yellowstone County specifically; this included a wildfire extent and ignition profile.
2. **Field Observations and Estimations** about wildfire risks including fuels assessments, juxtaposition of structures and infrastructure to wildland fuels, access, and potential treatments by trained wildfire specialists.
3. **Mapping** of data relevant to wildfire control and treatments, structures, resource values, infrastructure, fire prone landscapes, and related data.
4. **Facilitation of Public Involvement** from the formation of the planning committee, to a public mail survey, news releases, public meetings, public review of draft documents, and acceptance of the final plan by the signatory representatives.
5. **Analysis and Drafting of the Report** to integrate the results of the planning process, providing ample review and integration of committee and public input, followed by acceptance of the final document.

2.2 The Planning Team

Planning efforts were led by the Project Co-Directors, Dr. William E. Schlosser, Tera R. King, B.S., and Gary Ellingson, B.S., of Northwest Management, Inc. Dr. Schlosser's education includes 4 degrees in natural resource management (A.S. geology; B.S. forest and range management; M.S. natural resource economics & finance; Ph.D. environmental science and regional planning). Mrs. King and Mr. Ellingson both hold bachelor's degrees in Forest Resource Management.

They led a team of resource professionals, city and rural fire protection, law enforcement, State of Montana Disaster and Emergency Services, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs; also included were fire mitigation specialists, resource management professionals, and hazard mitigation experts.

The planning team met with many residents of the county during the inspections of communities, infrastructure, and hazard abatement assessments. This methodology, when coupled with the other approaches in this process, worked adequately to integrate a wide spectrum of observations and interpretations about the project.

The planning philosophy employed in this project included the open and free sharing of information with interested parties. Information from federal and state agencies was integrated into the database of knowledge used in this project. Meetings with the committee were held throughout the planning process to facilitate a sharing of information between cooperators.

When the public meetings were held, many of the committee members were in attendance and shared their support and experiences with the planning process and their interpretations of the results.

2.2.1 Multi-Jurisdictional Participation

CFR requirement §201.6(a)(3) calls for multi-jurisdictional planning in the development of community wildfire protection plans which impact multiple jurisdictions. This Community Wildfire Protection Plan is applicable to the following Jurisdictions:

- Yellowstone County, Montana
- City of Billings
- City of Laurel
- Town of Broadview

All of these jurisdictions were represented on the planning committee, in public meetings, and participated in the development of hazard profiles, risk assessments, and mitigation measures. The monthly planning committee meetings were the primary venue for authenticating the planning record. However, additional input was gathered from each jurisdiction in a combination of the following ways:

- Planning committee leadership visits to scheduled municipality public meeting (e.g., County Commission meetings, City Hall meetings) where planning updates were provided and information was exchanged.
- One-on-one visits between the planning committee leadership and the representatives of the municipality (e.g., meetings with County Commissioners, or City Councils in chambers).
- Special meetings at each jurisdiction by the planning committee leadership requested by the municipality involving elected officials (Mayor and County Commissioners, County Assessor, Sheriff), appointed officials (e.g. City Police, Disaster and Emergency Services Director), municipality employees, local volunteers (e.g., fire district volunteers), business community representatives, and local citizenry.
- Written correspondence was provided monthly between the planning committee leadership and each municipality updating the cooperators in the planning process, making requests for information, and facilitating feedback.

Planning committee leadership (referenced above) included: Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services, Dr. William E. Schlosser and Tera King, of Northwest Management, Inc., Dianne Lehm from the Big Sky Economic Development Authority, and the Bureau of Land Management.

Like other rural areas of Montana and the USA, Yellowstone County's human resources have many demands put on them in terms of time and availability. Recognizing this, many of the

jurisdictions decided to identify a representative from the jurisdiction to cooperate on the planning committee and then report back to the remainder of their organization on the process and serve as a conduit between the planning committee and the jurisdiction. This was the case with the Yellowstone County Commissioners where one of the Commissioners would attend the planning committee meetings as a regular attendee.

At the city level, the city mayors were represented in a variety of ways. The individual mayors commonly appointed a representative from the municipality to provide this representation on the committee meetings. For example, Jenny Johnson, Laurel City Councilperson represented the Mayor of the City of Laurel. The planning committee leadership provided communications and feedback with the municipality directly to insure the multi-jurisdictional planning necessitated by this process.

2.3 Public Involvement

Public involvement in this plan was made a priority from the inception of the project. There were a number of ways that public involvement was sought and facilitated. In some cases this led to members of the public providing information and seeking an active role in protecting their own homes and businesses, while in other cases it led to the public becoming more aware of the process without becoming directly involved in the planning process.

2.3.1 News Releases

Under the auspices of the Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Committee, news releases were submitted to the local area newspapers, television stations, and radio broadcast networks. The following is an example of one of the press releases submitted during the planning process.

Yellowstone County Plans to Mitigate Wildfire Risk In and Out of Cities of Billings, Laurel and Broadview

Yellowstone County Commissioners have created a Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan Committee to complete a Wildfire Mitigation Plan for Yellowstone County as part of the National Fire Plan and Healthy Forests Restoration Act as authorized by Congress and the White House. The Wildfire Mitigation Plan, funded through a grant from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), will include risk analysis at the community level with predictive models for where fires are likely to ignite and where they are likely to spread rapidly once ignited. Northwest Management, Inc. (NWM) has been retained by Yellowstone County to provide wildfire risk assessments, mapping, field inspections, and interviews, and to collaborate with the committee to prepare the plan. The committee includes rural and wildland fire districts, land managers, elected officials, agency representatives, and others. NWM specialists are conducting analyses of fire prone landscapes and making recommendations for potential treatments. Specific activities for homes, structures, infrastructure, and resource capabilities will be proposed as part of the analysis.

One of the most important steps in gathering information about fire risk in Yellowstone County is to conduct a homeowner's survey. NWM, in cooperation with local fire officials, will mail a brief survey to randomly selected homeowners across the county seeking input about home construction materials, proximity to water sources, and other risk factors surrounding homes. This survey is very important to the success of the plan. Those homeowners that receive a survey are asked to please take the time to complete it, thereby benefiting the community overall.

The planning team, along with commissioner participation, will be conducting public meetings to

discuss preliminary findings and to seek public involvement in the planning process in early October. A notice on the date and location of these meetings will be posted in local newspapers.

For more information on the Fire Mitigation Plan for Yellowstone County contact Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services Director at 406-256-2775 or Marv Jochems, Billings City Fire Chief at 406-657-8420.

2.3.2 Newspaper Articles

Committee and public meeting announcements were published in the local newspaper ahead of each meeting. The following are examples of newspaper announcements that ran in the *Billings Gazette*, the *Yellowstone County News*, and the *Laurel Outlook*.

Figure 2.1. *Billings Gazette* announcement published on September 28th, September 30th, and October 2nd, 2005.

Yellowstone County values your input!

Please join us to learn about the **Community Wildfire Protection Plan** and how you can protect yourself and your property from wildfire.

Yellowstone County Commissioners and the Wildfire Mitigation Committee are seeking public input and comment on the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Take this opportunity to review the preliminary findings, draft plan, provide input on historical data, and participate in discussions of at risk areas.

Laurel Monday, October 3, 7 pm Laurel Fire Hall	Worden/Huntley/Shepherd Tuesday, October 4, 7:00 pm Worden VFW
Billings Tuesday, October 4, 9:30 am Yellowstone County Courthouse Room 403	Broadview Wednesday, October 5, 7:00 pm Broadview Community Center
Wednesday, October 5, 12:00 pm Yellowstone County Courthouse Room 105	Lockwood Thursday, October 6, 7:00 pm Lockwood School

For more information contact Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Emergency and General Services Director and Fire Warden at 256-2775.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan is funded through a grant from the Bureau of Land Management

Figure 2.2. *Laurel Outlook* announcement published on September 28th, 2005.

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Community Wildfire Protection Plan
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and your property from wildfire.

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Community Wildfire Protection Plan is funded through a grant from the Bureau of Land Management

Figure 2.3. *Billings Gazette* article published on October 1st, 2005.

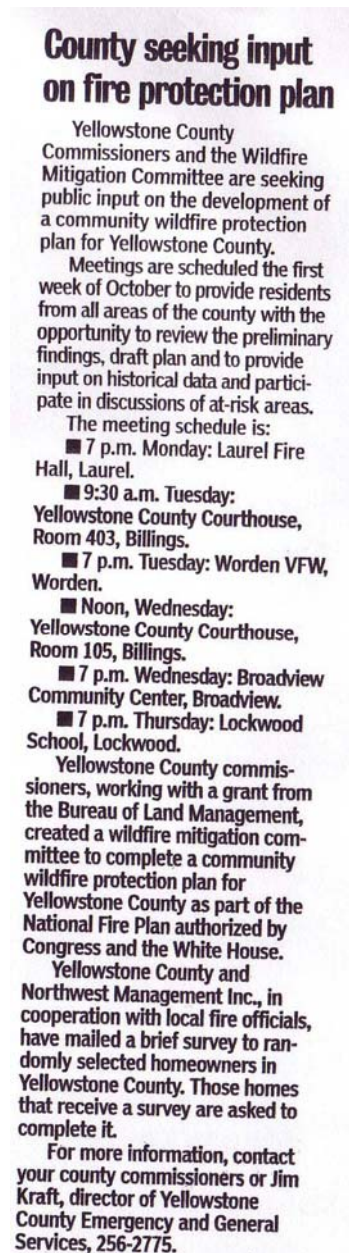


Figure 2.4. *Billings Gazette* article published on October 7th, 2005.

County drafting wildfire strategy

By BECKY SHAY
Of The Gazette Staff

Wildfire can be a formidable foe and the chance to fight it may be closer than you think.

To help residents and responders be prepared for the wildfires, Yellowstone County is working on a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

The document and projects will fit into the county's "all hazards plan" that was completed last year and covers potential problems as minor as hail and as devastating as terrorism, said to Tera King, who works for the county's consultant, Northwest Management Inc.

A committee of about 70 people has worked to develop the plan, which identifies areas that are at the most risk for fires that could damage private and public lands, buildings and infrastructure.

King said the committee hopes to hear from residents if they think there are areas that are not included or that should be made priorities.

Some of the projects areas identified so far include lands located in and around Buffalo Trail and Clapper Flats in the Laurel area, Echo Canyon toward Molt, Alkali Creek and Rehberg Ranch in the Billings area, areas in Blue Creek, Emerald Hills near Lockwood, High Trails in the Pryor Creek area, and Pleasant Hollow north of Shepherd.

King said work will include education and awareness efforts and thinning projects. The key to implementing the plan, she said, will be getting landowners to be proactive and take some responsibility to reduce risks, such as by thinning dying trees and removing brush around their buildings. Other objectives in the plan are to equip and train fire departments, she said.

"What we're trying to do is be prepared before we actually have a catastrophic fire," King said.

It is easier, and cheaper, to be prepared and mitigate fire hazards than to try to rehabilitate after a blaze, King said.

The plan is still being developed but should be reviewed by the committee at the end of this month. The draft plan will be made public in late November, and residents will have another chance to comment. King said she hopes the county commissioners and local city councils will be able to adopt the plan by early next year.

Several state and federal agencies that are partners in the plan will also sign off, she said. It will then become part of those agencies' fire planning documents.

Once local governments adopt the plan, the county will be eligible for more grant money, including funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, King said.

The county has already received \$170,000 through the Bureau of Land Management. The grant is paying for the assessments and developing the draft plan. After paying the consultant, the county should have \$100,000 to \$110,000 to use for project work, said Jim Kraft, the county's director of emergency and general services, whose office is overseeing the plan.

Figure 2.5 Yellowstone County News article published on October 7th, 2005.

County gets serious about wildfire risks

by Evelyn Pyburn

BILLINGS - It's time to get on with actually doing some of the things that are necessary to reduce risks of wildfires in Yellowstone County. That was the loud and clear message from Yellowstone County Commissioners Bill Kennedy and Jim Reno as they listened to a report about a wildfire mitigation study that is nearing completion. Commissioner John Ostlund was absent from Tuesday's regular weekly meeting of the board.

Jim Kraft, the county's Director of Emergency Services, made the presentation before the commissioners, during one of five hearings that are planned during the

week at various locations in the county, with the final one being held at Lockwood School, Thursday evening, 7 p.m. A draft of the plan will then be submitted for final approval of a committee that has been designated to oversee its development.

Terra King of NW Management, the firm that has been developing the plan, explained that every county in the nation was required by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) to develop a plan to mitigate wildfires in order to qualify for FEMA grants in the future.

Yellowstone County has already been the recipient of

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Wildfire...

(Continued from page 1)

some pretty hefty grants that the commissioners want to direct to addressing the priorities that have been identified in the county as needed to reduce the potential of wildfire destruction.

In September 2003 the Bureau of Land Management awarded the county \$43,000 for Hazardous Fuel Reduction projects and another \$100,000 for planning efforts. Subsequently, \$10,045 and another \$17,170 in grants were awarded for a regional educational awareness campaign for total awards to the county of \$170,215. Approximately \$36,300 has been spent on the study.

"I would favor one less plan and have trees and brush gone," said Commissioner Reno.

"I would agree," said Commissioner Kennedy. "We need to prioritize."

Kennedy asked about the prospects of getting addi-

tional grants. Diane Lehm with the Big Sky Economic Development Authority, an agency which was contracted with to administer the grants, explained that there were more grants available. The size and terms of the grants are dependent upon the project for which they are applied, she said. A typical grant size might be \$30,000 or \$40,000, she suggested.

A top priority in the county which emerged from the study is the need for dry hydrants (dry hydrants are not the least bit dry, in that they are water storage units). Other needs included such things as tree removal, signage, equipment, training and education.

The county already has some dry hydrants, explained Kraft, some of which were built by the fire districts. Another 10 to 20 were identified as being needed in the study. Dry hydrants are often required, now, in the development of subdivisions.

Reno asked about the availability of grants to build the hydrants, and whether they required matching funds. Kraft said that grant money is available for that, and in some cases it's available with only a 10 percent required match, which could be beneficial to defray costs for subdivisions.

Lehm emphasized the importance of education and information "so the homeowners understand how to mitigate their risks." Areas in which property is particularly at risk to the threat of wildfires include Emerald Hills, Briarwood, Rehberg Estates, Buffalo Trail, Pleasant Hallow, Echo Canyon and Clapper Flats.

Meetings that have already been held regarding the wildfire plan have drawn strong interest from among homeowners in those areas, said commissioners.

Kraft said that they plan to make a lot of information available to the homeowners in such areas with "the idea to convince them to make their home defensible."

Kennedy noted that in several areas property owners indicated an interest in having the same kind of permanent fire ban that is imposed in Emerald Hills.

A citizen present at the meeting, Bob Fears, spoke in opposition to that idea, point-

ing out that controlled burning is one means of mitigating fire risks. He said that he is the Fire Committee Chairman for the Yellowstone Rifle Club on Molt Road. "We use fire as a mitigating tool," he said, noting that in 50 years they never had to worry much about the threat of fires. It's only been in the last three years, he said, that they have done controlled burns to reduce fuel levels. They also closed the club for 90 days, much to the consternation of their membership.

He said their biggest concern is neighbors who do not do anything to reduce the fire danger, and those neighbors include the City of Billings with Phipps Park and CRP land "where weeds are pocket high."

"We would like to see a requirement that CRP holders create fire breaks around their land," he said, adding. "We are ahead of the curve and would not like to get caught up in regulations that would not allow us to continue."

Figure 2.6 *Yellowstone County News* article published on December 9th, 2005.

County seeks comments on proposed Community Wildfire Protection Plan

BILLINGS - The Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been completed in draft and is available to the public for review and comment at locations throughout the county.

The plan includes risk analysis at the community level with predictive models for where fires are likely to ignite and where they are likely to spread once ignited. The coordination for this effort is being provided by Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Director with funding from a Bureau of Land Management grant. The committee includes rural and wildland fire districts, land managers, elected officials, agency representatives and others.

The draft plans will be available in the communities of Billings, Laurel, Broadview, Huntley, Shepherd, Lockwood, Molt, Custer and Worden, as well as on the Yellowstone County website at www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/.

For more information on the plan or if you have ques-

tions, contact Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County DES Director at 256-2775.

Draft Plans will be available at the following locations Dec. 2, 2005- Jan. 11, 2006:

Department of Disaster and Emergency Services
Yellowstone County Courthouse
217 North 27th, Room 312
Billings, MT 59101

Billings Library City and County Planning Office
4th Floor
510 North Broadway
Billings, MT 59101

Huntley Post Office
155 Northern Avenue
Huntley, MT 59037

Shepherd Post Office
5450 Carey Avenue
Shepherd, MT 59079

Custer Post Office
413 2nd Avenue
Custer, MT 59024

Lockwood Fire District
3329 Driftwood Lane
Billings, MT 59101

Figure 2.7 *Billings Gazette* article published December 18th, 2005.

Yellowstone County wants your input!

The Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been completed and is available for public review and comment at the listed locations:

Department of Disaster and Emergency Services Yellowstone County Courthouse 217 N 27th St., Room 312 Billings, MT 59101	Billings Library City and County Planning Office 4th Floor 510 N Broadway Billings, MT 59101
Custer Post Office 413 2nd Avenue Custer, MT 59024-9759	Laurel City Hall 115 West 1st Street Laurel, MT 59044
Worden Post Office 2427 Main Street Worden, MT 59088-2227	Shepherd Post Office 5450 Carey Avenue Shepherd, MT 59079-9701
Broadview Community Center Broadview, MT 59015	Lockwood Fire District 3329 Driftwood Lane Billings, MT 59101
Prairie Wind Cafe 110 Wolfskill Avenue Molt, MT 59057	Huntley Post Office 155 Northern Avenue Huntley, MT 59037-9701

web site: <http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.us>

For more information or to comment on the plan, contact Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Disaster (DES) Director at (406) 256-2775.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan is funded through a grant from the Bureau of Land Management

Figure 2.8 *Laurel Outlook* article published December 21st, 2005.

Yellowstone County Wants Your Input

The Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been completed and is available for public review and comment at the listed locations.

Department of Disaster and Emergency Services Yellowstone County Courthouse 217 North 27th , Room 312 Billings, MT 59101	Lockwood Fire District 3329 Driftwood Lane Billings, MT 59101
Billings Library City and County Planning Office (4th Floor) 510 North Broadway Billings, MT 59101	Laurel City Hall 115 West 1st Street Laurel, Montana 59044
Custer Post Office 413 2nd Avenue Custer, MT 59024-9759	Broadview Community Center Broadview, Montana 59015
Worden Post Office 2427 Main Street Worden, MT 59088-2227	Huntley Post Office 155 Northern Avenue Huntley, MT 59037-9701
	Prairie Winds Café 110 Wolfskill Avenue Molt, Montana 59057
	Shepherd Post Office 5450 Carey Avenue Shepherd, MT 59079-9701

Web site: <http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/>
For more information or to comment on the Plan contact,
Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency
Services (DES) Director at 406-256-2775.

Figure 2.9 *Yellowstone County News* article published December 23rd, 2005.

Yellowstone County Wants Your Input

The Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been completed and is available for public review and comment at the listed locations.

Department of Disaster and Emergency Services Yellowstone County Courthouse 217 North 27th, Room 312 Billings, MT 59101		Billings Library City and County Planning Office (4th floor) 510 North Broadway Billings, MT 59101
Custer Post Office 413 2nd Avenue Custer, MT 59024-9759	Worden Post Office 2427 Main Street Worden, MT 59088-2227	Lockwood Fire District 3329 Driftwood Lane Billings, MT 59101
Laurel City Hall 115 West 1st Street Laurel, MT 59044	Broadview Community Center Broadview, MT 59015	Huntley Post Office 155 Northern Avenue Huntley, MT 59037-9701
Prairie Winds Cafe 110 Wolfskill Avenue Molt, MT 59057	Shepherd Post Office 5450 Carey Avenue Shepherd, MT 59079-9701	Web Site: http:// www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/

For more information or to comment on the plan, contact Jim Kraft, Yellowstone
County Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Director, at 406-256-2775.

2.3.3 Public Mail Survey

In order to collect a broad base of perceptions about wildland fire and individual risk factors of homeowners in Yellowstone County a mail survey was conducted. The survey was completed during 2005. Using the cadastral database of landowners in Yellowstone County, homeowners from the county were identified. Approximately 250 residents of Yellowstone County were randomly selected to receive mail surveys.

The public mail survey developed for this project has been used in the past by Northwest Management, Inc., during the execution of other Hazard Mitigation Plans. The survey used The Dillman Total Design Method (Dillman 1978) as a model to schedule the timing and content of letters sent to the selected recipients. Copies of each cover letter, mail survey, and communication are included in the Appendices.

The first in the series of mailings was sent September 21st, 2005, and included a cover letter, a survey, and an offer of receiving a custom GIS map of the area of their selection in Yellowstone County if they would complete and return the survey. The free map incentive was tied into assisting their community and helping their interests by participating in this process. Each letter also informed residents about the planning process. A return self-addressed envelope was included in each packet. A postcard reminder was sent to the non-respondents on October 4th, 2005, encouraging their response. A final mailing, with a revised cover letter urging with them to participate, was sent to non-respondents on October 11th, 2005.

Surveys were returned during the months of September, October, November, and December. A total of 125 residents responded to the survey as of January 10th, 2006. The effective response rate for this survey was 50%. Statistically, this response rate allows the interpretation of all of the response variables significantly at the 99% confidence level.

2.3.3.1 Survey Results

A summary of the survey's results will be presented here and then referred back to during the ensuing discussions on the need for various treatments, education, and other information.

Of the 125 respondents in the survey, approximately 25% were from the Billings area, 16% from Huntley, 15% were from Shepherd, 14% from Laurel, 8% from Ballantine, 8% from Worden, with the remaining respondents from other areas in the county.

The vast majority of the respondents (98%) correctly identified that they have emergency telephone 911 services in their area. When asked if their home was protected by a local fire department 13% *incorrectly* responded that they did not. Of the 87% that said they were protected, 26% said that the average response time by a fire department to their home was less than 10 minutes, 48% thought the average response time was between 10 and 20 minutes, and 20% of respondents thought that a fire department would be there within 20 to 30 minutes.

Respondents were asked to indicate the type of roofing material covering the main structure of their home. Approximately 67% of respondents indicated their homes were covered with a composite material (asphalt shingles). About 19% indicated their homes were covered with a metal (e.g., aluminum, tin) roofing material and 10% of the respondents indicated they have a wooden roofing material such as shakes or shingles.

When asked how many trees were within 250 feet of their homes 6% said none, 38% indicated less than 10, 40% said between 10 and 25, and 15% indicated more than 25. When asked how many were within 75 feet, 59% responded less than 10, 27% said between 10 and 25, and only 6% said more than 25. 89% of respondents replied that they had a lawn and 89% of those that had a lawn keep it green year round.

The average driveway length of respondents to the survey was 441.5 feet long (0.08 miles). The longest reported was 10,560 feet (2.0). Of those respondents (6%) with a driveway over ½ mile long, about half, 53%, do not have turnouts allowing two vehicles to pass. 7% of those respondents with a driveway indicated having a dirt surface, while 68% had gravel or rock and 25% had a paved driveway. Approximately 73% of the respondents indicated an alternate escape route was available in an emergency which cuts off their primary driveway access.

100% of respondents indicated they have some type of tools to use against a wildfire that threatens their home. Table 2.1 summarizes these responses.

Table 2.1. Percent of homes with indicated fire fighting tools in Yellowstone County.

97% – Hand tools (shovel, Pulaski, etc.)
23% – Portable water tank
14% – Stationery water tank
27% – Pond, lake, or stream water supply close
13% – Water pump and fire hose
82% - Well or cistern
19% – Equipment suitable for creating fire breaks (bulldozer, cat, skidder, etc.)

Respondents were asked to complete a fuel hazard rating worksheet to assess their home's fire risk rating. The following is an example of the worksheet and a summarization of responses (Table 2.2).

Circle the ratings in each category that best describes your home.

Table 2.2. Fuel Hazard Rating Worksheet		Rating
Fuel Hazard	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	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		

Table 2.3. Percent of respondents in each risk category as determined by the survey responses.

00% – Extreme Risk = 26 + points
02% – High Risk = 16–25 points
42% – Moderate Risk = 7–15 points
56% – Low Risk = 6 or less points

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding mitigation activities they had recently done or currently do on their property. The first question asked if they conducted a periodic fuels reduction program near their home; about half; 49% said that they did. Respondents were also asked if livestock was grazed around their home and 40% indicated that there was.

Finally, respondents were asked “If offered in your area, would members of your household attend a free or low cost, one-day training seminar designed to share with homeowners how to reduce the potential for casualty loss surrounding your home?” A strong majority, 59% of respondents, indicated a desire to participate in this type of training.

Homeowners were also asked, “How Hazard Mitigation projects should be funded in the areas surrounding homes, communities, and infrastructure such as power lines and major roads?” Responses are summarized in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4. Public Opinion of Hazard Mitigation Funding Preferences.

	100% Public Funding	Cost-Share (Public & Private)	Privately Funded (Owner or Company)
Home Defensibility Projects →	22%	40%	38%
Community Defensibility Projects →	51%	43%	6%
Infrastructure Projects Roads, Bridges, Power Lines, Etc. →	69%	22%	9%

We wish to thank all Yellowstone County residents completing and returning these surveys.

2.3.4 Committee Meetings

The following list of people who participated in the planning committee meetings, volunteered time, or responded to elements of the Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan’s preparation.

NAME	ORGANIZATION
• Alan Riley.....	Lockwood Fire District #8
• Annette Cabrera	Yellowstone County GIS
• Aura Lindstrand	Yellowstone County/City Planning
• Bill Kennedy.....	Yellowstone County Commissioner
• Bob Meidinger.....	Bureau of Land Management
• Bob Fears	Yellowstone Rifle Club
• Bryan Juhas.....	Broadview City Council
• Daniel Krum	Worden Fire District #4
• Darrell Kurk.....	Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
• Dena Lang	Bureau of Land Management

- Dianne Lehm Big Sky Economic Development Authority
- E. J. Jensen Huntley Project Fire Service Area
- Eric Chapman Bureau of Land Management
- Eric Gilsrud City of Billings Forester
- Gary Colley Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
- George Richards..... Shepherd Fire Department
- Greg Smith..... Molt Volunteer Fire Department
- Irv Leach Bureau of Land Management
- Jack Welsh Billings Urban Fire Service Area
- Jan Wheeler..... Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Jenny Johnson..... City of Laurel
- Jim Kraft..... Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services
- Jim Roessler Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Jim Ziegler Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
- John Ostlund..... Yellowstone County Commissioner
- John Raisler..... Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Jon Rutt Laurel Fire District #5
- JT Smith..... Beartooth Resource Conservation and Development Council
- Keith Bauer Blue Creek Fire Service Area
- Kenneth Kaufman..... Shepherd Fire Service Area
- Larry Johnson..... Broadview Fire District #3
- Lloyd Weber..... Laurel Fire District #7
- Marv Jochems Billings Fire Department
- Michael Jansen..... Broadview Fire District #3
- Mike Dannenberg Bureau of Land Management
- Mike Linder Yellowstone County Sheriff's Office
- Mike Spini Billings Fire Department
- Monte Dvorak Worden Volunteer Fire Department
- Paul Aaby Blue Creek Fire Service Area
- Rick Cortez III Blue Creek Volunteer Fire Department
- Robby Badgett..... Broadview Fire District #3
- Robert Guenther..... Lockwood Fire District
- Roger Boss Yellowstone County Park Board
- Sandy Brooks Bureau of Land Management
- William Cummins..... Lockwood Fire District #8

- William Jones.....Broadview Fire District #3
- David McKinney.....Lockwood Fire District #8

2.3.4.1 Committee Meeting Notes

Committee Meetings were scheduled and held on the dates indicated with each entry. This information is useful to observe what topics were discussed, who participated, and the source of recommendations made in this planning process.

2.3.4.1.1 August 18th, 2005 – Yellowstone County Courthouse

Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Department of Emergency Services, opened the meeting and explained that funds had been obtained from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to assist Yellowstone County with the development of a Wildfire Mitigation Plan. The purpose of the plan is to identify where wildfire hazards exist and to identify ways that existing hazards can be mitigated. Hopefully the plan will assist with the goal to develop “firewise subdivisions” within the county. Tera King and Gary Ellingson, staff members of Northwest Management, Inc (NMI) were introduced. NMI is a natural resource consulting firm and was selected to assist Yellowstone County with the development of its Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

Tera King asked audience members to introduce themselves to begin the meeting. An Attendance Roster, Meeting Agenda, and Timeline for Completion were distributed to attendees.

Tera presented a power point presentation (see attached) that provided an overview of the process involved with the development of a Wildfire Mitigation plan. Tera then distributed the draft Community Assessments and encouraged committee members to provide comments as their input is vital if the planning process is to be successful.

Several committee members offered comment during the presentation.

Comments included:

- It’s important that the committee define the wildland urban interface boundary. The boundary determination will not be strictly based on a mathematical equation.
- The community name of Shepherd (check spelling!) is spelled incorrectly.
- Lockwood should have a community assessment completed.
- Blue Creek and Duck Creek should be treated as separate communities.
- Documents associated with the mitigation plan should be made available on the county website (community assessments, public survey, etc.).

Tera distributed the draft Yellowstone County Fire Mitigation Plan Survey that will be mailed to approximately 235 households (probably more to account for the large population of Billings) in Yellowstone County. Committee members were asked to review the document and submit their comments to Jim Kraft Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services (DES) Director by Friday, August 26th. The survey will be mailed out the following week.

Comments regarding the survey included:

- The survey seems to focus on homeowners and “backyard type” wildfire hazards. It’s important to consider completing risk assessments for outlying areas on other ownerships.

Tera distributed a draft Press Release for comment by the committee. Additional written comments should be provided to Jim Kraft by August 26, 2005.

Comments regarding the press release included:

- The survey could be mentioned in the press release and should be made available on the county website so that volunteers could complete it.
- Yellowstone County can make arrangements for distribution of the press release.
- The press release should mention that project funding was provided by the BLM.
- The City of Billings should be mentioned so that city residents know that they are included in the process.

Tera went on to review the timeline for completion of the mitigation plan and proposed meeting dates.

Comments regarding the proposed timeline included:

- The proposed public meeting dates are Oct 4-6 or the week prior.
- Evening meetings are preferred.
- Suggested locations for public meetings are: Huntley-Worden, Lockwood, Billings, Broadview, Custer, Blue Creek/Duck Creek, Laurel, and Shepherd.
- The press release for public meetings should include a map that indicates the meeting locations and shows residents that if they live within that area indicated on the map that the meeting pertains to them.
- The county commissioners meet on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 am and this would be a good time to present information that is to be presented at the public meetings.

Tera distributed a draft vision statement. Comments or changes to the vision statement should be submitted to Jim Kraft by August 26th.

The meeting ended with a general discussion regarding the planning process of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan. The next committee meeting was slated for September 15th, 2005.

2.3.4.1.2 September 15th, 2005 – Deaconess Billings Clinic

Tera King of Northwest Management, Inc. began the meeting by making introductions and passing around a sign in sheet. There were several housekeeping items on the agenda before the committee broke into working groups. The public survey has been modified and will be mailed by September 20th. There has also been several edits to the community assessments, which have been incorporated to date. Comments and edits on the assessments can still be sent to Tera at Northwest Management, Inc. There has been some response by the fire departments on the Resources and Capabilities surveys, but Tera will begin calling departments who have not sent there's in next week.

Public meeting dates were proposed for the week of October 3rd – 6th with the following schedule.

Date	Target Community	Tentative Location	Time
October 3	Laurel	Laurel Fire Hall	7 pm
October 4	Billings	Commissioner's Office (televised)	9 am
October 4	Huntley/Worden/ Shepherd/Custer	Worden Elementary Cafeteria	7 pm

October 5	Broadview	Broadview Community Center	7 pm
October 6	Lockwood/Blue Creek/Emerald Hills	Lockwood School	7 pm

The final item on the agenda was a short presentation by Bill Schlosser of NMI explaining the features of the newly developed wall maps. Maps covered were: ownership, past fire history, historic fire regime, fire regime condition class, current fire severity, fire prone landscapes, wildland-urban interface, fire service areas, and topographic relief. During the discussion, it was pointed out that the past fire history for the county was limited. Jim Kraft mentioned that it would be beneficial to take the map to the Rural Fire Council meeting next Tuesday. Bill will send the information to Annette Cabrera, County GIS Department, who will make maps for this purpose.

After this discussion and question period, the committee broke into four groups focused on different areas of Yellowstone County. The goal of the groups was to identify hazardous areas, outline projects, and discuss the components of the significant infrastructure throughout the County. One topic that came up frequently was the role of the County's fire departments and their needs. The following notes were compiled from the each group's notes.

Broadview Group –

- Communications – need a repeater closer to the Broadview community
- There is a need to require new subdivisions to install water resources for fire suppression, i.e. dry hydrants, storage tanks, etc.
- Minimum road width standards are believed to be adequate across the County
- Buffalo Trail Area – Main County road is adequate. Most private roads are inaccessible to anything larger than a 1-ton truck. There are 100+ homes and structures located in this area, which is characterized by steep canyon walls and wildland vegetation. There are only two ways into this entire subdivision. Clappers Flat Subdivision is in the same situation, which contains 63 homes.
- Need a minimum countywide standard on private roads for emergency access. There are numerous areas across the county that are accessed via one-way in, one-way out.
- CRP lands – need to be able to treat to help reduce fire potential
- Broadview FD #3 does not respond to structural fires. They need to establish structural capabilities; however, there are several limitations; including lack of manpower and volunteers, lack of equipment, no personal protective equipment, and they lack a facility in which to house additional equipment.
- LUFSA needs new Type 3 WUI pumper truck, but their communication system is in good condition due to past grant. Communications with State DNRC is good, but an annual meeting would be helpful.
- Rural addressing is in progress and going well.
- Future issues – water availability and access in outlying subdivisions
- Lockwood/Emerald Hills has poor access and water availability

Laurel Group –

- There is a new substation on northern part of Laurel off Airport Road and a new subdivision northwest of Laurel.
- The intersection of Duck Creek Road and River Road has a history of past fire ignitions. There are a lot of new homes within this area.

- Clappers Flat – one way in and generally poor roads (inaccessible for standard pumper trucks). People in this area may be resistant to defensible space or other mitigation projects. This area also needs more water resources within the subdivision. Clapper Flats is approximately 7-8 miles from Laurel.
- Laurel FD needs 4x4 WUI pumper and a 1500-2000 gallon water tender.
- Duck Creek Road – there are a lot of new homes in the coulees
- Laurel VFD #8 protects the northern tip of Carbon County. There are two tanks in this area.
- Buffalo Trail – lots of expensive homes in the area. It takes over 20 minutes to get there from Laurel VFD. There are also address and signage issues in this area.
- City of Laurel needs an ambulance.
- There is a need for roadside fuel mitigation along many of the high risk roads.
- Education/Awareness – need training of the public of wildfire issues through the Fire Marshall office.

Huntley/Shepherd/Worden/Custer –

- Pryor Creek Subdivision south of Huntley – needs funding for dry hydrants and a 10,000 gallon storage tank.
- Need river access for dry hydrant near new bridge west of Pompey's Pillar.
- Need to install a buried 10,000 gallon tank at spring on W. Arrow Creek south of Ballantine.
- White Buffalo and Shadow Canyon RFD did home-to-home assessments
- Shadow Canyon could use fuel reduction project in brushy areas.
- Need a truck in the north end of district (Worden). DNRC Type 6 engine could sit at Clair Tempero's farm house.

Greater Billings Area –

- Lockwood maintains a wildland fire public education program
- County/City of Billings has revised their subdivision regulations
- Railroads tend to ignite several fires. The interstates also get a lot of ignitions.
- Most of the transmission lines throughout the County are on wooden poles; however, the high tension lines are metal.
- The BLM recreational pieces along the river may be a source of ignitions; however, this is rare. They would recommend that these areas are kept clean with developed camp sites and fire or barbeque pits.
- Billings FD has a regular inspection program for new construction homes that checks for access and wildland fuel issues.
- Lockwood FD has made a proposal to build an 8-10 bay facility.
- Several areas throughout the County have developed Neighborhood Plans, which helps make plans for future development.
- The Shepherd FD would like to construct a satellite station in the Hidden Lake subdivision. This would consist of a warm shed with a truck. The Shepherd FD already maintains 7 dry hydrants in the area.
- County/City of Billings can govern all subdivisions in the County, but they cannot govern use of private property. The committee would like to recommend Countywide Zoning (Annette has current zoning layer).
- Rehberg Project Area – defensible space, thinning of neighboring coulees, and education

- Emerald Hills Project Area – address access issues, defensible space, community defensible space, and education
- Alkali Creek Project Area – (developing area) address access issues, defensible space, and education
- Pine Hills Project Area – education
- Briarwood Project Area – some defensible space projects and education
- Pleasant Hollow Project Area – defensible space, address access on private drives, and some defensible space
- Indian Cliffs Project Area – thinning and defensible space
- Echo Canyon Project Area – education
- Secret Valley Project Area – address access issues (too steep) and education
- Hill Estates Project Area – (developing 40 lots and 1 dry hydrant) education and some defensible space
- High Trails Project Area – address access issues (too steep), some defensible space, and education
- Subdivisions on Jellison Road need annexed into the Blue Creek Fire Service Area

The next committee meeting will be on Wednesday October 19th. Reminder letters and emails with more information will be sent out prior to the meeting.

2.3.4.1.3 October 19th, 2005 – Billings Deaconess Hospital, Fortin Conference Center

William E. Schlosser, Northwest Management, Inc., opened the meeting (sign-in sheet was passed around). Pizza and beverages were available.

The purpose of the meeting was to go through the DRAFT Committee Review of the Yellowstone CWPP. Dr. Schlosser explained that the plan is not ready for distribution to the general public, and that this draft is the first time everyone on the committee has seen all of the components of the plan in one document. The dates of the committee review were set for October 20 through November 15. The committee will meet again on November 17 to review the public review draft, which will be available to the general public (and all committee members) until December 12th.

Each section of the document was talked about with discussions focusing on risk assessments, hazard profiles, community assessments and treatment priorities. The actual prioritization of the projects was discussed at length and it was agreed that the scoring criteria detailed in the recommendations section would be completed for all listed projects.

Edits were discussed and Dr. Schlosser asked everyone to reference the section of the document as opposed to the page number when sending in comments. Comments can be sent either to NMI or to Jim Kraft. Everyone was asked to have comments sent before November 15.

Requests for additional data were made of the committee. Dr. Schlosser said NMI would complete missing data concerning fire ignitions and extents. The supply of additional fire ignition data from the rural fire districts has been terrific as the fire districts have provided a lot of additional fire ignition data. NMI is working on digitizing this information and summarizing it for the plan. It will be available in the next draft version for public review.

The next meeting was set for November 17, 6:00 PM in Billings to review the Public Review Draft of the plan.

2.3.4.1.4 November 17th, 2005 – Emergency Operations Center in Billings

The meeting was called to order by Tera King of Northwest Management, Inc. at 6pm. The purpose of this committee meeting was to discuss the logistics of putting the Draft CWPP out for public review for the month of December. In order to accomplish this Tera asked for possible locations in each town for the document to be available for viewing by local citizens. The list decided on by the committee was as follows:

- Billings County Courthouse
- Yellowstone County Website
- Billings City Hall
- Laurel City Hall
- Broadview Community Center
- Shepherd High School Office
- Yellowstone County News in Huntley
- Custer School Library
- Worden School Central Office
- Lockwood Fire House
- Prairie Winds Café in Molt

The second item on the agenda was to go over significant changes to the Draft document since the last meeting including all of the comments and edits received from committee members. A brief summary of these changes includes: additional Resources and Capabilities sections from fire departments, additional wildfire extent and profile information, public survey results, prioritization and ranking of projects in Chapter 5, BIA information, updated lists of cooperators and logos, and the addition of the Molt community assessment. All of the maps and prioritization tables were also added to the Appendices document.

In further discussions the committee requested that an Executive Summary be written for the Commissioners before they sign the final plan. The committee would also like to have fuel mitigation along roads separated from the home defensibility project areas in the recommendations and prioritization. It would also be helpful if we listed in the wildfire profile how many ignitions each fire department was experiencing each year.

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was decided that the public review period should be left open until after the first of the year in order to accommodate the holiday season; thus, the next meeting date was not identified at this time.

2.3.5 Public Meetings

Public meetings were scheduled in a variety of communities in Yellowstone County during the hazard assessment phase of the planning process. Public meetings were scheduled to share information on the planning process, inform details of the hazard assessments, and discuss potential mitigation treatments. Attendees at the public meetings were asked to give their impressions of the accuracy of the information generated, and provide their opinions of potential treatments.

Wall maps detailing risk assessments, hazard profiles, and a slide show were presented at each meeting. Public meetings were conducted by Tera King on the following dates and locations:

2.3.5.1 October 3rd, 2005 – Laurel Fire Hall

Attendance:

Bill Kennedy	Yellowstone County Commissioner
Tera King	Northwest Management, Inc.
Jim Ziegler	Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
Gary Colley	Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
Bill Linger	Molt Volunteer Fire Department
Mat Kegling	Molt Volunteer Fire Department
Dennis Deppmeier	Rimrock Vista Estates
Gordon and Abby Brown	Residents
Sandra Miller	Residents
Ron and Linda Kesler	Rimrock Vista Estates
P. J. Smith	Molt Volunteer Fire Department
Stewart Brown	Residents
Nichole Brown	Residents
Duane Torby	Residents
David Charles	Residents
Patty Nordlund	Big Sky EDA
Dianne Lehm	Big Sky EDA
Darrell L. McGillen	Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
Kurt Markegard	Residents
Rob Harris	Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
Lori York	Residents
Silver Zubaith	Laurel Volunteer Fire Department
Irv Leach	Bureau of Land Management
Sandy Brooks	Bureau of Land Management

Jim Ziegler of the Laurel Volunteer Fire Department began by welcoming everyone to the meeting and making introductions.

Tera King from Northwest Management, Inc. gave an overview presentation of the Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Included in the presentation was a discussion of the planning process, key elements of the plan, a discussion of the wildland urban interface, proposed project areas, and several Yellowstone County maps. After the formal presentation, Tera opened it up for discussion and questions. Some of the key issues that came up were:

- The Clapper Flats subdivision already has land available to install an additional dry hydrant. There were many questions on how they should go about finding funding to complete this project. Tera King explained the benefits of having this project included in the County plan.
- One resident had questions regarding whether or not new homes in rural subdivisions were being GPS'd by the County and if this information was available to the public. Dianne Lehm from the Big Sky EDA said that the County was keeping up to date and gave her some contact names for more information.
- A resident from the Rimrock Vista Estates noted that subdivision covenants and codes generally restricted fuels reduction projects and could affect other types of on-the-ground fire mitigation projects.
- The Clapper Flats subdivision has several wildfire issues that could be potential mitigation projects including: excessive grass and other vegetation surrounding homes, access issues, and a lack of water resources.
- The Emerald Hills subdivision currently has a year round burn ban that seems to be helping reduce ignitions. Clapper Flats and Buffalo Trails subdivisions would also benefit from this type of no burning restriction. The Laurel Volunteer Fire Department

noted that although they already had some burning restrictions throughout the County, enforcement of these laws was difficult. Commissioner Kennedy said that he would bring this up at the next Rural Fire Committee meeting. It is important that all fire departments as well as law enforcement personnel were on the same page regarding burn bans.

- The Laurel Volunteer Fire Department said that the cities had a tendency to tell people to take their fireworks out into the County to light them off. This puts considerable pressure on the rural fire departments as well as increases the risk of a wildland fire.
- One problem with fuels reduction projects will be disposing of the waste. There will have to be some type of agreement with the refuge board as well as the cities to help dispose of slash and other waste from thinning and fuels reduction projects.

The County is working on new restrictions and codes for developing subdivisions that will help reduce the wildfire risk. Currently, fire departments do as many assessments of new subdivision as their manpower allows. The problem is generally with older subdivisions that already have established access routes, hydrants, etc.

2.3.5.2 October 4th, 2005 – Yellowstone County Courthouse, Commissioners Meeting

Jim Kraft, Yellowstone County Disaster and Emergency Services Director; Dianne Lehm, Big Sky EDA; and Tera King, Northwest Management, Inc. gave a short presentation at the regular meeting of the Yellowstone County Commissioners. Tera King gave a brief background and the current status of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan and then answered questions by the Commissioners. Commissioner Kennedy then opened the floor for public comment or questions. Bob Fears from the Yellowstone Rifle Club commented that the rifle club conducted an annual prescribed burn on their lands to reduce the fire risk. He thought it would also be beneficial if the neighboring property owners were to do some type of fuels reduction project due to the excess grass and sagebrush fuels in the area. Mr. Fears also commented that restrictions on burning or mowing on neighboring CRP lands increases the risk of wildfire.

2.3.5.3 October 4th, 2005 – Worden VFW Hall

Attendance:

Joe Feist	Ballantine
Tera King	Northwest Management, Inc.
Dan Krum	Worden Fire District #4
Monte Dvorak	Worden Fire Department
Joy Eshleman	Worden Fire Department
John Eshleman	Worden Fire Department
Stuart Andersen	Shepherd Volunteer Fire Dept.
Jim Kraft	Yellowstone County DES
Annie Rowe	Worden
William Jo Rowe	Worden

Tera King from Northwest Management, Inc. began the meeting by welcoming those who braved the storm to attend the meeting and making introductions. Tera then began the formal PowerPoint presentation and asked attendees to ask questions as she went through it. The group also spent considerable time discussing the wall maps.

Comments that came out of the meeting included:

- We need to add the Cedar Ridge subdivision on Highway 87 to the project areas map. This area is need of fuels reduction and home defensible space projects. This area also has some access issues with dead end roads and private driveways. Education and awareness projects would also be beneficial to the homeowners.
- The local fire departments want to do assessments of all the new subdivisions; however, they don't generally have the time or the money to get people out on the ground. It would be helpful to set up some type of program to help pay the firefighters for time spent doing this type of work.
- The Worden Volunteer Fire Department is in need of two 1000 gallon pumper trucks. One would be stationed in Huntley and the other in Pompey's Pillar. They are also in need of a heated two-bay equipment storage facility at Huntley and Worden needs to construct an addition to the Worden Fire Station.

2.3.5.4 October 5th, 2005 – Yellowstone County Courthouse

Attendance:

Tera King	Northwest Management, Inc.
Jack Welsh	Billings Urban FSA
Keith Kolstad	Blue Creek VFD
Mike Spini	Billings Fire Department
Rebecca Helvik	Big Sky EDA
Patty Nordlund	Big Sky EDA
Dianne Lehm	Big Sky EDA
Beth Woodson	Landowner

The noon meeting at the County Courthouse was not well attended due to power outages throughout the County including the Courthouse building. Tera King from Northwest Management, Inc. went through the PowerPoint presentation showing the group slides on the laptop computer and then led a discussion regarding how the funding opportunities through FEMA worked and how the County would go about applying for additional funding to carry out project implementation. Specific project areas and potential educational opportunities were also discussed.

2.3.5.5 October 5th, 2005 – Broadview Community Center

Attendance:

Tera King	Northwest Management, Inc.
Jim Kraft	Yellowstone County DES
Robby Badgett	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Mike Linder	Yellowstone County Sheriffs Office
Bill Jones	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Tim Jones	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Ben Heiken	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Unreadable	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Unreadable	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Larry Johnson	Broadview Rural Fire Dept
Byron ?	Broadview Councilman
Ralph Brewington	Broadview Councilman
Jr. Conover	Resident of Broadview

Sandy Brooks
Irv Leach

Bureau of Land Management
Bureau of Land Management

Tera King of Northwest Management, Inc. began the meeting by welcoming everyone and making introductions. Tera then gave an overview presentation of the Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Included in the presentation was a discussion of the planning process, key elements of the plan, a discussion of the wildland urban interface, proposed project areas, and several Yellowstone County maps. After the formal presentation, Tera opened it up for discussion and questions. Some of the key issues that came up were:

- Broadview has a very limited water supply. Presently, they only have 18,000 gallons available in the storage tank for the town. The pump on this system can only pump approximately 25 gallons per hour (i.e. it would take about 30 days to refill if emptied). They need to install a 100,000 gallon tank. Broadview received a \$100,000 grant to work with the School of Mines to locate new, more efficient well sites. They are also working on a long term project with the communities of Rygate, Lavina, Utica, and Roundup to install a well for the use by all communities. However, the water gained from this well project would be for household use only.
- The Broadview Rural Fire Department has fairly good equipment.
- They need some type of communications infrastructure. Brett Conover has donated land for a good tower site. They are also having trouble with the new narrow band frequencies not being able to reach over longer distances.
- Broadview Rural Fire Department would like to add on to their fire hall in order to house their 4,000 gallon tender.
- Outside of town the water supply is not bad due to stock tanks and farmers having their own mobile water tanks.

This group was very interested in the wall maps, so following the formal part of the meeting, there were several in depth discussions of the various maps.

2.3.5.6 October 6th, 2005 – Lockwood School

Attendance:

Tera King	Northwest Management, Inc.
Rebecca Helvik	Big Sky EDA
Dianne Lehm	Big Sky EDA
Becky Shay	Billings Gazette
Alan Riley	Lockwood Fire Department
Sandy Brooks	Bureau of Land Management
Eric Chapman	Bureau of Land Management

Tera King of Northwest Management, Inc. began the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and introducing those who came from the committee. Tera then gave an overview presentation of the Yellowstone County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Included in the presentation was a discussion of the planning process, key elements of the plan, a discussion of the wildland urban interface, proposed project areas, and several Yellowstone County maps. After the formal presentation, Tera opened it up for discussion and questions. Ms. Shay from the *Billings Gazette* asked for clarification on a few points stemming from the presentation, but otherwise there were no additional comments.

Figure 2.10. Public meeting slideshow overview.



The public meeting slide show (title slide above) is outlined below.

Table 2.5. Public meeting slide show.

Slide 1



Slide 2



Table 2.5. Public meeting slide show.

Slide 3

FEMA All Hazards Mitigation Plan
Yellowstone County Plan 2004

Natural & Manmade Hazards

- Flooding
- **Wildland Fire**
- Wind & Hail Storms
- Tornado
- Winter Storms
- Transportation/Mobile Accident
- Hazardous Materials Incident
- Terrorism/Bio-Terrorism
- Civil Disturbance/Riot/Labor Unrest
- Enemy Attack
- Plus several others



Each Hazard is one Chapter of the AHMP
Required by November 1, 2004 for all counties

Slide 4



Slide 5

FEMA Requirements

- Adoption by Local Government Body
- Multi-Jurisdictional Planning
- Identification of Hazards & Risk Assessment
 - Profiling Hazard Events
 - Mapping Juxtaposition of Hazards, Structures, Infrastructure
 - Potential Dollar Losses to Vulnerable Structures (B/C Analysis)
- Documented Planning Process
- Assessing Vulnerability
- Mitigation Goals
- Analysis of Mitigation Measures
- Monitoring, Evaluating & Updating the Plan (5 year cycles)
- Implementation Through Existing Programs
- Public Involvement

Slide 6

Wildfire Mitigation: National Policy

- **National Fire Plan (2000)**
 - Preparedness
 - Rehabilitation & Restoration
 - Hazardous Fuel Reduction
 - Community Protection
 - Accountability
- **Healthy Forests Restoration Act**

Slide 7

Healthy Forests Restoration Act

- Recognizes that community plans and priorities have an important role in shaping management on federal and non-federal lands.
- Emphasizes cross-boundary action.
- Engages all branches of government at the local level.

Slide 8

Key Issues from HFRA

- Where is the Wildland-Urban Interface?
- How should federal agencies prioritize their \$\$\$ and projects for community protection?
- What is the role of individuals and communities in reducing their own risk?

Table 2.5. Public meeting slide show.

Slide 9

HFRA Language

Wildland-Urban Interface ~ The HFRA gives communities the opportunity to define their own WUI boundary rather than using the default definition of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the community center.



Slide 10

HFRA Language

Prioritization ~ The HFRA directs the USFS and BLM to give special consideration to prioritized project areas and methods of treatment identified in a community plan.



Slide 11

HFRA Language

Individual Responsibility ~ The HFRA states that communities that have a community plan or have "taken proactive measures...to reduce fire risk on private property" should be prioritized for funding.



Slide 12

Recommendations

- WUI Safety & Policy
- People & Structures
- Infrastructure
- Resources & Capabilities
- Regional Land Management Recommendations

We will revisit this list at the end of the presentation...

Slide 13

Yellowstone County WUI Committee

Formed by County Commissioner's Office with membership determined by invitation from the County:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------|
| • County Departments | • USFS |
| • City Mayor Offices | • BLM |
| • City Fire Departments | • BIA |
| • Rural Fire Departments | • DNRC |
| | • RC&D |

Meetings are chaired by Northwest Management, Inc., representing the County Commissioner's Office

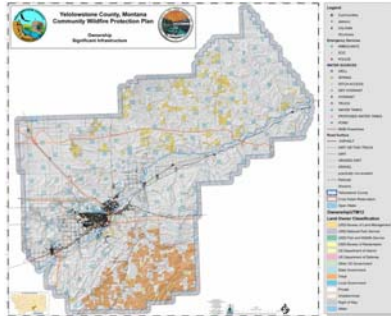
Slide 14

Hazard Mitigation Approach

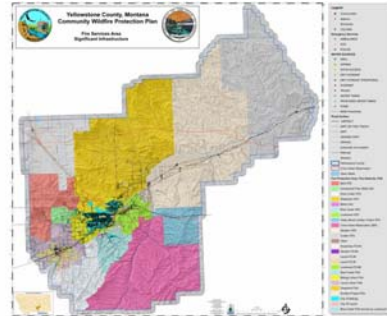
- Hazard Profile
- Risk Assessment
- Vulnerability Appraisal
- Mitigation Strategy Development
- Prioritization and Planning
- Implement the Plan!

Table 2.5. Public meeting slide show.

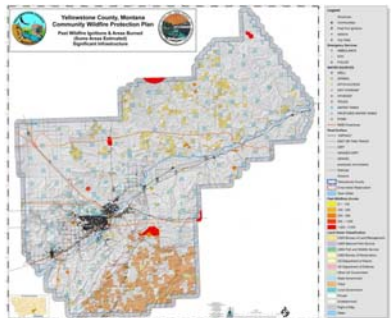
Slide 15



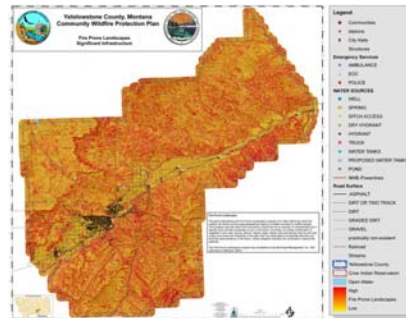
Slide 16



Slide 17



Slide 18



Slide 19

Wildland-Urban Interface



- **Interface Condition** – a situation where structures abut wildland fuels. There is a clear line of demarcation between the structures and the wildland fuels along roads or back fences. The development density for an interface condition is usually 3+ structures per acre;
- **Intermix Condition** – a situation where structures are scattered throughout a wildland area. There is no clear line of demarcation, the wildland fuels are continuous outside of and within the developed area. The development density in the intermix ranges from structures very close together to one structure per 40 acres;
- **Occluded Condition** – a situation, normally within a city, where structures abut an island of wildland fuels (park or open space). There is a clear line of demarcation between the structures and the wildland fuels along roads and fences. The development density for an occluded condition is usually similar to that found in the interface condition and the occluded area is usually less than 1,000 acres in size; and
- **Rural Condition** – a situation where the scattered small clusters of structures (ranches, farms, resorts, or summer cabins) are exposed to wildland fuels. There may be miles between these clusters.

Slide 20

Defining Yellowstone County's Wildland-Urban Interface

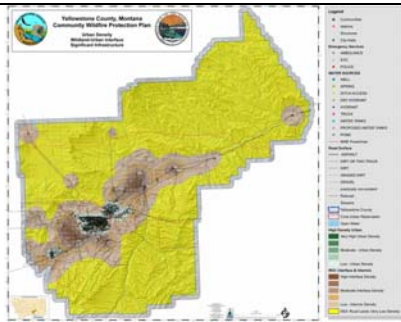


- Unique to each area & it changes over time
- Based on where structures are currently located
- Uses mathematical formulae and geospatial relationships to visually represent where the WUI exists
- *When you see it, you'll understand what we mean*

Slide 21

Slide 22

Table 2.5. Public meeting slide show.



Slide 23

Slide 24



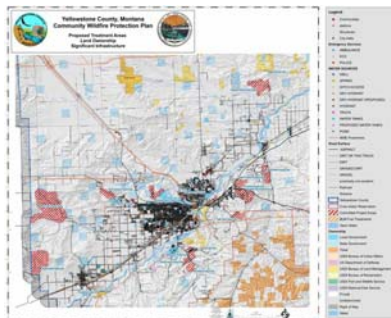
Preparedness

- City Fire Protection
- Rural Fire Protection
- Wildland Fire Protection



Slide 25

Slide 26



Public Involvement

- Public Mail Survey was sent to 250 households in Yellowstone County
- Planning Committee Meetings
- Press Releases & Advertisements
- Public Meetings around the County (x5)
- Public Review of the DRAFT Plans will be facilitated once all sections have been completed and reviewed by the committee



Slide 27

Slide 28

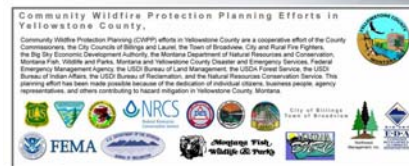
Table 2.5. Public meeting slide show.

Recommendations

- WUI Safety & Policy
- People & Structures
- Infrastructure
- Resources & Capabilities
- Regional Land Management Recommendations

Are we accomplishing these goals?

Cooperators



Slide 29



2.3.6 Documented Review Process

Reviews of sections of this document were conducted by the committee during the planning process as maps, summaries, and written assessments were completed. These individuals included fire mitigation specialists, firefighters, planners, elected officials, and others involved in the coordination process. Preliminary findings were discussed at the public meetings, where comments were collected and facilitated.

The results of these formal and informal reviews were integrated into a DRAFT Community Wildfire Protection Plan. This plan was given to members of the planning committee on October 19th, 2005 with comments provided by November 16th, 2005. Public review of the revised DRAFT document was made from November 29th until January 11th, 2006. All comments were integrated into the final version of the mitigation plan.

The final plans were prepared on February 28th, 2006. Adoption of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan was completed by the listed municipalities on the dates indicated in section 6.4 (Signature Pages) as being formally adopted on those dates by the municipalities. Other agencies and organizations indicated their cooperation and collaboration in the planning process.

2.3.7 Continued Public Involvement

Yellowstone County is dedicated to involving the public directly in review and updates of the Wildfire Protection Plan. The Yellowstone County Commissioners, through the Wildfire

Protection Plan Committee are responsible for the annual review and update of the plan as recommended in Chapter 5 of this document.

The public will have the opportunity to provide feedback about the Plan annually on the anniversary of the adoption of this plan, at the meeting of the County Commissioners. Copies of the Plan will be catalogued and kept at all of the appropriate agencies in the county. The existence and location of these copies will be publicized. The Plan also includes the address and phone number of the County Commissioners Office, responsible for keeping track of public comments on the Plan.

A public meeting will be held as part of each annual evaluation or when deemed necessary by the Wildfire Protection Plan Committee. The meetings will provide the public a forum for which they can express its concerns, opinions, or ideas about the plans. The County Commissioners will be responsible for using county resources to publicize the annual public meetings and maintain public involvement through the public access channel, webpage, and newspapers.