

Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council, Inc.
Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Date: March 14, 2019, Revised April 2019

Introduction

This Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was developed by the Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council, Inc. (501(c)3) with guidance and support from the County of San Diego, Julian/Cuyamaca Fire Protection District, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL-FIRE), and the United States Forest Service. This CWPP was developed to help clarify requirements and priorities for protection of persons, structures, land, livestock and pets in the Cuyamaca Woods area of Julian. The intent of this document is to describe and prioritize fire protection needs and planned actions in the mountain community of Cuyamaca Woods. This CWPP supplements San Diego County Planning and Development Services documents referenced in Appendix A.

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ADDENDUM – AUTHORS' CONTACT INFORMATION

This information is not included as part of the final public CWPP document for protection of the applicant's privacy as per the Privacy of Information Act. It will be attached as a separate document for internal use only and must be updated/revised periodically throughout the life of this document.

Section I: Collaboration

A. Community/Agencies/Fire Safe Councils

The representatives involved in the development of the Cuyamaca Woods Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) are included in the table below. Their organizations, roles and responsibilities are indicated as well.

Organization/Name	Roles / Responsibilities
<i>Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council, Inc. (501c(3))</i>	Primary development of the CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods and education of the community on fire safety methods.
Julian/Cuyamaca Fire Protection District	Provides local information and expertise. This could include community risk and value assessment, development of community fire protection priorities and establishment of fuel treatment areas and methods.
San Diego County Fire Authority	Provides input and expertise on County Standards and Regulations. Primary review of the CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.
County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services	Provides input and expertise on planning and hazard mitigation.
CAL FIRE	Facilitation of planning process and approval of CWPP process and minimum standards. Provides input and expertise on forestry fire and fuels, and Fire Wise concepts.
San Diego County Fire Safe Council	Provides educational outreach, information and support for pre-wildfire disaster planning, defensible space, fuel reduction and hazard assessment.
United States Forest Service	Provides input and expertise on federal lands forestry and fire, fuels and Fire Wise concepts. Assists in the development of community protection projects and priorities.

San Diego County Sheriff's Office	Provides local information and expertise for County Sheriff's jurisdictional region, including County land management activities. Provides input and expertise for emergency evacuation and escape route development.
US Fish and Wildlife Service	Provides local information and expertise for CDFW lands and the wildland urban interface, including fire prevention, fuels treatment and land management activities.
California State Parks Department	Provides local information and expertise for CDPR lands management activities related to vegetation management, fuels reduction, and healthy fire resilient ecosystems as a landowner adjacent to the Cuyamaca Woods community. Provides law enforcement support for the San Diego County Sheriff's Office.

B. Community Overview

Cuyamaca Woods (CW) is a 583-acre, off-grid, residential community comprising approximately 65 homes on 201 parcels in the unincorporated area of San Diego County, in the mountains 40 miles northeast of the City of San Diego. CW is located off Engineers Road, three to five miles northwest of Lake Cuyamaca, and six miles south of Julian. It is bordered by Cuyamaca Rancho State Park on the east, and tribal reservation lands on the northwest and private lands to the south. The elevation is 4,000 to 4,600 feet. All community roads are privately owned roads off Engineers Road, a county-maintained road. The community roads are all dead-end roads branching off of Engineers Road. Engineers Road connects to the east to Highway 79, and to the west to Boulder Creek Road.

The topography of Cuyamaca Woods is comprised of steeply sloped mountainsides. The community is west of, and lower than, adjacent North Peak. Primary vegetation consists of oak trees, pine trees, Manzanita and ceanothus. Roadside vegetation along Engineers Road frequently consists of dense chaparral. Both the oak trees and the pine trees have been damaged by borers and drought. The gold-spotted oak borer has caused substantial oak death in the last decade.

Cuyamaca Woods experiences high wind conditions, primarily Santa Anas, as well as extremes of heat in the summer and snow and freezing conditions in the winter.

An important feature of CW is that it is off-grid. That means that it is self-sufficient for its energy and water production. Community-based North Peak Water District serves some 50% of the parcels. Others use wells. Homes in CW have water tanks for fire protection purposes as well as for irrigation and/or household use. The community does have landline phone service, and some areas have cellphone

service. In recent years cellphone service has improved and many of the residents have terminated their landline phone service

Community Fire History

The Greater Julian area, of which the Cuyamaca Woods Community is a part, is a fire-prone area. The community of Cuyamaca Woods was badly impacted by the Cedar Fire of 2003. The Cedar Fire, which was caused by a hunter setting a signal fire, originated west of Cuyamaca Woods and rampaged westward, spurred by strong Santa Ana winds. The residents of Cuyamaca Woods were evacuated. Three days after the fire began, on October 28, the Santa Ana winds subsided and coastal winds turned the fire back toward the east. As it moved eastward it quickly reached Cuyamaca Woods, and neighboring communities of Pine Hills, Harrison Park, Julian Estates, and Lake Cuyamaca among others, as well as Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. In Cuyamaca Woods, 51 of the then existing 71 homes were destroyed. Altogether, more than 500 homes surrounding the town of Julian were destroyed.

C. Identification of Community Values at Risk

Using technology and local expertise, the sponsors of this CWPP have developed a series of maps depicting the site and situation of the Cuyamaca Woods Community (Appendix C).

Values at risk within the community are:

- Residential homes and cabins
- Water District facilities
- Wildlife
- Native Live Oak, Englemann Oak, Pines, Manzanita, Ceonothus
- Native American Cultural Resources.
- Adjacent Indian Reservation

Residential: There are 65 homes in the Cuyamaca Woods area, 48 of which have been rebuilt since the Cedar Fire. At an average, conservative value of \$350,000, the value of the 65 homes is \$22,750,000, not including outbuildings, tools, equipment and vehicles. Approximately 40% of the home-owners in this community maintain their homes as their primary residences. Most of the remainder consider their houses in CW as weekend homes or cabins. About 10% of the home-owners in CW have livestock, such as chickens, horses, and goats. There is at least one apple orchard in CW.

North Peak Water District: The North Peak Water District provides water to about 50% of the properties in Cuyamaca Woods. The District owns and operates three

wells, each with pumphouses and generators, and two water storage tanks, one above ground water tank, and one below ground. The system has above ground hydrants and flush valves, and 90 meters. There are about six miles of water lines. Approximate value for the above-ground equipment is \$135,000.

Oak and Pine Trees The large, native oaks and pines are cherished by the property owners as emblematic of the CW area, which provide homes, shelter and forage for the area's rich birdlife and wildlife, and shade for the people.

D. Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capability

All fire jurisdictions within the area as identified by this CWPP are listed below with information as available on number of firefighting personnel and fire response vehicles.

Fire protection for the Cuyamaca Woods FSC CWPP region is provided by Cal Fire (wildland fires) along with Julian Cuyamaca Fire Protection District (structure fires and EMS services). The closest Cal Fire Station (Cuyamaca #51) is located near the Cuyamaca Woods community on Engineers Road. The closest available backup is the Julian Cal Fire Station in Julian. The Cuyamaca Woods community is served by the new JCFPD Station #56. The older JCFPD Station #57 is physically closer to Cuyamaca Woods but is not currently in operation. US Forest Service is the primary wildland and federal properties provider in the area. The nearest station is 1 mile from the western edge of Cuyamaca Woods. It is not open year-round.

Cal Fire Cuyamaca Fire Station #51	34520 Engineers Road, Julian	1 type III BLS 4x4 fire engine 500 Gallons of water, Extrication equipment, 3-person professional paid staffing. All Staff EMT or higher qualified. 1 Type II Water Tender with 2000 gallons of water.
Julian/Cuyamaca Fire Station #56 and #57 (currently unoccupied)	3407 Hwy 79, Julian 34560 Engineers Rod., Julian	62 people on roster, 2 Type 1 Structural Engine, 1 Type 3 Brush Engine, 2 Rescue Vehicles, 5 support vehicles
USFS Pine Hills Station #33	Boulder Creek Rd at Engineers Rd	
Cal Fire Julian Fire Station Station #50	1587 Hwy 78, Julian	2 Type III BLS 4x4 fire engine 500 Gallons of water, Extrication equipment, 3-person professional Paid staffing. All Staff EMT or higher qualified. 1 Type I ALS Engine 500 gallons of water, Vehicle extrication equipment, Paramedic staffed, 3 person professional paid personnel. 1 Type III 4X4 Engine 500 Gallons of water.

Along with the volunteers of this active Fire Safe Council, there are Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers within the Cuyamaca Woods Community.

SECTION II PRIORITIZED FUEL REDUCTION TREATMENTS

The partnership that exists between the listed organizations and citizens in this Cuyamaca Woods CWPP allows the community of Cuyamaca Woods to reduce hazardous vegetative fuels that could ignite residences and commercial facilities, particularly during Santa Ana wind fire conditions. Maintaining properties with the appropriate defensible space is a key factor to protecting lives and properties.

The CWPP is not to be construed as indicative of project “activity” as defined under the “Community Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act, Chapter Three, Projects Subject to CEQA.” Any actual project activities undertaken that meet this definition of project activity and are undertaken by the CWPP participants or agencies listed shall meet with local, state, and federal environmental compliance requirements. Activities undertaken will be done in accordance with the local fire code and will comply with the authorities having jurisdiction (AHJ).

County code requires property owners to maintain defensible space around structures to meet San Diego County, California State and Forest Service standards and requirements. Specifically, all fire fuel, including any accumulation of combustible vegetation, dead, dying or diseased trees, green waste, rubbish, or other flammable materials must be removed within 100 feet of the exterior perimeter of any improvement thereon.

A. Priorities

1. Encourage and facilitate property owners to keep appropriate defensible space around values at risk, through ongoing fuel reduction and maintenance of defensible space to meet San Diego County, California State and Forest Service standards and requirements.
2. Within the perimeter, live tree limbs should be cut up 8-10 feet from the ground on mature trees.
3. Ongoing removal of dead, dying and diseased trees adjacent to structures and throughout the community.
4. Sustainable fuel reduction along ingress and egress roads to ensure safe passage for emergency vehicles and residents, and accessibility for firefighting equipment to water storage supply connections in the community.
5. Upgrade current access roads to homes and cabins to make them navigable by heavy firefighting equipment and emergency vehicles, including space for emergency vehicles and fire trucks to turn around.
6. Provide clear signage for emergency personnel that ensures they know where the values of risk are located and whether they can be safely accessed, and for residents to be able to identify safe exits and evacuation routes.
7. Annual seasonal maintenance of those areas around structures that have already been reduced of brush and other combustible materials.

8. Continued educational activities to sustain and further community awareness and commitment to work together to provide a healthy forest environment for the use and enjoyment of residents and visitors, as well as safe for the habitat and wildlife.
9. Encourage all property owners to reduce hazardous fuels on their properties, whether built or vacant.

Regional and Local Projects: The Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council, Inc., supports:

- Chipping for fuel reduction and abatement
- Roadside vegetation management along roads
- Removal or treatment of dead, dying and diseased trees
- Installing/improving reflective code compliant road and address signs, including road signage on interior roads indicating Exits. Most homes in CW already have reflective address signs, and new ones should be encouraged to obtain them.
- Wood splitting as part of fuels management, local firewood use only (containment of potentially contaminated wood)
- Develop programs to educate residents about defensible space and natural fire resistive vegetation concepts
- Research and identify resources for maintaining defensible space and vegetation reduction
- Assist seniors and disabled in creating/maintaining defensible space around structures
- Perform hazardous brush abatement around homes, tanks, pump stations and distribution facilities
- Installation and maintenance of emergency water supply firefighting storage tanks
- Partner with Julian Library for Fire Safe Council education programs
- Develop plans for human and animal safety in the event of a wildfire.
- Prepare digital GIS layer in coordination with the Fire Agencies that can be easily accessed by fire personnel that show where the houses, water hydrants and turn-around points are in the CW community.
- Prepare and install weather-proof, reflective signage in the community at appropriate locations to show how to exit the community and which roads are dead-ends.
- Offer periodic free opportunities for property owners to dump undesirable, flammable materials such as old building materials, garden waste and unwanted patio furniture in a dumpster that will be taken to the County landfill.
- Reach out to the owners of vacant lots that are not maintained and seek their cooperation in cleaning up the properties.
- Periodically provide free chipping services to property owners, and provide information about free chipping services available through other sources.
- Notify property owners when a fire is in the area that may pose a threat to the CW neighborhood, utilizing phone tree and the Cuyamaca Woods Facebook page and Cuyamaca Woods Neighborhood Yahoo Group.
- Identify a “safe zone” that can be used as a refuge and meeting place during an emergency.
- Partner with California State Parks to educate CW property owners regarding the importance of wildlands fuels reductions activities and prescribed burning to replicate

a natural fire interval to reduce the intensity of wildfires and to promote healthy fire-dependent ecosystems.

- Assist California State Parks with disseminating prescribed burn notices to CW property owners by keeping CW point of contact information on file with State Park's Colorado Desert District Natural Resources team to be used for prescribed burn notifications, and by utilizing a phone tree, the Cuyamaca Woods Facebook page, and Cuyamaca Woods Neighborhood Yahoo Group.

SECTION III TREATMENT OF STRUCTURAL IGNITABILITY

In cooperation with the County of San Diego, the Cuyamaca Woods CWPP supports and promotes fire safe activities and supports and educates its citizens in ways to reduce structure ignitability through meeting the requirements of the County of San Diego Building and Fire Code. See Appendix A. Reducing structural ignitability requires home hardening plus maintenance of a Defensible Space perimeter according to County Code requirements. Home hardening must occur before a fire starts by using ember-resistant building materials, because flying embers can destroy homes up to a mile from a wildfire.

Following is a description of structural challenges, including proposed methods of improvement and implementation proposed for the community.

Because so many homes in Cuyamaca Woods were destroyed in the Cedar Fire of 2003, the rebuilt homes were built according to the fire code as it then existed. Therefore, many include upgrades that make the rebuilt homes more fire resistant than they were, but may not be up to current code. In addition, homes that did not burn at that time may not have been upgraded at all.

In cooperation with the County of San Diego, and CAL FIRE, CWFSC supports and promotes Firewise activities, and CWFSC supports and educates its citizens in ways to reduce structure ignitability through meeting County of San Diego building and fire code requirements, including hardie-type (concrete) siding or stucco, Class A roofs, and double-paned windows, improving ember resistance by boxing in the eaves and using vents that meet the strictest codes, in the 5-foot zone around structures using gravel or low-height hydrating plants. In addition, not piling firewood next to the house or other flammable structures, and not attach wood fencing directly to structures.

CWFSC supports the following actions that have been identified as additional steps communities can take to reduce structural ignitability.

- Retrofit homes to meet natural fire resistive vegetation and structural hardening standards
- Identify and evaluate current and new products available for structure hardening and to train residents in their use and installation
- Community education regarding reducing structural ignitability, enhancing wildfire readiness, proper defensible space, yard maintenance, and other natural fire resistive vegetation practices.
- Educate homeowners about proper storage of hazardous/flammable materials
- Standardize addresses, street names and use non-combustible signage with reflective lettering; consider including color-coded signage indicating water availability.

- Community education about “add no fuel” techniques (e.g., not using wood patio furniture or plastic bins near the house.)
- Educate residents about proper vegetation management that maintains and/or restores native habitats
- Cooperate with local fire agencies about use of fire gel, to determine proper/effective usage and train users
- Ensure firefighters have access to accurate local resource and access maps
- Create and maintain list of qualified/licensed vegetation management and/or fire resistive building construction contractors
- Support Fire Agency Defensible Space Inspectors (DSI) who come out to each home in CW periodically to inspect for violations of defensible space standards and other non-Firewise activities.
- Take action and support efforts to remove invasive plants

The Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council, Inc., will encourage its property owners to make these changes as necessary to their structures through education and by pursuing grant funding to assist in implementation.

SECTION IV SIGNATURE PAGE (page one)

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan as developed for Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council CWPP:

- Was collaboratively developed and meets the intent of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) in emphasizing the need for agencies to work collaboratively with communities in developing hazardous fuel reduction projects, and places priority on treatment areas identified by communities themselves in a CWPP. Interested parties and federal land management agencies in the vicinity of this CWPP have been consulted.
- Identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment that will protect areas within this CWPP.
- Recommends measures to reduce ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.
- Is intended for use as a planning and assessment tool only, utilizing a compilation of community issues/goals and projected fire mitigation strategies. The CWPP is not to be construed as indicative of project "activity" as defined under the "Community Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act, Chapter Three, Projects Subject to CEQA." Per the Community Guide, Section 3.1.1, "CEQA only applies to public agency decisions to approve or actions to carry out, a discretionary project." Any actual project activities meeting this definition of project activity and undertaken by the CWPP participants or agencies listed shall meet with local, state and federal environmental compliance requirements.

President of Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council, Inc.
(John Groth)

Date

Participating State, Local, or Tribal fire agency representatives:

Julian/Cuyamaca Fire Protection District
M. Van Bibber, Chief

Date

CAL FIRE Station 51
J. Roesler, Battalion 5 Chief

Date

Pine Hills Fire Station USDA #33
Chief Metz

Date

SECTION IV SIGNATURE PAGE (page two)

This Community Wildfire Protection Plan has been developed for the community of Cuyamaca Woods.

This CWPP was reviewed and recommended for approval by the San Diego Community Wildfire Protection Plan Review Committee as demonstrated by the signature below.

Chair of CWPP Review Committee

Date

The CAL FIRE Unit Chief has final signing authority on CWPPs in San Diego County. The signature below attests that the standards listed in the section above and the content of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan are proposed to be met and mutually accepted.

STATE AGENCY

Date

CAL FIRE
San Diego Unit
Tony Mecham, Unit Chief

SECTION V: APPENDICES: Appendix A
Documentation Affecting Fuels Reduction, Building Construction, and Community
Fire Protection

LIST OF REFERENCES:

1. County of San Diego Consolidated Building Code, available at:
<http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/bldg.html>
2. County of San Diego Consolidated Fire Code (current version), available at:
<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/pds/docs/cosd-fire-code.pdf>
3. County of San Diego Defensible Space for Fire Protection Ordinance (current version), available at:
<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/sdcfa/documents/prevention/2011-defensible-space-ordinance.pdf>
4. County of San Diego, Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (2010), available at:
<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/dam/sdc/oes/docs/2010-HazMit-Final-August-2010.pdf>
5. County of San Diego, Fire, Defensible Space and You
http://www.sandiegocounty.gov/pds/fire_resistant.html
6. CAL FIRE Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP)
<http://frap.fire.ca.gov> for additional maps, data and documents
7. <http://www.readyforwildfire.org>
8. www.livingwithfire.com
9. www.firesafecouncil.org
10. www.firesafesdcounty.org

SECTION V: APPENDICES: Appendix B: Meeting Tracking Documents

**Cuyamaca Woods Fire Safe Council
Members Contributing to this Document**

Mr. John Groth
Mr. Jon Driscoll
Mr. Bill Stowers
Ms. Terri Groth
Mr. Matt Arsena
Mr. Steve Nankervis
Ms. Colleen Manzer
Ms. Susan A. Carter
Mr. Bob Uribe, San Diego County Fire Authority

Fire Representatives

Cal Fire Cuyamaca Fire Station #51	34520 Engineers Road, Julian
Julian/Cuyamaca Fire Station #56	3407 Hwy 79, Julian
USFS Pine Hills Station #33	Boulder Creek Rd at Engineers Rd
Cal Fire Julian Fire Station	1587 Hwy 78, Julian

Meeting Dates:

December 11, 2017 Fire Safe Council Workshop Meeting, Lakeside Fire Station
Cuyamaca Woods FSC Meetings: April 28, 2018; July 28, 2018; January 26, 2019
February 13, 2019 Initial CWPP Planning Meeting, San Diego County Fire Authority Office
February 26, 2019 Meeting at Julian/Cuyamaca FS #56 with Chief Van Bibber
April 23, 2019 Consultation with Lisa Gonzales-Kramer, California State Parks, Colorado Desert District.

SECTION V: APPENDICES: Appendix C: Maps

Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Communities Map

Figure 3: Assets at Risk

Figure 4: USGS Topographic Map

Figure 5: Fire Threat (modeled by CDF FRAP)

Figure 6: Fire History 1910-2010 (CDF FRAP)

Figure 7: Wildland-Urban Interface Zone Designations (CDF FRAP)

Figure 8: Vegetation Classification