

Firewise USA



FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

Goals



UNDERSTAND THE
FIREWISE PROCESS



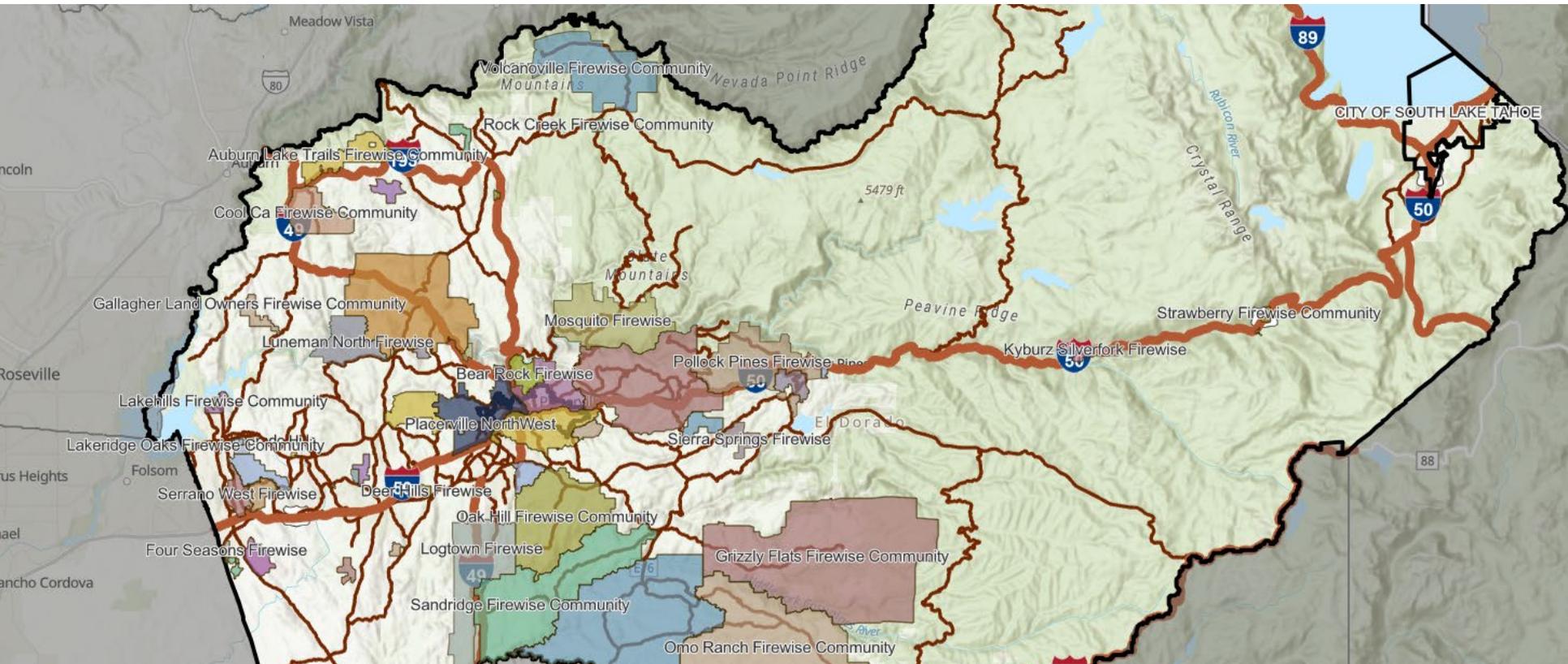
LEARN HOW TO GET
STARTED



KNOW WHAT SUPPORT
IS AVAILABLE

Are you already in a Firewise Community?

- Check the OWPR Mapping Tool
- [Online Mapping Tool - El Dorado County](#)



Step 1: Organize

Form a
local
committee

- People to help with risk assessment, community outreach, etc.

Identify a
resident
leader

- 2-3

Who Should
Be Involved?

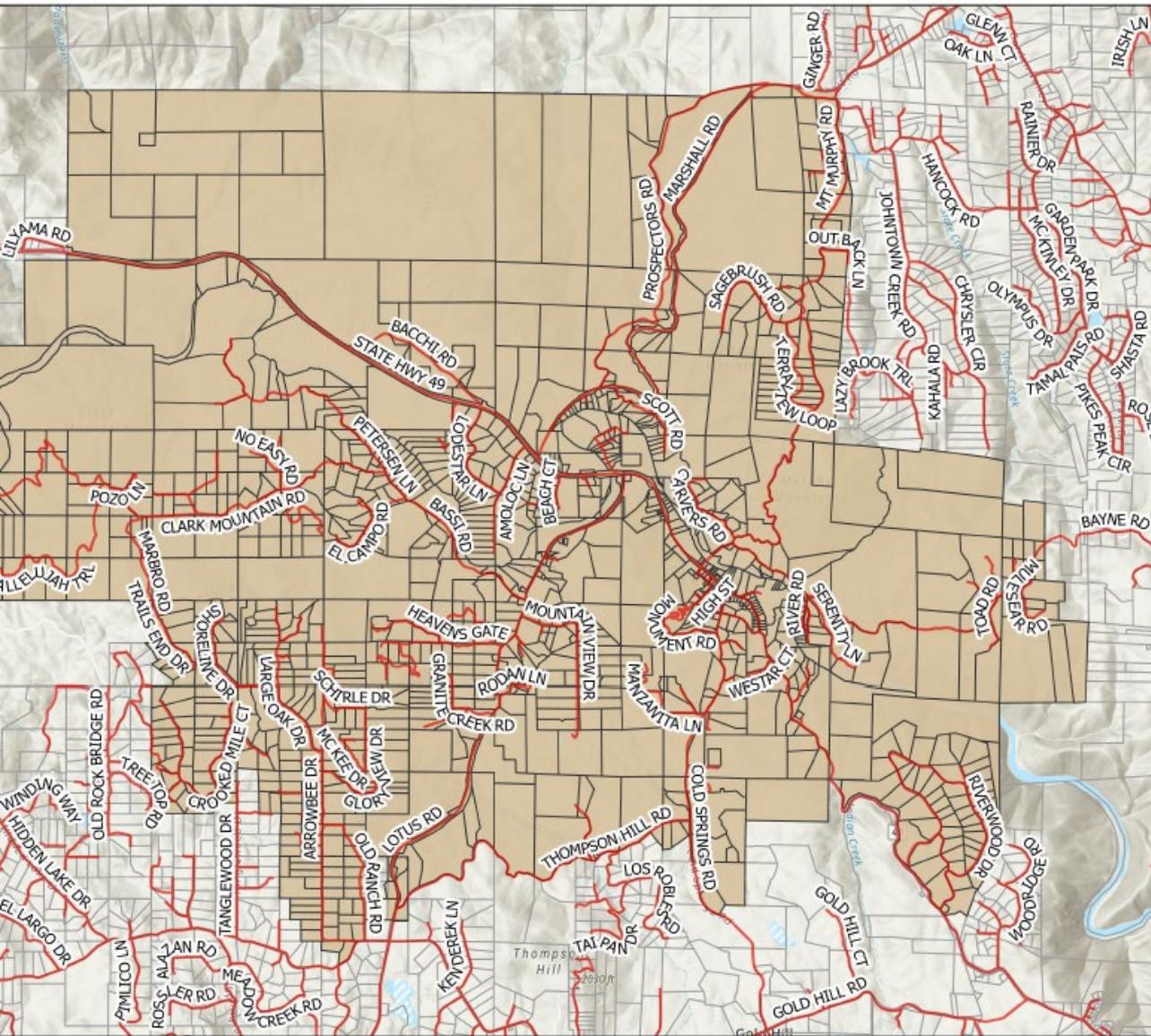
Neighbors

Local Fire District

OWPR

Community Requirements

- 8–2,500 homes
- Parcel level accurate
- Defined boundaries
 - Must be contiguous



Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council
Boundary Map

County of El Dorado
State of California

0 0.5 1 Miles

- Roads
- ▭ Parcels
- ▭ Inset Par
- ▭ Coloma-L

Mapping



Use existing map of community or



Contact OWPR for assistance with mapping

Will also provide number of parcels

Once community has achieved recognition, community map will go live on mapping tool

Create Community in Portal

Now that you have the boundary and number of parcels, “Create Community”



Enter the information that you do have and save



Enter Tanya Harlow as Regional Coordinator

Tanya.harlow@edcgov.us

Step 2: Plan



Community Wildfire Risk
Assessment



<https://www.nfpa.org/en/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa/online-learning-opportunities>

Risk Assessment Focus

Home ignition
zones

Overall
community
conditions

Updated
every 5 years

Risk Assessment Includes:

- ▶ Site information
- ▶ Items to be evaluated
 - ▶ Home Hardening
 - ▶ Roofing materials, soffit vents, siding, skirting, decks/combustible attachments, windows, gutters
 - ▶ Defensible Space (Refer to inspection form)
 - ▶ Zone 0 – 0-5 Feet from the structure
 - ▶ Zone 1 – 5-30 Feet from the structure
 - ▶ Zone 2 – 30-100 Feet from the structure

General Site Information

Number of dwelling units – Firewise USA® participation requires a minimum of 8 individual dwelling units not to exceed 2,500 units within the site's identified boundary.

Contact [Firewise USA®](#) if you have questions about your area's eligibility, [visit our contact us](#) page.

Number of dwelling units: 833
Number of residents: 1,777

Description of Properties within the Boundary

Residential types in your site (check **all** that apply):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single family	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Duplex	<input type="checkbox"/> Townhomes
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apartment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mobile	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Few parcels with two houses</u>

Types of ownership (check **all** that apply):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Common	<input type="checkbox"/> Public (county, state, or federal)
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Lot sizes (check **all** that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 0.10 acres or 4,356 square feet
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 0.10–0.50 acres or 4,356–21,780 square feet
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 0.51–1 acre or 22,215–43,560 square feet
<input type="checkbox"/> Greater than 1 acre or 43,560 square feet

Other site information that you would like to provide (OPTIONAL): _____

Description of local wildland fire characteristics:

Fire intensity and rate of spread depend on the vegetation type and condition (live/dead), topography, and typical weather patterns. This information can be obtained from your state forestry agency or local fire department.

Describe the common vegetation type(s) in your site (i.e., grasses, shrubs, and trees): The heavy fuel loading consists of oak and pine forests as well as various grasses with an understory forming excess ladder fuel.

Describe the topography within your site (include geographical features such as canyons, chimneys, steep slopes, indicate which direction slopes face, or note whether the area is flat): Steep canyons as well as a river canyon. Multiple drainages flow into the area. The main river corridor and side canyons act as "chimneys". East/West Slopes.

Severe wind exposure:

<input type="checkbox"/> Not in an area with regular exposure to winds	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Area with history of fire occurrence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regularly exposed to winds	<input type="checkbox"/> Area with no history of fire occurrence
<input type="checkbox"/> Frequent severe winds	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown

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Conducting Risk Assessment

- ▶ Risk Assessment
 - ▶ Assess as many homes as possible, **not every home** has to be assessed for the purpose of achieving designation
 - ▶ Roadside assessments may be conducted, or electronic
 - ▶ Electronic questionnaire may be sent to homeowners if a community has an email list

Summary

- ▶ Summarize findings of the Risk Assessment here
- ▶ Percentages captured here create a snapshot of the community
 - ▶ Gives the community a starting point on what to focus their efforts towards

Summary

Use this section to summarize findings in observations. The percentages captured will help you briefly explain a snapshot of your community's current status and areas for successful focus. List areas where there is significant success and areas where improvements could be made, especially at low cost with sweat equity/volunteer labor. Of the three home ignition zones, emphasis should be on the immediate zone.

Example: Greater than 75% of homes observed have non-combustible roofs; however, there were several noted with wood shake shingles.

Strengths:

- Metal Gutters >75%
- Clean Gutters >75%
- Multi-paned Windows >75%
- Class A Roofs >75%
- Non-combustible siding 50-74%

Weaknesses:

- Homes with wooden attachments 50-75%
- Homes without skirting 50-75%
- Homes without screened vents 25-50%

Areas to Improve:

- Increase % of homes with zero vegetation in 0-5 ft zone
- Increase % of homes with treated vegetation, especially in the 0-5 ft zone
- Increase % of homes with non-combustible soffit vents and 1/8 inch or smaller metal screen mesh
- Decrease % of homes that have combustible wooden attachments

Recommendations

- ▶ Use findings from the Risk Assessment to identify actions and steps that can be taken

Recommendations

Using the findings from the observation phase, identify actions and steps that can be taken to reduce the site's risk from wildfire. Prioritize recommendations based on the potential fire threat to homes. It's recommended that residents address hazards at the home first and work their way out into the three home ignition zones. Remember, small things can have a huge impact on home survivability. Use these recommendations to create your site's action plan.

Examples:

- Less than 75% of homes observed had a roof free of leaf litter, pine needles, and other debris. Encourage residents to remove the debris and keep those areas clean to work towards greater than 75% compliance.
- Bark mulch is widely used within the immediate area. Recommend removing bark mulch and replacing with an ignition-resistant material, such as crushed stone or gravel.
- Work with residents to improve the number of homes that have removed flammable materials 0-5 feet from the home.

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Create an Action Plan

Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council Community Wildfire Action Plan [2024-2026]



Please enter a brief description of your community and delete the example below

The area served by the Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council (CLFSC) has approximately 833 dwelling and 1,777 residents. The Coloma-Lotus valley's predominant feature is the South Fork of the American River. The South Fork American River's headwaters and upper watershed lies within the El Dorado National Forest and the Tahoe National Forest. There are no U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands in the CLFSC area; however, steep canyons surround the Coloma-Lotus valley as well as the river canyon upstream and downstream of the valley with heavy fuel loading. Multiple drainages flow into the South Fork in this area. The main river corridor and these side canyons act as "chimneys" for airflow as the daytime temperatures increase. Airflow is up-canyon in the daytime and then reversed to down-canyon at night. When the overall weather systems may be calm, there may be significant breezes up or down these canyons due to this effect. The heavy fuel loading in the area consists of oak and pine forests as well as various brush types and grasses with an understory forming an excessive amount of ladder fuel. Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) conditions exist throughout El Dorado County's western slope. The SRA Fire Hazard Severity Map shows an estimated 50% of the land within the CLFSC area as Moderate, about 30% as High, and approximately 20% as Very High. Many of the most densely populated and developed areas are within the Very High fire hazard category. This proposed Firewise USA™ Site Community Wildfire Action Plan was developed through input received during the Fall 2023 Firewise Assessment. The goal of the Plan is to develop a strategy to incrementally outreach, educate, and implement efforts to make our neighborhood and the surrounding area more fire resilient.™

Year 1 - 2024

Education and Outreach Goals

1. [Apply for a portion of the Education & Outreach grant awarded to the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council by the California Fire Safe Council]
2. [Hold a Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council meeting featuring the author of the County's Evacuation Study]
3. [Hold a Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council meeting featuring a presentation on Home Hardening and defensible space]
4. [Hold a Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council meeting featuring a presentation on home insurance options]
5. [Encourage at least two members of the community to attend Cal Fire defensible space inspection training]
6. [Hold a Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council presentation focusing on defensible space issues determined from the previous Risk Assessment survey]

Home Hardening Goals

1. [Conduct a home hardening presentation focusing on wooden attachments, skirting and screened vents]
2. [Do another survey focusing on the home hardening issues determined from the previous Risk Assessment survey]
3. [Conduct voluntary home hardening inspections using trained volunteers and/or local fire personnel]

Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council Community Wildfire Action Plan [2024-2026]



Defensible Space / Fuel Reduction Goals

1. [Complete all work associated with the Roadside Fuel Reduction grant project]
2. [Take advantage of and promote the El Dorado County green waste and chipping program]
3. [Using trained local volunteers, promote and conduct defensible space assessments in the community]

Evacuation Planning (Ex. Preparedness & Routing) and Wildfire Preparedness

1. [Hold a Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council presentation featuring Dan Bolster, author of the Greater Placerville Evacuation Study]
2. [Invite the El Dorado County Neighborhood Radio Watch to do a presentation on their wildfire alert program]
3. []

Year 2 - 2025

Education and Outreach Goals

1. [Develop a website for the Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council]
2. [Record and Post videos of various education and training presentations held by the Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council]
3. [Invite El Dorado County Defensible Space Ordinance representatives to a Coloma-Lotus Fire Safe Council meeting]
4. [Conduct a field trip showing local residents good examples of defensible space and home hardening mitigation]
5. [Encourage at least two members of the community to attend Cal Fire defensible space inspection training]
6. [Conduct a field trip and/or presentation to educate local residents of evacuation route options]

Home Hardening Goals

1. [Conduct voluntary home hardening inspections using trained volunteers and/or local fire personnel]
2. []
3. []

Defensible Space / Fuel Reduction Goals

- 3-year plan
- Annual priorities
- Living document

Develop a Plan

- ▶ **3 Year-Action Plan**
 - ▶ All actions must be derived from findings of the Risk Assessment
 - ▶ These actions will include defensible space and home hardening measures
 - ▶ Wildfire preparedness, such as evacuations
 - ▶ Must include a minimum of 1 educational event a year

Step 3: Do



EDUCATION



MITIGATION
PROJECTS



VOLUNTEER
EFFORTS



ENTER
INVESTMENT

Implementation

- ▶ Educational Events
 - ▶ A Firewise Community needs to host at minimum 1 educational event per year
 - ▶ BBQ, community meeting, Firewise meeting with a guest are a few examples
- ▶ Volunteer Hours
 - ▶ Communities are required to record and report the volunteer hours worked in their community
 - ▶ 1 hour per residence within the community
 - ▶ Any work done on a property counts towards this hour amount
 - ▶ Paid labor, homeowner work, grant funded projects

Renewal process & Requirements

- ▶ Firewise Communities must submit for renewal every year
- ▶ **1 Year**
 - ▶ Communities must submit volunteer hours
 - ▶ 1 hour per residence
 - ▶ Submit estimated vegetation removed
- ▶ **3 Year**
 - ▶ Create a new 3 Year-Action Plan
 - ▶ May use activities from the existing plan, but may not copy and paste the entire document
- ▶ **5 Year**
 - ▶ A new Risk Assessment shall be conducted
 - ▶ Helps a community understand where improvements took place, and where to focus future efforts

Benefits



Increase community preparedness for wildfire events



Inform the community of assistance programs or other County programs



Potential for insurance discounts

Contacts

- ▶ **Firewise Regional Coordinator**

- ▶ **Tanya Harlow**

- Office of Wildfire Preparedness
and Resilience

- Tanya.harlow@edcgov.us

What Happens Next?



State review



NFPA recognition

Step 4: Report & Renew

Annual reporting in November