

Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Executive Summary

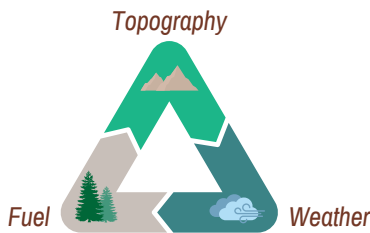
Overview

The 2025 Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) has been prepared by the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services with direct input from stakeholders, local wildfire experts, non-profit organizations, land managers, fire agencies, and community members to guide Nevada County in becoming wildfire resilient. The CWPP includes all 623,213 acres of Nevada County including incorporated, unincorporated, private, state, and federal land.

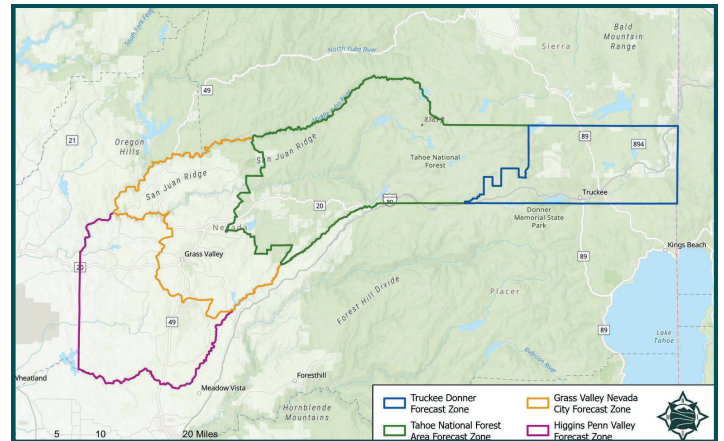
(The complete document is available at ReadyNevadaCounty.org/CWPP)

Wildfire Hazard

The wildfire hazard in Nevada County is influenced by the dynamic terrain and diverse fuel conditions across the Plan Area.



CWPP Forecast Zones



The County was divided into four Forecast Zones for the CWPP based on differences in fire environment and community identity.

1. Higgins/Penn Valley
2. Grass Valley/Nevada City
3. Tahoe National Forest Area
4. Truckee/Donner

Community Engagement



194 Initial Community Engagement Events



72 CWPP Survey Events



2,267 CWPP Survey Responses



4 Virtual Lunch & Learns



9 Community Risk Reduction Workshops



2 Spanish Workshops



Nevada County High Value Resources and Assets at Risk



Community Lifelines



Community Health



Natural Resources



Economic Resources

Primary Community Concerns



Hazardous Vegetation



Financial Barriers



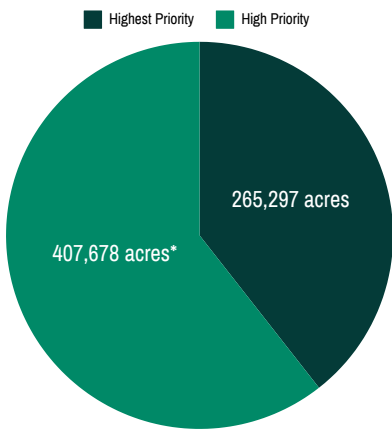
Defensible Space



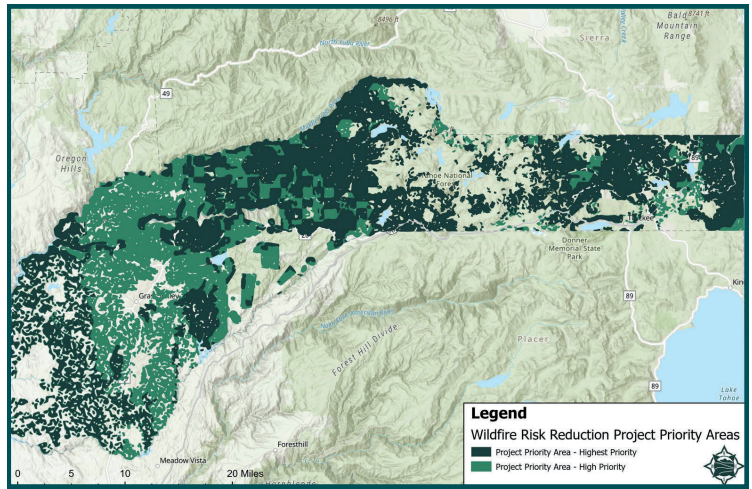
Safe Evacuation

Project Priority Areas

The Nevada County Project Priority Areas identify locations for multi-beneficial wildfire risk reduction activities. The Project Priority Areas were identified using the results from the Wildfire Risk Assessment, input from local wildfire experts, and results from community engagement activities. The Project Priority Areas represent the overlap between our most vulnerable assets and resources and our most important community values that need to be protected from wildfire. Highest Priority areas are comprised of the highest risk areas for Community Lifelines, Community Health, and Natural Resources. High Priority areas included the highest-risk areas for Community Lifelines and Community Health.



**There is overlap in acreage for Highest and High Priority areas as they both consider Community Lifelines and Community Health.*



Nevada County CWPP Project Priority Areas

CWPP County Action Plan

Action	Example Recommendation
Reduce Structural Ignitability	Evaluate and pursue grant funding opportunities for structural retrofits, including micro-grants, reimbursement, or other cost-share programs.
Defensible Space	Emphasize the importance of creating an Ember Resistant Zone 0 around all structures.
Vegetation Management/Fuel Reduction	Expand the number of shaded fuel breaks/hazardous fuel reduction areas along major evacuation routes.
Community Outreach & Education	Develop outreach and education strategies that promote all-hazard disaster preparedness.
Evacuation	Leverage Appendix A of the 2024 Evacuation Study to support the implementation of community-identified evacuation priorities.
Emergency Communication	Pursue methods for disseminating evacuation information at high-use recreation areas where cell reception is limited.
Funding	In addition to grants, explore other funding opportunities that increase capacity for wildfire risk reduction measures.
Post Fire Recovery	Support the community by providing post-fire educational resources related to physical recovery, monetary support, and social services.

See Section 6 for the full CWPP Action Plan recommendations.

Next Steps



Land Management Plan



GIS Application



Implementation

Recommended Actions



Reduce Structural Ignitability



Defensible Space



Vegetation Management/
Fuel Reduction



Community Outreach
& Education



Evacuation



Emergency
Communication



Funding



Post-Fire Recovery



Office of Emergency Services

For More Information Visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/CWPP



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Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone

Overview

Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone is located at the southwest end of the County and is 143,715 acres. This area is commonly referred to as "South County." It is dominated by rangelands, oak woodlands, and is comparatively much flatter than the rest of the County. The area is 93% private land, all of which is in unincorporated Nevada County. Some of the major communities within the area are Lake of the Pines, Alta Sierra, Higgins Corner, Rough and Ready, Penn Valley, and Lake Wildwood.



Lake Wildwood

Fire Environment

The dominant vegetation in the area is hardwood woodlands and grass/herbaceous vegetation. From 1950 to 2022 there have been 47 fires, and the largest fire was the 1988 49er Fire. The highest concentration of ignitions has been alongside State Highway 49, State Route 20, and around communities.

Primary Community Concerns



Hazardous Vegetation



Resource Limitation

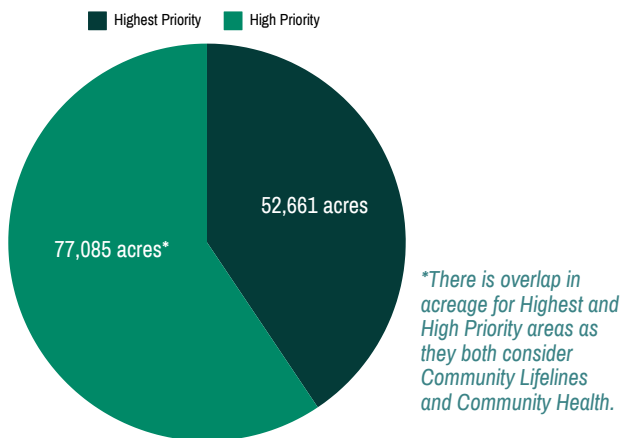


Defensible Space



Safe Evacuation

Project Priority Areas



Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone Action Plan

Action	Example Recommendation
Reduce Structural Ignitability	Educate residents of working landscapes on the importance of hardening accessory structures (e.g. barns, paddocks, pens etc.) against wildfire.
Defensible Space	Educate residents and encourage the use of prescribed grazing for maintaining defensible space in appropriate landscapes.
Vegetation Management/Fuel Reduction	Concentrate roadside vegetation management/fuel reduction along major evacuation routes and where roadside ignitions are common
Community Outreach & Education	Conduct outreach specific to addressing wildfire hazards, emergency communications, and evacuation with vulnerable populations.
Evacuation	Coordinate with private landowners to implement roadside vegetation removal along private roadways.
Emergency Communication	Pursue methods for disseminating evacuation information at high-use recreation areas where cell reception is limited.
Post Fire Recovery	Support the community by providing post-fire educational resources related to physical recovery, monetary support, and social services.

See Section 7 for the full CWPP Action Plan recommendations.

Recommended Actions



Reduce Structural Ignitability



Defensible Space



Vegetation Management/
Fuel Reduction



Community Outreach & Education



Evacuation



Emergency Communication



Post-Fire Recovery



Office of Emergency Services

For More Information Visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/CWPP



Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Executive Summary

Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone

Overview

The Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone is 136,166 acres and is centrally located in the County. This is where the majority of residents reside. The area is dominated by community development that ranges in density and is intermixed with the environment. There are two cities, the City of Grass Valley and the City of Nevada City. Some of the major communities in the area include Grass Valley, Nevada City, North San Juan, Banner Mountain, Greenhorn, and Lower Colfax. The area is impacted by fluctuating tourist and visitor populations.



Banner Mountain

Fire Environment

The dominant vegetation in the area are mixed conifer/hardwood and conifer forests. From 1909 to 2022 there have been 57 fires and the largest fire was the 1988 49er Fire. The highest concentration of ignitions has been along roads around the cities, North San Juan, and Cedar Ridge/Peardale.

Primary Community Concerns



Wildfire Ignition



Roadside Vegetation

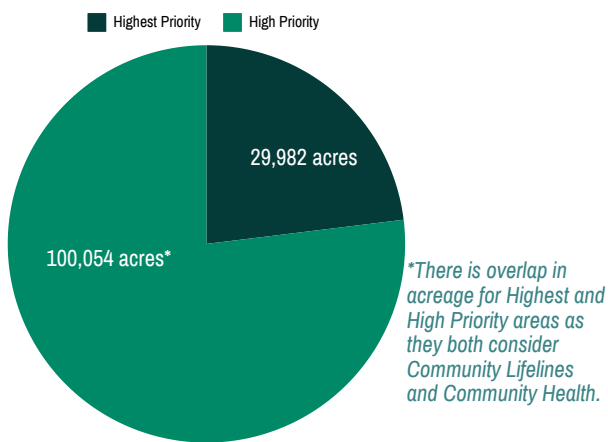


Defensible Space



Safe Evacuation

Project Priority Areas



Recommended Actions



Reduce Structural Ignitability



Defensible Space



Vegetation Management/
Fuel Reduction



Community Outreach & Education



Evacuation



Emergency Communication



Post-Fire Recovery

Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone Action Plan

Action	Example Recommendation
Reduce Structural Ignitability	Target contiguous community areas to provide maximum benefit towards reducing structure-to-structure ignition.
Defensible Space	Emphasize the relationship between winter storm debris and defensible space.
Vegetation Management/Fuel Reduction	Encourage vegetation removal in open spaces and parks adjacent to or within communities.
Community Outreach & Education	Work with camps, recreational facilities, and other guest oriented businesses to develop evacuation plans and enhance wildfire preparedness.
Evacuation	Educate resident on the importance of developing individualized evacuation plans.
Emergency Communication	Improve early warning systems and emergency communications to reach everyone including non-English speakers.
Post Fire Recovery	Develop post-fire rehabilitation guidelines for property owners and landowners in cooperation with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies that address post-fire effects on potable water, wastewater, and hazardous materials and the clean-up process.

See Section 8 for the full CWPP Action Plan recommendations.



Office of Emergency Services

For More Information Visit ReadyNevadaCounty.org/CWPP



Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Executive Summary

Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone

Overview

The Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone is 234,891 acres and defined by the Tahoe National Forest boundary. The largest landowner is the U.S. Forest Service. As a result this is the least developed area in the County and community areas are dispersed across the Forecast Zone. There are no incorporated communities and the existing communities are primarily in a few locations - Cascade Shores, Washington Ridge, Highway 20, and Little Town of Washington. The area is popular for recreation-based tourism.



Residential Area in the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone

Fire Environment

The dominant vegetation in the area are conifer and mixed conifer forests. From 1908 to 2022 there have been 95 fires and the largest fire was the 1910 Fall Fire. The highest concentration of ignitions has been in the middle portion of the Forecast Zone where recreation resources are concentrated and along Highway 20.

Primary Community Concerns



Wildfire Ignition



Infrastructure

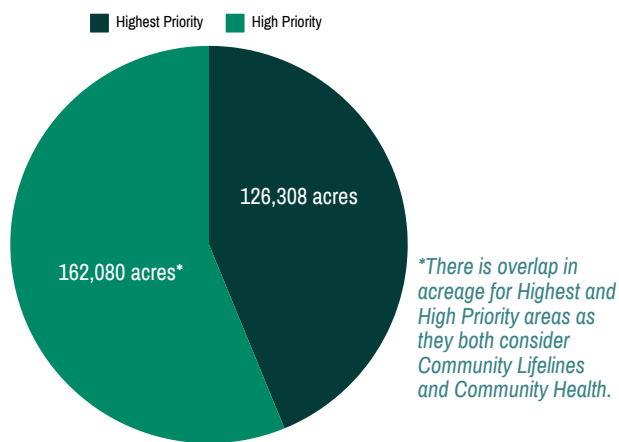


Financial Barriers



Resource Limitation

Project Priority Areas



Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone Action Plan

Action	Example Recommendation
Reduce Structural Ignitability	Evaluate opportunities for engaging residents and landowners in structural retrofit programs.
Defensible Space	Emphasize the importance of storing firewood away from structures during fire season.
Vegetation Management/Fuel Reduction	Conduct vegetation management/fuel reduction projects around high-use recreation facilities to decrease potential for ignitions.
Community Outreach & Education	Develop wildfire awareness materials for display and/or distribution at high-use recreation areas to increase awareness of wildfire hazards.
Evacuation	Coordinate with relevant agencies to manage access to areas with large expanse of open space during Red Flag Warnings, or other high fire hazard periods to minimize ignition potential.
Emergency Communication	Pursue methods for disseminating evacuation information at high-use recreation areas where cell reception is limited.
Post Fire Recovery	Educate residents on how unpermitted structures impact their recovery options.

See Section 9 for the full CWPP Action Plan recommendations.

Recommended Actions



Reduce Structural Ignitability



Defensible Space



Vegetation Management/
Fuel Reduction



Community Outreach & Education



Evacuation



Emergency Communication



Post-Fire Recovery



Office of Emergency Services

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Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone

Overview

The Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone is 108,438 acres and is located in East Nevada County. It includes the unincorporated areas in East Nevada County, Truckee Fire Protection District, and the Town of Truckee. The area blends community development, historic resources, and recreation resources with a forested landscape. Outside of the developed areas the majority of the landscape is owned by the U.S. Forest Service. Major community areas include Donner Summit, Donner Lake, Tahoe Donner, Town of Truckee, and Glenshire. The area has a high concentration of secondary homeowners.



Donner Lake

Fire Environment

The dominant vegetation in the area are conifer forest and shrub communities. From 1908 to 2022 there have been 137 fires and the largest fire was the 1960 Donner Ridge Fire. Ignitions tend to be concentrated around recreation resources and Interstate 80.

Primary Community Concerns



Wildfire Ignition



Wildfire Preparedness

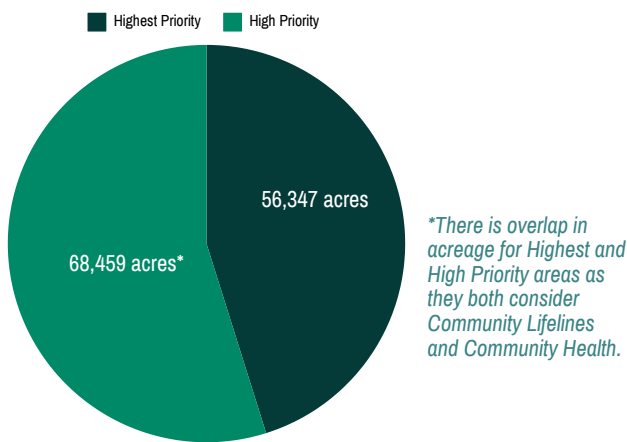


Recreation Impacts



Safe Evacuation

Project Priority Areas



Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone Action Plan

Action	Example Recommendation
Reduce Structural Ignitability	Educate residents on how attached wooden decks impact structural ignitability. Encourage resident to not store combustible materials below wooden decks.
Defensible Space	Emphasize the importance of storing firewood away from structures during fire season.
Vegetation Management/Fuel Reduction	Conduct vegetation management/fuel reduction around high-use recreation facilities to decrease the potential for wildfire ignitions.
Community Outreach & Education	Develop outreach strategies to engage with seasonal residents, absentee landowners, and visitors.
Evacuation	Educate residents on the importance of developing individualized evacuation plans.
Emergency Communication	Identify areas with limited telecommunications facilities and capabilities and explore opportunities for enhancing communication to residents and visitors prior to, during, and following wildfire events.
Post Fire Recovery	Identify opportunities for post-fire social resilience including but not limited to support for housing, employment access, health resources, mental health resources, and emotional support resources.

See Section 10 for the full CWPP Action Plan recommendations.

Recommended Actions



Reduce Structural Ignitability



Defensible Space



Vegetation Management/
Fuel Reduction



Community Outreach & Education



Evacuation



Emergency Communication



Post-Fire Recovery



Office of Emergency Services

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