Resources

Lake Dillon Fire Rescue
(970) 262-5100
www.ldfr.org

Red White and Blue Fire Protection District
(970) 453-2474
www.rwbfire.org

Copper Mountain Consolidated Metro District
(970) 968-2300
www.coppermtnmetro.org

Summit County Sheriff
(970) 453-2232
www.co.summit.co.us/Sheriff/index.htm

Summit County Office of Emergency Management
(970) 423-8911
www.co.summit.co.us/emergencymanagement

Summit County Extension
(970) 668-4140
www.co.summit.co.us/wildfiremitigation

U.S. Forest Service Dillon Ranger District
(970) 468-5400
www.fs.fed.us/r2/whiteriver/rangerdistricts/dillonindex.shtml

Colorado State Forest Service
(970) 887-3121
http://csfs.colostate.edu/pages/granbydist.html

Living With The Threat of Wildfire

A Resource Guide for Property Owners in Summit County

Discussion and Tips to Manage Risks, Protect Neighborhoods, Improve Forest Health

Wildfire Danger Heightened as Mountain Pine Beetles Make Way for New Forest

The tiny mountain pine beetle has packed a mighty punch during this current infestation, defying earlier predictions of a routine outbreak and making forest history with its prolonged and destructive behavior, which has now reached epidemic levels. Underway in the Rocky Mountain region since 1996 and encompassing thousands of miles from the southern Colorado Rocky Mountains to the northern Rockies in British Columbia and Alberta, Canada, experts now predict the current infestation will cause a 90 percent mortality rate in mature lodgepole pine stands. Drought conditions during the early 1990's, a lack of active forest management over the past 30 years and mature forests have contributed to the extent of this outbreak. By the time it's over, foresters predict virtually every mature lodgepole will die, including those in the White River National Forest in Summit County. These circumstances pose a heightened hazard for wildfire as well as the need for new and diverse vegetation growth.

Use this booklet to determine the wildfire danger in your neighborhood and create an action plan to protect your property. Don't forget to encourage your neighbors to do the same.

Coordinating Public and Private Efforts

Recognizing the many hazards that now exist because of the ongoing pine beetle activity, Summit County Government, in cooperation with the Summit County Wildfire Council and its partner agencies, implemented a comprehensive Summit County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (SCCWPP). Key components of this plan include:

- Use computerized mapping along with onsite inspection by firefighters to identify areas where fuel reduction efforts are most important to protect homes, businesses and critical infrastructure. These areas are called "focus areas".
- Provide a cooperative framework to guide wildfire prevention efforts in Summit County, towns within the County, fire districts, the United States and Colorado State Forest Services.
- Suggest a strategy and funding mechanism to protect critical infrastructure through creating fuel breaks and creating defensible space on over 8,000 acres of private land.

To be successful, however, the plan also asks for participation by private property owners in Summit County.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: I want to do some fuels reduction work on my property, what is the best way to go about it?

A: The best and safest strategy is to contact your local fire district and/or local municipality to arrange a property risk assessment.

Q: How do I mitigate fuels in U.S.F.S. property?

A: Contact the Dillon Ranger District at: (970) 468-5400.

Q: Is there a use for the trees that are removed?

A: In areas where access allows, trees can be hauled off for use as wood products, including house logs, lumber, fence materials and even pellets for wood burning stoves. The "slash" (limbs and tree tops) is treated in several different ways. In areas that are not accessible, trees that are cut may be left on the ground to help with erosion control.

Q: Is it possible to obtain the cut trees to be used as lumber or wood pellets?

A: Yes. Please call Colorado Wood Utilization and Marking Program at: (970) 247-5250 for information on utilizing local wood.

Q: Where can I take my slash for disposal?

A: Slash can be disposed in several ways, including scattering, piling and burning, chipping and leaving on site or chipping and hauling away. You can work with your contractor or call Summit County Extension at: (970) 668-3595 for more information.

Q: Is it really safe to burn slash?

A: Slash burning does have some safety concerns, but if done properly, it can be a very efficient and cost effective solution for slash treatment. Summit County adheres to strict slash burning requirements and has a permitting system in place. If you are considering pilling your slash to burn please contact your local fire protection district.

Q: Who will respond to a wildfire in Summit County?

A: Depending on which part of the county the fire is located, firefighters from local fire protection districts will initially respond to all reports of a wildfire. Since nearly 85% of the forested land in Summit County is National Forest land, it is likely that firefighters from the U.S. Forest Service will respond to the fire as well.

Q: What is the role of the U.S. Forest Service in the event of a wildfire in Summit County?

A: The U.S. Forest Service will respond and manage any fire on National Forest land. In the event of a wildfire on private land, they may assist local law enforcement & fire agencies with control efforts.

SUMMIT COUNTY EVACUATION PLAN

If a wildfire occurs requiring an area evacuation in Summit County, the Summit County public safety agencies will issue instructions to guide residents, employees and guests to safety.

Public Notification

- A land-line phone call back emergency notification system (Reverse 9-1-1) will call phones identified in targeted areas with a pre-recorded message.
- The Emergency Alert System, which is a part of the National Weather Service, will be activated to send emergency information to radio and television stations.
- Roam Secure messages will deliver emergency alerts, notifications and updates to pagers, cell phones and e-mails of subscribers. Go to www.scalert.org to register.
- Door-to-door notification through neighborhoods will occur when time and personnel allow.

Evacuation

Please wait for notification to evacuate from law enforcement agencies.

In the event you are asked to evacuate, be prepared to leave the porch light on and display a white object in a visible place, such as a front window, to notify emergency personnel the home has been evacuated.

Domestic pets may accompany evacuees if they are on a leash or contained. Pets are not allowed at public shelters and emergency personnel will work with the local animal control to accomodate pets.

Take only high priority items with you such as prescriptions, medications, eyeglasses, important documents (passports, insurance, birth certificates), pet supplies and a child's favorite toy. Prepare this list ahead of time. Check ready.gov for a more comprehensive list...

Visit www.co.summit.co.us/wildfiremitigation/ for details, including information on shelters and neighborhood pick up locations for evacuees.

Special Needs

If you have special needs you can register at Summit County Public Health at (970) 668-9161 or www.scalert.org, to add your name into the Special Needs Group.

PROTECTING YOUR HOME

If you reside in Summit County and want to minimize the risk of wildfire around your property, take these steps now to protect your home.

Start with a defensible space property assessment from your local fire protection district.

A defensible space property assessment will include identification of vegetation which should be removed, trimming trees and other vegetation, where best to store woodpiles, propane tanks and other combustible materials. To have your property assessed, call:

Copper Mountain Consolidated Metro District (970) 968-2537

Red, White & Blue Fire Protection District (970) 453-2474

Lake Dillon Fire Rescue (970) 262-5100

Be sure to encourage your neighbors to have their property assessed for defensible space as well.

Help organize your neighborhood's fuels reduction activities.

Take a leadership role in your neighborhood and explain the benefits of fuels reduction activities. With your help, the County hopes to promote and increase the amount of proactive wildfire mitigation projects. To find out how you can organize your neighborhood, call your local fire protection district:

Copper Mountain Consolidated Metro District (970) 968-2537

Red, White & Blue Fire Protection District (970) 453-2474

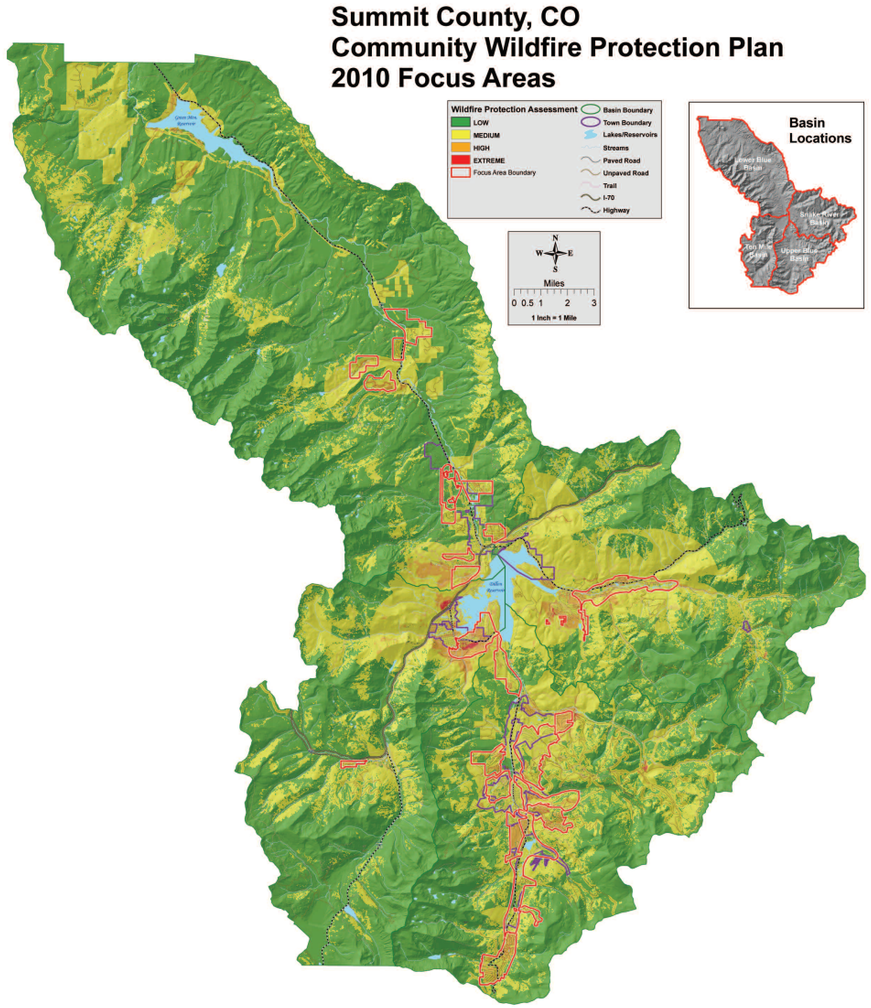
Lake Dillon Fire Rescue (970) 262-5100

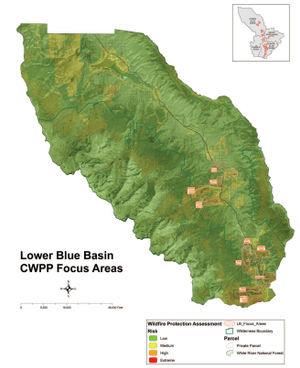
See www.colostate.edu and www.firewise.org for more home protection information.

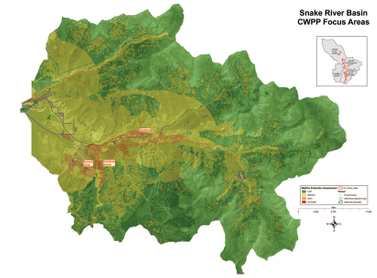
Replace wood shake shingles with fire-resistant roof material.

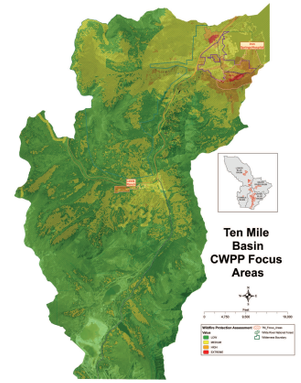
Be sure your house or lot number is visible from the street for emergency personnel.

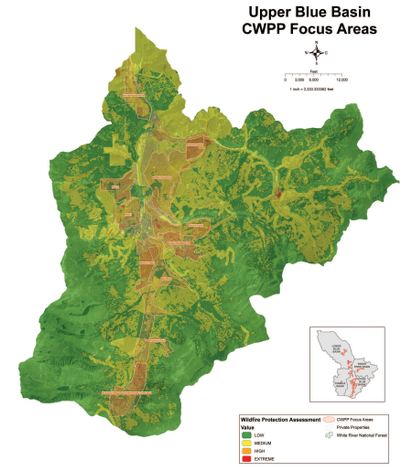
WILDFIRE RISK IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD











The risk of wildfire in Summit County has been documented as shown above. The data has been compiled over many years and is being used to prioritize fuels reduction projects. This work includes fuels reduction projects on both private and public lands. The hazard map uses four categories to identify the risk for wildfire: Extreme, High, Moderate and Low.

The risk is determined based on slope, fuels, access and building materials. The map is available online at www.co.summit.co.us/wildfiremitigation/ and is divided into watershed basins for additional reference.

There is a large percentage of land in Summit County that is at risk of wildfire. Every effort is being made to mitigate through citizen agency cooperation.

- **Upper Blue Focus Area**
- **Lower Blue Focus Area**
- **Ten Mile Focus Area**
- **Snake River Focus Area**