

Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan

IV.10. Eel Planning Unit Action Plan

IV.10.1. Eel Planning Unit Description

The *Eel Planning Unit* encompasses 222,623 acres situated in the south-western portion of Humboldt County; it is located south of Humboldt Bay and the Headwaters Forest Reserve, and west of the town of Bridgeville, with the southern edge of the Unit bordering Humboldt Redwoods State Park. This Unit contains some of the more populated areas of Humboldt County, apart from the Greater Eureka Area. Highway 101 is the central transportation route, entering from the south-east corner and traveling in a north-westerly direction through the Planning Unit. Highway 36 is another major route that heads east out of the Unit towards Trinity County. The geography of the Unit is dominated by the lower portion of the Eel River *basin* and its *tributary watersheds*. A major confluence of primary waterways and transportation routes takes place just south of Fortuna near the community of Alton: the Eel River, which is paralleled by Highway 101, is joined by the Van Duzen River, which is paralleled by Highway 36. Major Eel River tributaries within the Unit include: Yager Creek, Home Creek, Price Creek, and Strongs Creek.

The City of Fortuna, known as the “Friendly City,” and the City of Rio Dell comprise the community population centers of this Planning Unit. The rural City of Ferndale is another yet smaller population center within this Unit. Located directly west of Fortuna, Ferndale is accessed via Highway 211, which leads into the heart of Ferndale, where numerous smaller roads branch out into various neighborhoods. Several other towns and communities are clustered along Highway 101, including the town of Loleta to the north, and the town of Alton, in between Fortuna and Rio Dell, as well as Carlotta and Hydesville located to the east along Highway 36. The communities of Scotia, Stafford, Holmes, Pepperwood and Redcrest are located south of Rio Dell.

Private land is the prevailing ownership pattern within this Planning Unit. Rural-residential parcels dominate the areas surrounding Fortuna and Ferndale, with dense clusters development amassed around the main roads and community centers, while most of the southwestern Unit area is comprised of large ranchlands, with properties dispersed more widely. Rio Dell and the communities to the south are surrounded by land managed primarily by Humboldt Redwood Company, along with some parcels owned by Green Diamond Resource Company and other timber industries. Agriculture and timber production are the primary industries within this Planning Unit. A small portion of the famous Avenue of the Giants (also known as Highway 254) lies between the towns of Redcrest and Pepperwood, featuring some of the most breathtaking old growth redwoods still in existence today. A map of this planning unit can be viewed in Figure IV.10-1: Eel Unit: CWPP Unit Map at the end of this document.

IV.10.2. Eel Community Process Summary

Two community workshops were held within this Planning Unit for the purpose of gathering local information and garnering public input regarding various factors contributing to the extent of wildfire risk and/or preparedness among the communities in this Unit, and to provide information about the countywide *community wildfire protection plan* (CWPP) update process. One meeting took place on April 17, 2012 in Loleta, and the other was held on June 28, 2012 in Fortuna. These meetings were sparsely attended. A group exercise, which involved maps of the Planning Unit area, invited those present to help identify and pinpoint on the map where particular *fire hazards* exist, the location of *protection resources*, such as fire water drafting sites, as well as values and *assets at risk* within the community that could be threatened by wildfire. These workshop processes also provided an opportunity for participating community members to ask questions and provide information based on their local knowledge.

Participants were also asked to review pre-existing information illustrated on the maps which had been added by community members during similar workshops that took place during the

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initial planning process in 2006. These workshops and mapping exercises also facilitated discussion among community members about potential actions that could be taken to reduce fire risk in their communities. Through discussion and collaborative processes, participants identified major hazard areas and compiled lists of project proposals for enhancing their communities' fire preparedness.

The community-identified fire hazards, protection resources, and values and assets at risk discussed throughout the following sections of this Planning Unit Action Plan reflect information generated by these community workshop mapping exercises, as well as information resulting from direct outreach to local fire departments and residents.

The project proposals resulting from community member discussions are contained in section IV.10.8. Community-Identified Projects in this Planning Unit Action Plan.

IV.10.3. Eel Wildfire Environment

The majority of the Eel Planning Unit (72%) is zoned "High *Fire Hazard Severity*," as determined by CAL FIRE.¹ However, approximately 13% of the Unit area is zoned "Moderate Fire Hazard Severity," including the more populated areas surrounding towns and the main transportation corridors. A portion of the Unit, primarily land to the west of Fortuna and surrounding Ferndale, falls within *Local Responsibility Area (LRA)*, which is outside of CAL FIRE's jurisdiction and is therefore not zoned for Fire Hazard Severity; this accounts for 15% of the Unit acreage. Much of the inland portion of this Unit is moderately steep and heavily forested. Areas of tidal marshland are located closer to the coast. Many flat land areas near the bay contain a mix of agricultural production and pastureland.

The Unit is characterized by a Mediterranean climate. Summer weather further inland is typically dry and hot, while the coastal areas are tempered by cool fog. Winter months feature frequent precipitation and although snowfall is a rare occurrence near the coast, it is likely at elevations of 2,500 feet and above. *Local vegetation types* include: forested areas, which are largely comprised of redwoods, mixed conifer, hardwoods, and oak woodlands; *riparian* areas, where red alder, willow, and coastal shrub species are common; and annual grasslands.² Agricultural crops also comprise a significant portion of vegetation within this Unit.

Traditionally, fire was an integral part of the *ecosystems* in this region. Forest management by indigenous tribes often included low-intensity, intentional burns that helped enhance forest ecosystems and prevent the accumulation of high *fuel loads*. Communities in this Planning Unit are known for having a long history of ranching and agricultural practices; some of the early settlers in the late 1800s used intentional burning to clear and then maintain grasslands for pasture animals. A heavy *fire suppression* campaign beginning in the 1940s has allowed the accumulation of dense, flammable vegetation in forest *understories*, which acts as *fuel* and increases the risk of high-intensity wildfires. Forest ecosystems, accustomed to low-intensity fires that would burn off *brush* and newer starts in the understory, become threatened by overcrowded forests and accumulated fuel. Intense timber harvests during the 20th century further exacerbated damages to forest ecosystem health.

Humans are the most likely *ignition source* for fires in this Planning Unit. Vehicle accidents, smoking, playing with fire, poorly maintained brush pile burns, and incendiary burning are just a few potential causes. Various types of equipment use and downed power lines can also be potential ignition sources. Lightning is the most probable natural cause of fire starts within this Unit.

¹ CAL FIRE. (2007). *Fire Resources Assessment Program (FRAP)*. [Map showing Fire Hazard Severity Zone ratings within various geographic areas, mapped by county]. Fire Hazard Severity Zones Map. Retrieved from <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov/>.

² Dyett & Bhatia. (2002, September). Lower Eel River Watershed..(p. 14.)

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Although the majority of communities in this Unit reside within the “fog belt” and experience an abundance of precipitation, residents must not be lured into a false sense of security regarding their risk of wildfire. Many homes exist within the *wildland-urban interface* (WUI) in which *wildland fires* can easily become *structural fires*, and vice versa. *Dead plant matter* and vegetation with low *moisture levels* within 100-150 feet of homesteads pose some of the greatest threats to *structural ignitability*. Of particular concern are houses with needles and leaves accumulating on rooftops or in rain gutters. Houses with wooden rooftops and sidings add to this risk, as do the presence of wooden decks, particularly those with dead plant matter accumulated beneath them. Figure IV.10-2 found at the end of this Unit Action Plan illustrates risks and hazards identified by community members at public workshops and can be used as a key to access detailed descriptions of community-identified fire planning features on the Humboldt Web GIS Portal, Fire Planning section: <http://gis.co.humboldt.ca.us/>.

Highway 101 and Highway 36 are the central *ingress and egress* routes, with numerous smaller roads connecting residences and neighborhoods to these central corridors. Poor or complete lack of *signage* at roads and intersections pose potential problems for ingress and egress; this is especially true for more remote residences that are further away from the main towns. The narrowness of smaller roads leading to remote residences could create serious complications for firefighting *apparatuses* trying to gain access during simultaneous home evacuations. Routes may also be overgrown with vegetation, and many properties have inadequate *turn around spaces*. The potential for landslides in the area could also inhibit access.

The central cities of Ferndale, Fortuna, and Rio Dell provide potable water and *fire protection water* to the majority of the population within this Unit. The City of Ferndale serves a population of approximately 1,400; The City of Fortuna serves a population of approximately 11,200; and the City of Rio Dell serves a population of approximately 3,250. The Scotia and Carlotta Community Service Districts also provide their communities with water. Residents outside of the cities and service districts obtain water through other means, such as drawing from nearby creeks and holding tanks. Fire protection water may also be drawn from the following locations:

- Bear River drafting area
- Blue Slide Road river drafting
- Dyerville river drafting
- Eel River tributaries drafting locations
- Three drafting locations on Palco Log Pond
- Elinor Flat river drafting
- Holmes river drafting area
- Price Creek drafting areas
- Shively river drafting areas
- Yager Creek
- Carlotta Mill

The map in Figure IV.10-2 found at the end of this Unit Action Plan illustrates these *drafting sites* as well as other community-identified wildfire *protection resources*. The map can be used as a key to access detailed descriptions of community-identified fire planning features on the Humboldt Web GIS Portal, Fire Planning section: <http://gis.co.humboldt.ca.us/>.

IV.10.4. Eel Values and Assets at Risk

Assets at risk can be defined as those things that are important to quality of life that can be threatened with destruction or loss from wildfire. These may include community assets such as homes and businesses, as well as environmental values such as wildlife habitat, natural resources, and air quality, along with any other important attribute that individual communities rely on for their well being. Loss or damage to community assets as a result of wildfire can have short- or long-term impacts of varying severity, depending on the asset. Short-term loss caused by a wildfire can include the destruction of residences, commercial assets, timber, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, and *watersheds*. Long-term effects may include displaced persons, smaller timber

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harvests, reduced access to affected recreational areas, and destruction of cultural, ecological, and economic resources, and community infrastructure.

The majority of *assets at risk* in this Planning Unit are residential homes and communities, along with a variety of commercial and service industries, community centers, medical and dental clinics, schools, churches, museums, as well as infrastructure components, such as water treatment plants. The Bear River Casino and Rohnerville Airport are noteworthy assets as well. The ranching, agricultural, dairy, and timber industries within the Unit are also considered assets at risk. The Unit also contains a few city parks, an industrial park, and RV parks, which are scattered among the various communities.

The map in Figure IV.10-2 found at the end of this Unit Action Plan illustrates values and assets at risk to wildfire identified by community members at public workshops. The map can be used as a key to access detailed descriptions of community-identified fire planning features on the Humboldt Web GIS³ Portal, Fire Planning section: <http://gis.co.humboldt.ca.us/>. Some of the community-identified assets at risk within this Unit include:

- Mount Pierce Communications Site
- Eel River Sawmills
- Capetown Hotel
- Russ Park
- Cookhouse Ranch - historical site
- Humboldt Creamery Association

The Eel River itself is an environmentally significant asset; it “supports the largest remaining native coho salmon population in California, as well as fall-run Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, coastal cutthroat trout, green sturgeon, and Pacific Lamprey.”⁴ Table Bluff County Park, located at the southwestern edge of Humboldt Bay, and Crab Park are areas of environmental importance as well. The Eel River Wildlife Area has significant ecological value, with a diverse array of *habitats* that support a bounty of wildlife, such as, “river otters, harbor seals, tundra swans, bald eagles, egrets, herons, salmon and steel head trout.”⁵ Other notable wildlife species within the Unit include: black tailed deer, beaver, mink, gray fox, ring tailed cats, weasels, coyote, and bobcats.⁶ Just east of Table Bluff Park lies the Wiyot Reservation, a small bit of land that holds great cultural significance for many residents in this Unit.

IV.10.5. Eel Community Preparedness

No local *fire safe councils* (FSC) exist in this Planning Unit and none of these communities has achieved national *Firewise*® recognition. Efforts to educate community members about fire safety and to improve emergency preparedness within this Unit are guided by the local fire protection services with some support from Humboldt County FSC. *Community Emergency Response Teams* (CERT) training took place within this Unit to equip community members with basic disaster response skills for dealing with a variety of emergency situations. Such skills become extremely valuable in situations where professional responders cannot act immediately. CERT participants gain experience implementing collaborative problem solving and develop a greater sense of community cohesion.

The Fortuna Volunteer Fire Department (VFD) provides fire prevention and safety services through their Fire Prevention Division and Public Education Division. Their efforts include implementing and maintaining community outreach programs that educate and inform the public

³ Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

⁴ Dyett & Bhatia. (2002, September). Lower Eel River Watershed. *Humboldt 2025 General Plan Update: Natural Resources and Hazards; Vol. 2: Detailed Watershed Characteristics and Regulatory Framework Analysis*. Retrieved from <http://www.co.humboldt.ca.us/gpu/documentsbackground.aspx>.

⁵ The Wildlands Conservancy. (2012). *Eel River Estuary Preserve*. Retrieved from http://www.wildlandsconservancy.org/preserve_eelriver.html.

⁶ Dyett & Bhatia. (2002, September). Lower Eel River Watershed. (p.17.)

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about fire prevention; in addition to giving safety presentations on a range of topics, the Fortuna VFD also distributes informational materials at local community events. The Fortuna VFD is also committed to enhancing public safety by conducting fire safety inspections at businesses, residences, schools, as well as children's day cares and senior residential care units.

IV.10.6. Eel Wildfire Protection Capabilities

Seven *volunteer fire departments* (VFDs) and *volunteer fire companies* (VFCs) collaborate to provide fire protection to the communities within the various *fire protection districts* (FPD) and *community services districts* (CSD) that exist within this Planning Unit. The seven fire chiefs from these fire departments and companies comprise the Eel River Valley Fire Chiefs group. This group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss and coordinate issues in the Eel River Valley and along Highway 36.

Tax- or fee-supported fire protection services within this Unit include:^{7 8}

- **The Loleta VFD** was formed in 1900 and has 30 volunteer firefighters who provide service to approximately 1,500 community members in 30 square miles. Their apparatuses include: a 4,000 gallon water tender, three type-2 engines, one type-3 engine, one type-4 quick-attack engine, and a rescue truck. The Loleta VFD can be reached by calling (707) 733-5407, by email at: loletafire@suddenlink.net, or by visiting their webpage at: www.loletafire.com.
- **The Ferndale VFD** was founded in 1897 and supports 34 members who provide service to approximately 2,605 community members within the district, which encompasses over 28 square miles. They also provide service to about 130 residents outside the district. Their apparatuses include: one type-1 engine, two type-2 engines, one type-4 quick-attack truck, one rescue truck, and two 5,000 gallon water tenders. The Ferndale VFD can be reached by calling (707) 786-9909, or by visiting their website at: <http://www.ferndalefire.org/>.
- **The Fortuna VFD** was founded in 1904 and supports 68 volunteer firefighters out of three stations. Volunteers provide service to 15,000 community members in approximately 26 square miles, including the City of Fortuna and outlying areas including Hydesville and Alton. Their apparatuses include: a 2,000 gallon water tender, a 3,000 gallon water tender, two aerial fire trucks, two type-1 engines, two type-2 engines, plus one reserve type-2 engine, a type-3 engine, and two rescue trucks. The Fortuna VFD can be reached by calling (707) 725-5021, or by visiting their website at: www.fortunafire.com.
- **The Rio Dell VFD** was founded in 1941 under the name of "Wildwood FPD," and became the "Rio Dell FPD" in 1961.⁹ It supports a total of 30 members who provide service to approximately 3,300 community members within over 40 square miles. Their apparatuses include: one type-1 engine, one type-2 engine, one type-3 engine, one type-4 rescue truck, one 3,800 gallon water tender, and a Ford Expedition Incident Command vehicle. The Rio Dell VFD can be reached by calling (707) 764-3329, or by visiting their website at: www.riodellfire.com.
- **The Carlotta VFD** was formally established in 1965 and supports 12 members. Their apparatuses include: a Rapid Response 1986 GMC ¾-ton, which responds to all medical calls; a 1977 Ford Van Pelt Pumper with 850 gallons of water; a 1983 Chevy

⁷ County of Humboldt, Natural Resources Planning. (2012). *Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association Annual Report, 2010*. Humboldt County Fire Safe Council. Retrieved from http://www.co.humboldt.ca.us/natural-resources/fire_safe_council/fireserviceannualreport.aspx.

⁸ Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association. (2012). 2012 Local Fire Protection Survey.

⁹ Rio Dell Volunteer Fire Department. (2012). *Homepage*. Retrieved from <http://www.riodellfire.com/>.

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Utility Truck that carries 150 gallons of water, has foam, and carries rope rescue gear; a 1980 Ford F600 Pumper with a 550 gallon capacity; a 1977 Ford Van Pelt Pumper/Tender Combo with 2,500 gallons; and a 1971 International Tender with 3,500 gallons. The Carlotta VFD can be reached by calling (707) 768-1714 or (707) 768-1724.

There are two *volunteer fire companies* (VFC) operating in this Unit, which receive no tax-based support but rather rely solely on donations and fundraising. They include:¹⁰

- **The Redcrest VFC**, supports 6 volunteers who provide services to the areas of Redcrest, Holmes, Larabee, Shively, and Stafford. Their apparatuses include: one type-1 engine with a 500 gallon capacity and a 4WD Utility Truck with medical equipment. The Redcrest VFC can be reached by calling (707) 722-1967.
- **The Scotia VFC** supports 22 members who provide service to approximately 800 community members. Their apparatuses include: one type-1 engine, one type-2 engine, a medical response vehicle, and a Chief Command Vehicle (Pickup). The Scotia VFC can be reached by calling (707) 764-4322, by email at svfdfire@gmail.com, or by visiting their website at: <http://svfdfire.com/>.

The fire protection service entities in this Planning Unit respond to structural fires as well as wildfires. A substantial portion of the Unit, particularly the area west of Highway 101 surrounding Ferndale, falls under the jurisdiction of LRA. The remaining area is State Responsibility Area (SRA) and is the responsibility of CAL FIRE. The CAL FIRE – Humboldt-Del Norte Unit (CAL FIRE-HUU) Administrative Headquarters is located in Fortuna and houses the primary dispatch center in Humboldt: the Fortuna Interagency Command Center. Staffing at the Fortuna CAL FIRE station varies throughout the year, but remains adequate for emergency response most of the year. CAL-FIRE HUU can be reached by calling (707) 725-4413.

Many communities in this Unit have various needs associated with improving the availability of emergency water for wildfire protection. There are some locations where firefighting water is not available or where emergency water storage is needed to supplement the potentially over taxed municipal water supply. Many existing water sources are in need of maintenance, protection, or improvements. There is also a need to make the location of existing water sources more apparent to firefighters, and for community members to ensure that their water sources are properly outfitted for fire fighting equipment.

Emergency responders in this Unit are also challenged by a lack of proper signage throughout some of the more remote neighborhoods. Poorly visible or missing signage can make it difficult for firefighters to locate incident sites and can also hinder emergency *response times*. Difficulty accessing residences is exacerbated in areas where narrow roads are grown over with vegetation and have insufficient width to accommodate firefighting apparatuses.

The fire protection entities within this Planning Unit do their best to provide their communities with fire protection as well as medical and rescue services. However, individually, these departments struggle with the man-power, time and funding to support the more specialized goal of rescue services. This is why the fire chiefs of the Van Duzen and lower Eel River Valley areas came together to form the Eel River Valley Technical Resource Team (ERVTRT), to address the many risks that these departments face (water rescue, collapse rescue, confined space rescue and more). Participating fire departments include: Bridgeville, Carlotta, Ferndale, Fortuna, Loleta, Rio Dell, and Scotia. The ultimate goal of the ERVTRT is, through the pooling of resources, to have the ability to provide a higher level of rescue operations to their communities. These operations include low angle rope rescue, hazardous materials operations level training, confined space training, rescue systems training (collapse rescue) and swift water rescue training along

¹⁰ County of Humboldt, Natural Resources Planning. (2012). *Humboldt County Fire Chiefs Association Annual Report, 2010*.

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with the acquisition of appropriate equipment to address collapse, confined space and water rescue events. The ERVTRT has approximately 15 members who train together twice monthly and have an assigned Team Leader and Squad Leaders who are in charge of members from each fire department. In November 2011, the Fire Chief's determined that the level of training and procedures for the ERVTRT were adequate and authorized the team to respond to calls.

IV.10.7. Eel Evacuation

Evacuation from the Eel Planning Unit will travel either southeast or northwest along Highway 101, or east on Highway 36, depending on law enforcement recommendations based on *fire behavior*, wind pattern, traffic, and ingress of emergency vehicles. Ferndale residents will connect to Highway 101 either by traveling north on Highway 211 or southeast on Grizzly Bluff Rd, which becomes Blue Slide Road. There are numerous small roads connecting communities and residences to main roads and highways. Adequate ingress and egress along these roads is vital to a large portion of the community that may need to access primary *evacuation routes* and for firefighters who will be using the roads to access wildfire incidents.

Evacuation impediments may include: landslides, fallen trees, overgrown vegetation, poorly marked streets and intersections, and *one-way-in, one-way-out roads* that could inhibit evacuation and emergency response vehicles, or leave residents stranded should the roads become blocked.

During wildfire events that have the potential to threaten personal safety, community evacuation sites may be established where residents can go to survive a wildfire. Evacuation sites will be established in different locations depending on the anticipated path of the wildfire. The determination for the location of these sites is normally made by Humboldt County Emergency Operations Center Incident Commander in cooperation with an *Incident Management Team*. The Humboldt County Sheriffs and Emergency Officials will use mass communication and door-to-door methods to inform residents about the threat and where residents should go to take shelter.

If a catastrophic event occurs, residents may not be able to reach designated evacuation sites. In such cases, residents may need to make decisions on their own about seeking shelter where they can survive the passage of the wildfire until they can reach an evacuation site. It can be very difficult to determine the right thing to do as the fire approaches. Before a wildfire threatens, community members should talk to their local fire department about evacuation procedures in their neighborhood.

See section V.2.3 in Part V. Fire-Safe Communities for more information on preparing for safe evacuation and evacuation planning for pets and livestock. Also see section II.3.5 Evacuation Routes and Vulnerability in Part II. Risk Assessment for information about evacuation procedures and challenges in Humboldt County.

IV.10.8. Community Identified Potential Projects

The following list and matrix includes community identified proposed projects based on input from the community processes discussed above. A detailed description of each heading in the matrix can be found in Appendix G: *Descriptive Characteristics for Community Identified Projects Matrix*. These projects are illustrated on the community-identified projects map found at the end of this Unit Action Plan (Figure IV.10-3). Projects include those carried over from the 2006 fire-planning process and those identified and refined during the 2012 CWPP update process. This information can also be viewed on the fire planning GIS Portal. The GIS Portal allows users to search for and view specific fire planning features by location or to zoom into a desired area from an aerial view. To access the Portal, go to: <http://gis.co.humboldt.ca.us/> and choose "Fire Planning" from the list of mapping applications. The data collected through this Planning process are included in the GIS layers within the Portal.

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No vegetation *treatments* recommended in this plan will be carried out without the consent and involvement of the property owner and all applicable local, state and federal regulations must be observed.

Non-geographic community identified proposed projects based on community workshop notes:

- Provide education and outreach about living in an area vulnerable to wildfires. Include compelling stories about past coastal wildfire events. Send this information out with various already occurring mailers.
- Post more address and road signs in some areas.
- Identify roads that are impassable with fire trucks. Ferndale is considering posting a red reflective strip at the bottom of roads that can not accommodate their fire trucks.
- Include a link to the County Fire Safe Council and State Fire Safe Council websites on all fire department websites.
- Use Facebook and other popular social networking tools to get the fire safe message out to more people.
- Encourage Boy Scouts of America to perform community service activities including delivering literature to homeowners or clearing around and painting fire hydrants.
- Partner with the California Conservation Corps to treat hazardous vegetation in priority locations.

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LOCATION		Community Identified Treatment/Project Information Eel Fire Planning Unit							
Number Corresponds with location on map	Community, Structure, or Area (Value at Risk)	Description	Status	Year	Type	Acres	Veg. Type	Maintenance (actual or proposed)	Funding source (actual or proposed)
BRD020	HWY 36 east to Trinity CO line	Fuel reduction	Treat-Med	2010	Roadside Clearance				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
BRD035	H-Line (old PL haul road)	Fuel reduction	Treat-Med	2010	Roadside Clearance				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
BRD076	Cummings Creek Road	Fuel reduction	Funded	2010	Landscape				
BRD078	Fox Creek Road	Fuel reduction	Funded	2010	Landscape				
BRD082	Carlota - Church Ln (Private road) & Hwy 36	Neighborhood -combo driveway clearing, defensible space, and buffer to protect from wildland fire - Thinning Chipping	Treat-High	2009	Landscape Defensible Space				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
BRD089	Fox Creek Rd.	Roadside Shaded Canopy. 50 ft each side of Rd. for 2 miles -Thinning Chipping	Funded	2009	Roadside Clearance	24.00		Check re-growth every 3 years	USDA 2009 grant
BRD091	Cummings Creek Road	Roadside Shaded Canopy. 50 ft each side of Rd. for 1 mile - Thinning Chipping	Funded	2009	Roadside Clearance	12.00			USDA 2009 grant

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Number Corresponds with location on map	Community, Structure, or Area (Value at Risk)	Description	Status	Year	Type	Acres	Veg. Type	Maintenance (actual or proposed)	Funding source (actual or proposed)
BRD107	Carlotta interface areas North hwy 36	Public outreach re defensible space and fire safety	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Ed				
FER050	Williams Ck Rd (single access), and surrounding	Roadside vegetation Management, Public outreach re defensible space, evacuation plan	Treat-Med	2012	Roadside clearance & Other Education				
FER051	Eugene St (single access), Ferndale	Public outreach re defensible space and address signage	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Education				
PAC003	from 2N1E sec 34, SE ~14mi to 1N3E sec 27	Fire Suppression Ridges; some natural break; targeted for additional treatment	Treat-Med	2012	Landscape				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
PAC004	from 1N1W sec 36, SE ~6mi to 1S1E sec 14	Fire Suppression Ridges; some natural break; targeted for additional treatment	Treat-Med	2012	Landscape				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
PAC006	01S 02E SEC 14 ~6mi East to 01S 03E sec 23	Fire Suppression Ridges; some natural break; targeted for additional treatment	Treat-Med	2012	Landscape				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
PAC007	NE boundary Fortuna/timber lands	WUI; fuel treatment buffer between residence and wildland	Treat-Med	2012	Landscape				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association

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Number Corresponds with location on map	Community, Structure, or Area (Value at Risk)	Description	Status	Year	Type	Acres	Veg. Type	Maintenance (actual or proposed)	Funding source (actual or proposed)
PAC011	Tompkins Hill Rd, Fortuna	Install address and Rd signs. Public education and outreach	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Access and Education				
PAC012	Loop Rd and off-shoots, Fortuna	Install address and Rd signs. Public education and outreach	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Access and Education				
PAC013	Mill St (single access), Fortuna	Install address and Rd signs. Public education and outreach	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Access				
PAC014	North of neighborhoods in Palmer Ck, near Fortuna	Shaded fuelbreak as a buffer between residents and wildlands	Treat-Med	2012	Landscape				
PAC015	Neighborhood at the top of Home Ave (single access), Fortuna	Improve defensible space where needed (evacuation planning)	Treat-High	2012	Defensible Space Other - Education				
RIO076	Price Creek Neighborhood – Rio Dell	Improve Price Creek Community Water Source (Blue Dot Program)	Update	2012	Other – Water and Education				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
RIO077	Pepper Tree Lane – Rio Dell	Improve Pepper Tree Lane area Water Source (Blue Dot Program)	Update	2012	Other - Water				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association

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Number Corresponds with location on map	Community, Structure, or Area (Value at Risk)	Description	Status	Year	Type	Acres	Veg. Type	Maintenance (actual or proposed)	Funding source (actual or proposed)
RIO083	Redwood Avenue – Rio Dell	Widen Redwood Avenue & improve bridge crossing for fire truck access	Action Need	2010	Other - Rd. Access				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
RIO084	Demo Left & Stafford to Happy Valley – Rio Dell	Slash Treatment/Vegetation Management along timber roads	Treat-Med	2012	Roadside Clearance				grant-landowner, neighborhood or road association
RIO095	Shively Rd (single access)	Vegetation management along road. Prioritize county roadside clearing	Treat-Med	2012	Roadside Clearance	14.43			
RIO096	Shively Rd (single access)	Public Outreach re defensible space and evacuation planning	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Education				
RIO097	Residences near Larabee Ck Rd/Johnson Ln (single acc)	Public outreach about defensible space and evacuation planning	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Education and Evacuation				
RIO099	Monument Rd, Rio Dell	Education outreach about defensible space and roadside fuel reduction. Improve signage and water availability	Action-Needed	2012	Roadside Clearance Other-Education and Water				
RIO100	Rio Vista Ln (single access) – Rio Dell	Public outreach re defensible space, fire safety, evacuation planning	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Education				

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LOCATION		Community Identified Treatment/Project Information Eel Fire Planning Unit							
Number Corresponds with location on map	Community, Structure, or Area (Value at Risk)	Description	Status	Year	Type	Acres	Veg. Type	Maintenance (actual or proposed)	Funding source (actual or proposed)
RIO101	Hydesville neighborhoods interface areas	Public outreach re defensible space and fire safety	Action-Needed	2012	Other-Ed				

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IV.10.9. Eel Action Plan

The following items are the initial priorities for community action for the Eel Planning Unit as recommended by this Humboldt County CWPP (not listed in order of priority). In an ideal world, everything recommended here would be implemented. However, it must be understood that implementation will be subject to the availability of funds and other resources and the willingness/ability of community members and Plan Partners to take action. This Action Plan can be cited in grant applications to leverage needed implementation funds and used to guide and inspire action.

Enhancing Fire Protection

- **Sustainable Fire Departments:** Community members within this Planning Unit should support their local fire department¹¹ through activities such as volunteering as firefighters or auxiliary members, making donations, supporting fundraisers, writing grants, and/or helping with administrative tasks. With community support, local fire departments can continue to provide a wide variety of vital emergency services.
- **Road Improvements:** Upgrade and/or repair roads that hinder access by emergency responders. Begin by systematically identifying and mitigating such access impediments. The following priority access issue was identified at a community workshop and is recommended for initial action in this plan:
 - Widen Redwood Avenue near Rio Dell and improve the bridge crossing for fire truck access.
- **Signage:** To aid emergency responders, residents and road associations should improve road and address signage throughout their communities. Make signs larger and reflective to increase visibility and install road and address signs where they are missing. Less noticeable but more sentimental address signs may remain but it is important to also post reflective signs with lettering at least three inches in height. Focus initial efforts in the following areas:
 - Fortuna: Tompkins Hill Road, Loop Road and offshoots, and Mill Street
 - Ferndale: Eugene Street
 - Rio Dell: Monument Road
- **Firefighting Water:** Increase the availability of water for fire protection by making water access locations known to fire departments and investing in more community water tanks. Neighborhood and road associations and/or Firewise® communities work with local fire departments to develop a “Blue Dot” program, which identifies the location of firefighting water sources by marking them with a blue reflective dot. This program also ensures that tanks and water systems are outfitted with fittings compatible with firefighting equipment. Begin by identifying where such a program is most needed. Focus initial efforts in the following neighborhoods:
 - Pepper Tree Lane, North of Rio Dell and West of Highway 101.
 - Price Creek, North of Rio Dell and West of Highway 101.
 - Monument Road, Southwest of Rio Dell

Creating Fire Safe Communities

- **Firewise® Communities:** Pursue participation in the Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program with neighborhood groups in developed areas adjacent to the

¹¹ All local fire departments within this unit are listed above with their contact information in the “Wildfire Protection Capabilities” section.

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wildland, particularly where there are many residences located along dead-end roads. Actively implement and maintain the Firewise® action plan on an annual schedule. Target the following neighborhoods on edges of communities in the higher risk interface areas, possibly through an affiliation with a road association:

- Near Fortuna: Tompkins Hill and loop roads, top of Home Avenue, and Mill Street
- Near Ferndale: William Creek Road and Eugene Street
- Near Rio Dell: Monument Road
- Near Carlotta: Cummings Creek and Fox Creek roads
- Holmes and Shively

Ensuring Safe and Effective Evacuation

- Encourage fire department representatives from each department within this Planning Unit to work with local law enforcement and the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services to engage community members in evacuation preparedness. Efforts should be made to ensure that local gates are open or accessible during Red Flag conditions. Focus evacuation planning efforts in neighborhoods located along the following single access roads:
 - Fortuna: Tompkins Hill Road, Home Avenue, Mill Street
 - Ferndale: Eugene Street, Williams Creek Road
 - Carlotta: Cummings Creek Road, Fox Creek Road
 - Rio Dell: Monument Road, Rio Vista Lane
 - Shively/Holmes: Shively Road, Larabee Creek Road and Johnson Lane

Promoting Fire Safe Education

- Conduct public education and outreach efforts regarding strategies for fire safety, maintaining defensible space, and evacuation planning. Send out informational material in mailers throughout the communities. Consider involving Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America in outreach efforts. Focus initial educational efforts in the following neighborhoods:
 - Fortuna: Tompkins Hill Road, Home Avenue, Mill Street
 - Ferndale: Eugene Street, Williams Creek Road
 - Hydesville neighborhoods interface areas
 - Carlotta interface areas north of Highway 36
 - Rio Dell: Price Creek, Monument Road, Rio Vista Lane
 - Shively/Holmes: Shively Road, Larabee Creek Road, and Johnson Lane

Reducing Wildfire Fuels (Flammable Vegetation)

- **Defensible Space:** Those residents living in areas within this Planning Unit that are at risk to wildfire should manage the flammable vegetation within their home ignition zone. Maintaining *defensible space* through vegetation treatments should be a routine and ongoing practice for all homes and *landscapes*. Community *Chipper Days* can facilitate this process by helping landowners get rid of slash and brush piles so that they do not become an additional hazard. Begin by identifying where defensible space is most needed within the planning unit. The following priority areas were identified at community meetings and are recommended for treatment in this plan:
 - The neighborhood at the top of Home Avenue in Fortuna
 - The neighborhood along Church Lane, Southeast of Carlotta

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- **Roadside Clearance:** Manage roadside vegetation in order to improve and maintain access for emergency vehicles and ensure safe evacuation. Consider working with the California Conservation Corps or County Public Works Roads Division. Focus initial efforts along the following roads:
 - Williams Creek Road
 - Cummings Creek Road
 - Church Lane
 - Fox Creek Road
 - Highway 36 where needed
 - H-Line (Old lumber company haul road)
 - Monument Road
 - Shively Road

- **Landscape Fuels Reduction:** Construct *shaded fuelbreaks* as buffers between residential areas and wildlands to slow the progress of wildfires. This allows firefighters a higher probability of successfully protecting communities from wildfire damage. These buffers may also protect the wildlands from the spread of fires originating within communities. The following areas are recommended for priority treatment in this plan:
 - A shaded fuelbreak buffering WUI neighborhoods along the Northeast side of Fortuna, between the city and timberlands.
 - A shaded fuelbreak North of neighborhoods in Palmer Creek (North Fortuna)
 - A buffer between the neighborhoods along Church Lane and the wildlands (Southeast of Carlotta)