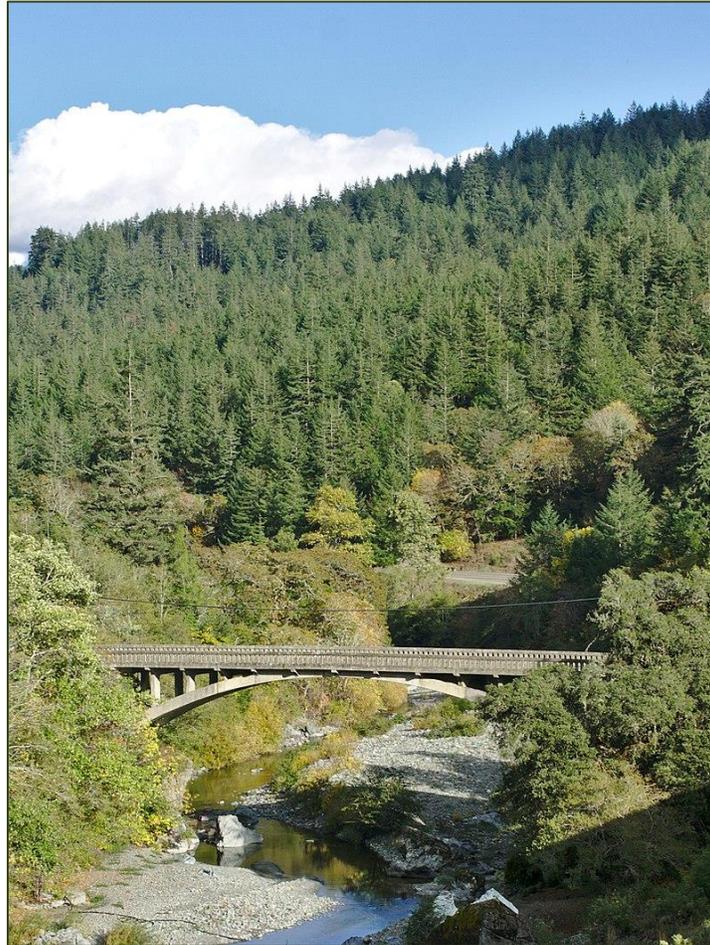


MAD–VAN DUZEN PLANNING UNIT ACTION PLAN



Bridge over the Van Duzen River near Bridgeville. Photo: Alexander Klink.

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Helpful Links	
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BRIDGEVILLE FIREWISE:	https://humboldtqov.org/725/Bridgeville
CAL FIRE HUMBOLDT-DEL NORTE UNIT:	http://www.fire.ca.gov/HUU
HUMBOLDT COUNTY WEB GIS:	https://webqis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.6_CWPP
HUMBOLDT COUNTY FIRE SAFE COUNCIL (HCFSC):	https://humboldtqov.org/FireSafeCouncil
HCFSC REPRESENTATIVE, CYBELLE IMMITT:	cimmit@co.humboldt.ca.us

4.11 MAD–VAN DUZEN PLANNING UNIT ACTION PLAN

4.11.1 MAD–VAN DUZEN PLANNING UNIT DESCRIPTION



*A larger map of this planning unit can be viewed in Map 4.11.1, **Mad–Van Duzen CWPP Unit**.*

The Mad–Van Duzen Planning Unit encompasses 300,661 acres situated in the southeastern region of Humboldt County. The cities of Fortuna and Rio Dell and Humboldt Redwoods State Park are located to the west, while Trinity County and Six Rivers National Forest border the eastern side of the Unit. Highway 36 is the primary transportation route through the Unit; it is paralleled by the Van Duzen River, which is one of the last remaining free-flowing rivers in California. The river and highway travel across the center of the Unit in a westward direction. Kneeland and Alderpoint Roads provide access to the north and south, respectively. The Unit contains portions of both the Van Duzen River *watershed* and the Mad River watershed. The topography includes steep canyons formed by the rivers and their tributaries, which include Indian Creek, Larabee Creek, the Little Van Duzen River, Butte Creek, East Creek and Pilot Creek, to name a few.

Bridgeville, a privately owned town, comprises the main community center within this planning unit. It is located at the point where the three primary transportation routes—Highway 36, Kneeland Road and Alderpoint Road intersect. Other communities within the Unit include Dinsmore in the east, and Blocksburg in the southern region. Other distinct neighborhood groupings exist near Coyote Flat and Homestead Roads, and in the Golden Gate and Deerfield Ranch subdivisions as well. The communities within this planning unit were established upon a resource-based lifestyle; agriculture, along with timber and non-timber forest products, continue to play an important role in the local economies. The area supports a variety of cottage industries, fine art trade, and social services as well.¹ Over the past decade, the marijuana economy has left a deep imprint on the community. An increase in traffic on rural roads and water diversion issues are two such impacts that increase the Planning Unit’s wildfire risk.

Watershed: All of the land that drains water runoff into a specific body of water. Watersheds may be referred to as drainage areas or drainage basins. Ridges of higher elevation usually form the boundaries between watersheds by directing the water to one side of the ridge or the other. The water then flows to the low point of the watershed.

Private land is the dominant ownership pattern in this unit. The composition of land uses includes farms and rural residences in the lower floodplain and near the river; large- and medium-sized swaths of rangeland; residential parcels concentrated along the main roads; and a few parcels of timberland managed primarily by Humboldt Redwood Company. The majority of residential properties lie along Highway 36, and around and in between Bridgeville and Dinsmore. Several clusters of residential property are also located to the south along Alderpoint Road and near Blocksburg. Residential parcel sizes span a wide range, “from standard house lots, 40- to 100-acres parcels, ranches with 1,000 acres or

¹ County of Humboldt, Department of Community Development Services. (2003). Bridgeville Area Community Action Plan. (pp. 5-6). Retrieved from http://www.co.humboldt.ca.us/planning/planning/documents/action_plans/2003_plans/brdq_web.pdf

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more, to small trailer parks.”² Large portions of land along the eastern edge of the Unit fall within Six Rivers National Forest and are managed by the US Forest Service. A few small areas of Bureau of Land Management Land (BLM) exist to the south of Highway 36 as well.

4.11.2 MAD–VAN DUZEN ASSETS AND VALUES AT RISK

Assets and values at risk are those things that are important to quality of life that can be threatened with destruction or loss from wildfire. These include a variety of things such as homes, businesses, critical infrastructure, cultural sites, wildlife habitat, natural resources, air quality, recreational facilities and areas, historical structures, and any other important attribute that individual communities rely on for their well-being.

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, fire stations, churches, as well as infrastructure components, such as cell phone towers and access roads. The ranching, agricultural, and timber industries within the Unit are also considered assets at risk. The Six Rivers National Forest, Grizzly Creek Campgrounds and State Park, and Robinson Rock comprise some of the environmentally significant areas within this unit. These areas, along with the wide swaths of undeveloped ranchlands throughout the region, provide breathtaking vistas and important habitat for wildlife species.

Map 4.11.2, found at the end of this Unit Action Plan, illustrates assets and values at risk to wildfire identified by community members at public workshops. More detailed descriptions of community-identified fire planning features can be found on the Humboldt County Web GIS³ Portal: https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.6_CWPP.

Some of the key community-identified assets at risk within this unit are listed in the table below. This list is not intended to be comprehensive and illustrates participating community members’ concerns.

FIGURE 4.11.1 MAD–VAN DUZEN: COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED ASSETS AT RISK	
○ Bridgeville downtown/bridge for evacuation	○ Power plant (Casterlin & Alderpoint)
○ Casterlin School	○ Pratt Mountain Lookout
○ CDF Fire Station	○ Train Station, Fort Seward
○ Dinsmore Airport	○ Triumphant Life Camp
○ First Baptist Church	○ Robinson Rock (nature area/viewshed)
○ Historic Blocksburg	○ Swain’s Flat Houses/Market
○ McClellan Mountain cell tower	○ Swimmer’s Delight/Van Duzen Park
○ PG&E Substation/Caltrans yard	○ Weekender (area)

4.11.3 MAD–VAN DUZEN WILDFIRE ENVIRONMENT

Approximately 62% of the Mad–Van Duzen Planning Unit is zoned “Very High Fire Hazard Severity,” as determined by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).⁴ Thirty-seven percent of the Unit, including a substantial portion of the western area, is zoned “High Fire Hazard

² Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program. (2010). Bridgeville Community Assessment. (p. 4).

³ Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

⁴ 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://www.fire.ca.gov/fire_prevention/fire_prevention_wildland_zones_maps

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Severity,” while one very small patch of land near Indian Creek (which encompasses less than 1% of the entire Unit area) is zoned “Moderate Fire Hazard Severity.”

For a closer look at fire hazard severity in this planning unit, see Map 4.11.2, Mad–Van Duzen Community-Identified Protection Resources, Values/Assets, & Risks/Hazards.

How is Fire Hazard Severity determined by CAL FIRE?

- The classification of a zone as moderate, high, or very high fire hazard is based on a combination of how a fire will behave and the probability of flames and embers threatening buildings.
- Zone boundaries and hazard levels are determined based on vegetation. For wildland areas, the current FHSZ model uses burn probability and expected fire behavior based on weather, fuel, and terrain conditions. For urban areas, zone boundaries and hazard levels are based on vegetation density, adjacent wildland FHSZ scores, and distance from wildland areas.
- Each area of the map gets a score for flame length, embers, and the likelihood of the area burning. Scores are then averaged over the zone areas.
- While FHS zones do not predict when or where a wildfire will occur, they do identify areas where wildfire hazards could be more severe and therefore are of greater concern.

Humans are the most likely ignition source for fires in this planning unit. Vehicle accidents, smoking, playing with fire, poorly maintained debris burning, ignitions associated with marijuana cultivation and processing, and arson are just a few potential causes. Various types of equipment use and downed power lines can also be potential ignition sources.

Ignitions from vehicles, particularly along Highway 36, have a variety of potential starts, such as vehicles dragging chains, hot mufflers or catalytic converters on vehicles parked over grasses by the side of the road, vandals torching abandoned vehicles on the roadside, or vehicles hitting the side of a bank or rolling down a ravine. Unfortunately, these are common occurrences along the Highway. The growing cannabis industry is another source of numerous ignition hazards, including illegal wiring and unsafe use of generators and storage of fuels. Vacant or unmaintained structures throughout the communities in this planning unit are potential fire hazards as well—presenting easy targets for arsonists.

Lightning is the most probable natural cause of fire starts within this planning unit. Several large wildfires have been started by lightning during thunderstorms that ignited more fires than firefighting resources could keep up with. The steep topography of this planning unit can accelerate the rate of fire spread and make access for firefighters very difficult. This, combined with local weather patterns, high fuel loads, and homesteads spread across the landscape, creates a potentially dangerous wildfire environment.

This area is one of the largest open rangeland-type wildlands in the region, made up of grasslands and oak savannah. Observations of many areas throughout this unit indicate that Douglas fir is invading meadows and oak woodlands, eventually shading out the white and black oaks and other hardwoods. Conversion of oak woodlands to conifer forest can result in a significant loss of wildlife habitat, range values, cultural uses, biodiversity, and other ecosystem services.

Fire History

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. Beginning as early as the late 1800s, the ranching community in this area used

Fire suppression: All the work and activities connected with control and fire-extinguishing operations, beginning with discovery and continuing until the fire is completely extinguished.

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intentional burning to clear and maintain grasslands for pasture animals. However, this activity has lessened over the past few decades as development—and associated liability issues—have increased. In the forestlands, a heavy *fire suppression* campaign beginning in the 1930s 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 fuels. Intense timber harvests during the 20th century further exacerbated damages to forest ecosystem health. The area is now experiencing a resurgence of prescribed fire as the community begins to recognize (or rather, remember) that fire is a vital component of the landscape in which they live and can be used proactively to prevent catastrophic wildfires from occurring. See *4.11.6 Community Preparedness* for a description of recent efforts.

The table below lists recent large (over 10 acres) wildfires and their causes. In June of 2008, after three years of drought, thunderstorms accompanied by dry lightning strikes ignited over 2,000 fires in Northern and Central California. This planning unit did not escape the impacts of those storms and subsequent fires. Even more significant for this area were the fire ignitions caused by lightning strikes associated with thunderstorms that occurred in the summer of 2015.

FIGURE 4.11.2 MAD–VAN DUZEN: WILDFIRES OVER 10 ACRES 1997-2017⁵

Fire Name	Cause	Year	Acres	
			In Unit	Total
Blake	Lightning	2015	8,997	11,439
Lassics	Lightning	2015	7,353	18,192
Johnson	Lightning	2015	3,722	17,821
Pine 1-44	Lightning	2015	1,629	1,773
Buck	Lightning	2015	1,297	1,420
Pilot	Playing with Fire	2004	287	287
Blocksburg 1-58	Lightning	2015	284	284
Pilot	Equipment Use	2004	283	283
Tierney	Lightning	2015	248	248
Iagua	Equipment Use	2009	148	148
Carson	Lightning	2008	65	65
Blocksburg	Power Line	2017	33	33
Larabee 3	Lightning	2008	25	29
House	Arson	2014	25	25
McClellan	Unknown/ Unidentified	2014	17	17
Bridge	Power Line	2014	17	17

Note: An interactive map of fire history through 1908 is available through the County WebGIS.

⁵ FRAP. (2018). State Fire Perimeters 1908-2017.

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The extent that the landscape has been altered as a result of fire suppression is reflected in the condition class of the Unit area. Condition class describes the degree of departure from the historical *natural fire regime*. Where the condition class indicates that fire has been absent for an unnaturally long time, the hazard and potential damages are high to both the environment and human developments in the area.

Approximately 52% of the Mad–Van Duzen Planning Unit is condition class 3, meaning the fire regime is significantly altered from the historical range; and approximately 20% of the area is condition class 2, or moderately altered from the historical range.

Natural fire regime: (1) A natural fire regime is a classification of the role fire would play across a landscape in the absence of modern human mechanical intervention, but including the influence of aboriginal burning. Fire regimes are classified based on average number of years between fires (fire frequency) combined with the severity (amount of replacement) of the fire on the dominant overstory vegetation.

Structural Ignitability

Neighborhoods in this unit exist within the *wildland-urban interface* (WUI), which increases the risk of *wildland fires* becoming structural fires, and vice versa. Embers carried on the wind from nearby wildfires—even miles away—could ignite homes within this planning unit. This was made all too clear during recent, catastrophic wildfire events in Northern California that claimed thousands of homes. Many of the homes lost burned from the inside out, as embers were forced inside by strong winds, or sucked in through ventilation systems. For this reason, home hardening should be a top priority for homeowners concerned about their fire resiliency. Roofs and eaves, windows, vents, and siding are all components that can be upgraded to reduce a home’s vulnerability to loss. Resources for homeowners ready to take this leap in fire preparedness include *Appendix L, Living with Wildfire* and *Home Survival in Wildfire-Prone Areas*⁶, published by the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources. Based on field observations, there are many homes in this planning unit where steps need to be taken to ensure structure survival when wildfire is nearby.

Wildland fire: A non-structure (i.e. non-home) fire that occurs in the wildland. Three distinct types of wildland fire have been defined and include wildfire, wildland fire use, and prescribed fire.

Wildland-urban interface (WUI): The zone where structures and other human developments meet, or intermingle with, undeveloped wildlands.

Structural ignitability: The ease with which a home or other structure ignites.

Wildfire risk in this unit is exacerbated by the fact that “many homes have large amounts of dense vegetation growing in the Home Ignition Zone and flammable items in direct contact with the structure.”⁷ Dead plant matter with low moisture levels within 100-150 feet of the 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 gates, fences, latticework and stacks of firewood located near or against structures add significantly to this risk, as does the presence of wooden decks, particularly those with dead plant matter accumulated beneath them.

Managing fuels for at least 100 feet of defensible space is highly recommended by this CWPP and is mandated by California Public Resources Code 4291⁸. By reducing the intensity and rate of spread of a

⁶ Quarles, S.L., Valachovic, Y., Nakamura, G.M., Nader G.A., & De Lasaux, M.J. (2010). *Home Survival in Wildfire-Prone Areas: Building Materials and Design Considerations*. University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources. ANR Publication 8393. Retrieved from <https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8393.pdf>

⁷ Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program. (2010). *Bridgeville Community Assessment*. (p. 12).

⁸ California Public Resources Code 4291 is provided as *Appendix K* of this CWPP.

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fire, defensible space provides suppression personnel the option to deploy their resources to defend the home; it also reduces the likelihood that a house fire will spread outwards. Likewise, managing fuels along access roads provides safer escape routes for both residents and suppression personnel.

Map 4.11.2, found at the end of this Planning Unit Action Plan, illustrates risks and hazards identified by community members at public workshops with an underlay map of fire hazard severity zones. More detailed descriptions of community-identified fire planning features can be found on the Humboldt County Web GIS Portal: https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.6_CWPP.

Water Sources

Water for fire protection is extremely limited in this unit and there are various needs associated with improving the availability of emergency water for wildfire protection. There are no fire hydrants in these communities and the water storage in residential water tanks often falls short of what is anticipated for fire suppression needs. 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 firefighting equipment. Community members have raised the concern that significant water withdrawal from the Van Duzen River associated with cannabis cultivation has reduced the availability of water at common drafting sites used by firefighters.

Community-identified locations from which fire protection water could be drawn are listed in the table below. This list is not intended to be comprehensive and illustrates participating community members' knowledge.

FIGURE 4.11.3 MAD–VAN DUZEN: FIRE PROTECTION WATER DRAFT SITES	
○ Van Duzen River	○ Sanderson Pond (dry in the Fall)
○ Sweasey Lake (new name Forest Lake)	○ Murphy Pond
○ Root Creek	○ McCann, Eel River
○ Little Larabee Creek	○ Dyerville river drafting site
○ McClellan Mountain Ranch pond	
<i>Note: Locations identified at community workshops and will need to be vetted further with local firefighting personnel.</i>	

Map 4.11.2, found at the end of this Unit Action Plan, illustrates these drafting sites as well as other community-identified wildfire protection resources. More detailed descriptions of community-identified fire planning features can be found on the Humboldt County Web GIS Portal: https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.6_CWPP.

4.11.4 MAD–VAN DUZEN FIRE PROTECTION CAPABILITIES

The Bridgeville Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD) began operating in 2005 providing fire suppression, rescue services, emergency medical services, and hazardous material response to the community of Bridgeville and the Van Duzen watershed. In August 2012, the Bridgeville Fire Protection District (BFPD) was formed to establish an ongoing revenue source to support the delivery of fire protection and emergency services by BVFD. The BFPD covers 196 square miles and approximately 126,000 acres—the largest district in the County of Humboldt. The BVFD serves many micro-communities within the District,

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as well as coverage of State Highway 36, a high-pressure natural gas pipeline, and adjacent US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management lands, which present a high risk of wildfire.⁹

As reported in the 2017 Fire Chiefs’ Association Annual Report, the BVFD is made up of 12 trained volunteer firefighting members, two EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians), and all others trained as first responders. The BVFD Fire Chief serves as a member of the Eel River Valley Fire Chiefs’ Association, which meets on a quarterly basis to discuss and coordinate fire service issues in the Eel River Valley and along Highway 36. In addition, members of the department participate on the Eel River Valley Technical Resource Team (ERVTRT), which was formed to address the many risks that area 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 and high angle rope rescue, confined space and trench rescue, collapse and water rescue, as well as providing additional personnel and equipment as needed during any emergency event. Operations and training are overseen by one team leader, while each department has a squad leader who oversees their individual squads, in turn. The ERVTRT is dispatched by the CAL FIRE Command Center.

FIGURE 4.11.4 MAD–VAN DUZEN: FIRE PROTECTION RESOURCES ¹⁰				
PERSONNEL	SERVES		FIRE APPARATUS	RESPONSE
	RESIDENTS	AREA (SQ. MI.)		
BRIDGEVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT (BVFD) – PHONE: (707) 777-3424				
12 Volunteer	1,200	196	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ (3) 750 gallon pumpers ○ (1) Rescue wagon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Structural and wildland firefighting ○ Emergency medical and rescue

The ability for the BVFD to provide effective emergency service is sometimes hampered by unmarked roads, missing addresses, inadequate or unmarked firefighting water storage, and outdated equipment. The BVFD uses a vehicle storage barn as a fire apparatus garage. This has been deemed inadequate for their needs and it has been difficult to secure funding to support construction of a fire station. It has also been reported that local, state, and federal fire service training requirements are increasing, which makes recruitment and retention of volunteers more challenging. An additional challenge for fire services in this unit are the fires started by marijuana operations. These ignitions are not tracked, however, and so it is difficult to document the extent of this impact.

CAL FIRE is responsible for addressing wildland fires in this unit. There is a CAL FIRE station in Bridgeville that is staffed seasonally, during the declared fire season. CAL FIRE resources also frequently respond out of their fire station in Fortuna.

The CAL FIRE Bridgeville Station can be reached by calling **(707) 777-3636**.

4.11.5 MAD–VAN DUZEN EVACUATION

When wildfires have the potential to become disasters by threatening life and safety, procedures are initiated to support the safe evacuation of people, domestic animals, and livestock from potentially hazardous areas. During such events, community evacuation sites may be established where residents can

⁹ Humboldt County Fire Chiefs’ Association Annual Report, 2017. (2018). (p. 15). Retrieved from <https://humboldtqov.org/Archive.aspx?AMID=75>

¹⁰ Humboldt County Fire Chiefs’ Association Annual Report, 2017. (p. 15).

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go to survive a wildfire. **Evacuation sites will be established in different locations depending on the anticipated path of the wildfire and location of the affected population.** The determination for the location of these sites is normally made by the Humboldt County Emergency Operations Center Incident Commander in cooperation with an Incident Management Team. The Humboldt County Sheriff and Emergency Officials will use the Humboldt Alert mass communication system (<https://humboldtqov.org/alerts>) and door-to-door methods to inform residents about the threat and where residents should go to take shelter.

Evacuation routes in the Mad–Van Duzen Planning Unit will depend on the location of the community at risk and law enforcement recommendations based on fire behavior, wind patterns, traffic, and ingress of emergency vehicles. Highway 36 is the central ingress and egress route, with several smaller roads connecting residences and neighborhoods to it. Few alternative routes exist for accessing neighborhoods in this unit. The eastern town of Dinsmore may be reached via Bear Creek Road to the north. Egress from Blocksburg could potentially be achieved via a US Forest Service road connected to Church Street; however, utilization of this route would likely necessitate permission and assistance from the US Forest Service. Some neighborhoods in the Unit, like the one west of Blocksburg near Homestead Road, depend on a closed network of smaller roads. Adequate ingress and egress along these roads is vital to a large portion of the community that may need to access the main highway evacuation route and for firefighters who will be using the roads to access wildfires burning in these areas.

FIGURE 4.11.5 MAD–VAN DUZEN: POTENTIAL EVACUATION ROUTES

- East or west along **Highway 36.**
- North on **Kneeland Road.**
- South on **Alderpoint Road.**

Roadside fuels, which increase the risk of ignitions, are not uncommon along these access routes. Given the topography of the region, the majority of roads in this unit are windy and often narrow. The narrowness of smaller roads leading to remote residences could create serious complications for emergency vehicle response trying to gain access during simultaneous home evacuations. In addition, some properties may lack adequate turn around spaces for emergency vehicles and locked gates could delay response. Other ingress and egress impediments may include steep road sections, fallen trees or power lines, vehicle accidents blocking the road, wooden bridges susceptible to burning, 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. The potential for landslides in the area could also inhibit access, particularly if wildfires were initiated by a severe earthquake.

If a catastrophic event occurs, residents and visitors may not be able to reach designated evacuation sites. In such cases, people may need to make decisions on their own about seeking shelter where they can survive the passage of the wildfire. Residents should seek shelter as a last resort, when evacuation is not an option. It can be very difficult to determine the right thing to do as the fire approaches, which is why it is so critical to **have a plan** and to **evacuate early**, if possible. Before a wildfire threatens, community members should research options and talk to fire and emergency service representatives about evacuation procedures, expected fire behavior in their neighborhood, and what to do if they get trapped.¹¹ If residents are forced to take shelter, the horrific sound, smoke, and heat of a passing wildfire may be physically and emotionally difficult to endure. It may bring some solace and may help combat the natural urge to flee knowing that all possible measures have been taken to increase the odds of survival.

¹¹ CAL FIRE and Idaho Firewise offer advice on what to do if you become trapped:

<http://www.readyforwildfire.org/What-To-Do-If-Trapped> and <http://idahofirewise.org/evacuation/if-you-get-trapped>.

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See Appendix H, *Living with Wildfire* for more information on preparing for safe evacuation, and evacuation planning for pets and livestock. See also Chapter 5.4.6, *Evacuation Preparedness in Part 5, Risk-Assessment Detail* for information about evacuation procedures and challenges in Humboldt County.

Humboldt Alert: Humboldt County's Mass-Notification System

- ❖ The best way for emergency personnel to alert you of an emergency in your geographic area. You may choose to be contacted by email, text message, landline, or cellphone – or all four.
- ❖ It is geographically targeted. You will only receive alerts relevant to your geographic area, which is based on the address(es) you provide. The system can hold multiple addresses under one account (ex. home, office, child's school).
- ❖ The service is completely free of charge.
- ❖ To sign-up visit: <https://humboldtgov.org/alerts> or contact the Humboldt County Office of Emergency Services (707) 268-2500.

4.11.6 MAD–VAN DUZEN COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS

Van Duzen Watershed Fire Safe Council

Communities in this unit are assisted by the efforts of the Van Duzen Watershed *Fire Safe Council* (FSC), which was founded in 2004 and operates under the umbrella of the Bridgeville Community Center. The mission of the Van Duzen Watershed FSC is:

- 6 To protect and preserve our homes, forests and waterways from the dangers of wildfires by actively performing fuel reduction work, creating a working fire plan, educating and motivating residents to be fire safe, coordinating funding and action plans with government agencies, detailed mapping and risk assessment and creating an emergency response system for our community.¹² 9

Fire safe council (FSC): Public and private organizations that comprise a council intended to minimize the potential for wildfire damage to communities and homeowners, while also protecting the health of natural resources. Goals are achieved by distributing fire prevention materials, organizing fire safety programs, implementing fuel-reduction projects, and more. Visit www.firesafecouncil.org.

Firewise®/Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program: (1) A national, multi-agency effort designed to reach beyond the fire service by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, and others in the effort to protect people, property, and natural resources from the risk of wildland fire before a fire starts. (2) Firewise® offers a series of practical steps that individuals and communities can take to minimize wildfire risks to people, property, and natural resources. It emphasizes community responsibility for planning in the design of a safe community as well as effective emergency response, and individual responsibility for safer home evacuation and design, landscaping and maintenance.

Van Duzen Watershed FSC has garnered over a million dollars in grant funding for projects to improve fire safety within this planning unit. Successful projects have included constructing fuelbreaks in and around residential areas and on Forest Service lands, creating defensible space around homes, conducting roadside clearance, and providing community members with educational materials to improve their fire awareness. The FSC has also been involved with the County in implementing the Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes (FLASH) program. FLASH is a rebate program that reimburses property owners for hazardous vegetation management completed around their homes, along access

¹² Van Duzen Watershed Fire Safe Council (2012). Van Duzen Watershed Council Facebook page. Retrieved from <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Van-Duzen-Watershed-Fire-Safe-Council/382176151812405>

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routes, and in particularly hazardous areas. A free wildfire home risk assessment is also offered through the program.

Bridgeville Firewise

Bridgeville was nationally recognized as a Firewise® community in 2010. The process of becoming recognized as Firewise® includes a site-specific wildfire risk assessment, an action planning process, and an annual community educational event. The Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program teaches people living within the WUI how to adapt to living with wildfire by preparing for a fire before it occurs. This program empowers communities with tools and resources for reducing their wildfire risk and encourages neighbors to work together to take action to minimize losses from wildfire. Over the years, the group has held several Fire Safety Days that provided an opportunity to educate the community about fire emergency preparation and fire prevention while enjoying live music and festivities. Since gaining Firewise® recognition, there have been several meaningful fire safety modifications throughout the community. These projects have focused on reducing hazardous fuels around vacant buildings and roadsides, creating defensible space around homes, and improving emergency vehicle access on roads and driveways.¹³

Maintaining the Van Duzen Watershed FSC and Bridgeville Firewise group has been challenging and there is a need to rebuild these critical local wildfire preparedness organizations. During the process associated with this CWPP update, several community members stepped up and offered to provide their support to this effort. Developing a strategy to reenergize FSC and Firewise activities will be a priority over the next five years.

Yager Van Duzen Environmental Stewards

Yager Van Duzen Environmental Stewards (YES) is a collaborative of ranching landowners in the Yager Creek and Van Duzen watersheds that has worked, for two decades, to implement what they call “community-based conservation”.¹⁴ In practice, this has resulted in many dozens of projects primarily aimed at addressing sites contributing excess sediment to the Van Duzen River and its tributaries. Having enjoyed great successes related to sediment reduction, YES has begun to branch out to address other resource issues affecting working lands, including bringing fire back to the landscape. Recently, YES has collaborated with CAL FIRE, the Northern California Prescribed Fire Council, and the Humboldt County Prescribed Burn Association to increase burning on private lands.

YES, along with other local, state, and federal agencies, is interested and invested in restoring the area’s expansive oak woodlands, much of which is privately held. Essential to this work is the curtailment of conifer encroachment within stands of oak. Aside from the many ecological benefits to be gained, reducing or eliminating conifers in these historically oak-dominated landscapes helps restore the natural fuel regime and can potentially reduce the severity of wildfire. In 2016, the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), along with seven other partners including YES, was awarded \$2.6 million from the Natural Resource Conservation Service to restore deciduous oak-dominated stand structure and ecosystem resilience.¹⁵ Private landowners in this planning unit will receive technical assistance and resources to restore oak woodlands on their land using prescribed fire or manual/mechanical treatments.

¹³ Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program. (2010). Bridgeville Community Assessment. (pp. 13-17.)

¹⁴ Yager Van Duzen Environmental Stewards. (2011). 2011 Report. Retrieved from <https://www.partnersforconservation.org/our-landscapes/van-duzen-river>

¹⁵ University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources News. Partnership brings \$2.6 million to North Coast to restore oak woodlands. Retrieved from <https://ucanr.edu/?blogpost=20276&blogasset=81020>

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As resources are available, CAL FIRE conducts defensible space inspections within this planning unit as part of their Fire Safety Education Program. These inspections are intended to determine and encourage compliance with Public Resource Code 4291, which requires residents of California to provide and maintain 100 feet of defensible space around all property structures. These inspections can be a valuable source of information about what a property owner can do to improve their defensible space and increase the odds that their home will survive a wildfire. Inspections usually take place in the spring but special arrangements can be made by contacting CAL FIRE directly.

CAL-FIRE HUU can be reached by calling (707) 725-4413 or visiting <http://www.fire.ca.gov/HUU>.

In the last five years, communities within the Mad—Van Duzen Planning Unit have made some notable accomplishments, some of which are listed in the table below.

FIGURE 4.11.6 MAD—VAN DUZEN: FIRE PREVENTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In 2017, Bridgeville Fire Protection District received Measure Z funding for a new rescue truck and additional basic equipment.
- Between 2014 and 2018, 28 acres were treated under the FLASH program and 25 site visits including a wildfire home risk assessment were conducted by FSC staff.

4.11.7 MAD—VAN DUZEN LOCAL WILDFIRE PREVENTION PLANS

Bridgeville Firewise® Action Plan

In 2010, Bridgeville was officially recognized as a Firewise® Community. The Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program teaches people living within the WUI how to adapt to living with wildfire by preparing for a fire before it occurs. This program empowers communities with tools and resources for reducing their wildfire risk and encourages neighbors to work together to take action to minimize losses from wildfire. As part of the certification process, the Bridgeville Firewise® Board/FSC developed the Bridgeville Community Assessment and Firewise® Action Plan. The following list summarizes action items developed to reduce fire risk in the community.

- Post road or driveway signs on at least ten currently unmarked locations.
- Look for property owners to outfit large water storage tanks with fittings compatible with fire department equipment.
- Complete wildfire hazard reduction work funded through the Humboldt County Fire-adapted Landscapes and Safe Homes (FLASH) program. A home risk assessment is provided with this program and mitigation recommendations are made for reducing fire hazards in the home ignition zone. The County received funds for this program from the USDA Forest Service.
- Host the “Bridgeville Fire Safe Day” – Bridgeville’s annual Firewise® event. This day showcases strategies that residents can use to reduce their risk to loss from wildfire and highlights community Firewise® projects and accomplishments.
- Create a mapbook for emergency response personnel (also called a Runbook).
- Host Neighborhood Cleanup Days. Assist property owners with the task of removing the byproduct debris from reducing flammable vegetation on their lots. A CAL FIRE chipper will be used where possible to chip material on location. These days will also be used as an opportunity to hand out educational materials and offer free home risk assessments.
- Prepare a manual on principles of shaded canopy fuel reduction.

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4.11.8 MAD–VAN DUZEN COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL PROJECTS

As part of the larger collaborative planning process to create this CWPP, 14 community wildfire preparedness workshops were held throughout the County. *See Chapter 1.2, Collaborative Planning Process and Appendix B, Planning Process Details for more information.* The workshop for this planning unit was held on November 30, 2017 at Bridgeville Elementary School with the following goals:

Provide information:

- Fire protection capabilities and needs.
- Prevention of unplanned human-caused wildfires.
- Wildfire and emergency preparedness.
- The role of wildfire in our local environment.
- The Humboldt County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Seek Information:

- Obtain local knowledge and concerns regarding assets and hazards.
- Provide an opportunity for direct input into priorities for community fire safety.

Through the initial 2004-2005 fire-planning process and the 2012 and 2017 CWPP update processes, dozens of projects were identified for this planning unit through a community workshop mapping exercise. These projects are illustrated on the community-identified projects map found at the end of this Unit Action Plan (*Map 4.11.3*). New or confirmed existing project ideas proposed during the 2017 update process are summarized in *Figure 4.11.7* and *4.11.8* in this section. *For more information on the mapping exercise, see Appendix B.5, Mapping Exercise Instructions.* The community-identified fire hazards, protection resources, and assets and values at risk discussed throughout this Planning Unit Action Plan (*Map 4.11.2*) reflect information generated by these community workshop mapping exercises as well as information resulting from direct outreach to local fire departments and residents.

The data collected through these planning processes can also be viewed in the GIS layers within the fire-planning GIS Portal. The GIS Portal allows users to search for and view specific community-identified fire-planning features by location or to zoom into a desired area from an aerial view. The GIS Portal also provides descriptions of each planning feature. To access the Portal, go to: https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.6_CWPP. For a copy of fire-planning feature descriptions in table format, please contact the Office of Natural Resources Planning by phone **(707) 267-9542**, or email cimmitt@co.humboldt.ca.us.

The following community-identified project ideas have been identified through the planning process described above and will not be found on the maps or in the GIS Portal but are important to note and evaluate for feasibility. These ideas build off the 2013 iteration of this CWPP based off the 2017 process, and incorporate actions identified in the 2010 Bridgeville Firewise® Action Plan.

FIGURE 4.11.7 MAD–VAN DUZEN: COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED PROPOSED PROJECTS

- Work with Sierra Pacific to create a fuelbreak around Swain's Flat Community.
- Develop a strategy to address concerns about properties that are consistently unmaintained and pose a wildfire threat to neighboring properties (vacant and developed properties).
- Encourage residents to provide lock or Knox Box codes to firefighters and CAL FIRE dispatch so that emergency response is not slowed by locked gates.
- Write letters to the Board of Supervisors urging funding for fire protection.
- Purchase a water tender for the BVFD.
- Establish a Blue Dot program to mark firefighting water sources and notify local fire department and CAL FIRE.

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The local residents who attended the November 30, 2017 workshop identified the following projects as their top priority projects to be evaluated for feasibility and implemented over the next five years. The rest of the community-identified projects can be found in the CWPP Web GIS Portal described above.

FIGURE 4.11.8 MAD–VAN DUZEN: COMMUNITY-IDENTIFIED PRIORITY PROJECTS		
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	PROJECT TYPE	PROJECT ID
Revisit, thinning/chipping in Bridgeville town	Defensible Space	BRD067
Revisit, 10 years+ since treatment; Roadside demonstration project in Golden Gate Subdivision	Roadside Clearance	BRD022a
Fuel reduction along Swains Flat and Highway 36	Landscape	BRD023
Landscape fuelbreak around Golden Gate Subdivision	Landscape	BRD139

4.11.9 MAD–VAN DUZEN ACTION PLAN

Ideally, everything recommended in this action plan will be implemented. However, feasibility analysis and implementation will be subject to the availability of funds and other resources, and the willingness and ability of community members and plan partners to take action. This action plan can be used to guide the action of community members, organizations, and agencies working and living within each of the 14 planning units within Humboldt County. It is the intention of the HCFSC that one or more local groups be sustained within each planning unit to lead local action. It is understood that some units have more capacity than others. The HCFSC, with individual members from higher-capacity areas and partner agencies, can provide guidance for building capacity where needed.

Any recommended vegetation treatments in this CWPP must be undertaken with the consent and involvement of the property owner and the observance of all applicable local, Tribal, state, and federal laws and regulations. Please work closely with the applicable regulatory and permitting authority as projects are developed, particularly if public funds are being used and/or the project will take place on public lands or in public right-of-ways. For more information about how to ensure regulatory compliance, refer to *Appendix I, Regulations and Compliance*.

The following Action Plan is intended as a resource to guide and inspire action, as well as to cite in grant applications to leverage implementation funds.

Priority Action Recommendations:

The following recommendations are based on a review and evaluation of community-identified fire planning features, local fire planning documents where they exist, and findings from this Humboldt County CWPP risk assessment. Given the results of this analysis, a growing understanding of local capacity, and potential supporting resources, it was determined that the following list of **priority actions** would best serve as a starting place towards the fire safety of the communities in this planning unit.

- **M**aintain/rebuild and support the Van Duzen Watershed FSC to facilitate community wildfire preparedness and mitigation.
 - Inspire more community involvement in and support of the FSC with outreach about what they do and how to get involved.
 - Develop a campaign to increase membership and effectiveness.
 - Ensure that the Van Duzen Watershed FSC is represented on the Humboldt County FSC.
- **A**ctively maintain or, if necessary, reinstate the Bridgeville Firewise Communities/USA® Site:
 - Actively implement and maintain the Firewise® action plan.
 - Focus activity on home hardening and defensible space.
 - Continue to host an annual Firewise® Day.
- **O**nce implementation groups are re-established, evaluate, further develop, seek funding for, and implement—as appropriate and feasible—the community-identified priority actions listed above as well as all community-identified potential projects stored in the Web GIS Portal. Perform this same process for the actions identified in the *Bridgeville Firewise Action Plan*, as well as in this *Priority Action Recommendation* list, and the *Action Catalogue* below. Pursue activities that align with available resources, community values, and the highest wildfire risks to local assets and values.

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- **P**riority areas within this planning unit for fuels reduction and associated maintenance are included in the list below. Activities might include creating/maintaining defensible space, roadside clearance, chipper programs, and/or landscape treatments, as well as education and assistance for addressing structural ignitability through home hardening and evacuation preparedness. Emphasize outreach to sensitive populations such as the elderly, disabled, and/or low income within these areas:
 - The town of Bridgeville. (Highly ranked community identified priority. Maintain previously treated area – BRD067)
 - Landscape surrounding historic buildings in Blocksburg. (ALD035)
 - Landscape surrounding Casterlin School, on Alderpoint Road and Pine Mountain Road. (ALD036)
 - Swains Flat area (BRD023)
 - Golden Gate Subdivision (BRD155, BRD022a, BRD139)
 - Cobb Road (BRD156)
 - Bear Creek Road (BRD157)
 - Larabee Subdivision (BRD158)
 - Upper Little Larabee Road (BRD159)
 - Muddy Creek neighborhood, south of HWY 36 (BRD160)
 - Meadow Road/Hidden Valley Road (BRD161)
- **T**he high fire danger, a dispersed WUI population, the large number of dead-end roads leading to multiple residences, and a need for increased wildfire preparation combine to make **evacuation planning** and education a top priority in this planning unit. This plan recommends that residents stay vigilant and evacuate as early as possible to avoid loss of life.
 - Work with the County Office of Emergency Services (OES), local fire service, and law enforcement to engage community members in evacuation preparedness (generally, the Sheriff’s Office is responsible for conducting evacuations while the fire service focuses on wildfire management). Work together to review best practices as well as emerging new approaches.
 - Identify local community liaisons to work directly with emergency management officials.
 - Identify and map local evacuation routes and sites.
 - Given the large number of residences located on long, dead end roads, residents, law enforcement, local fire departments, and FSCs should work together to identify alternative paths that may be taken or actions to initiate if primary routes become inaccessible during a wildfire.
 - Identify and actively maintain areas to shelter as a last resort if safe evacuation is blocked by wildfire, especially in areas with one-way-in, one-way-out roads.
 - See additional evacuation preparedness ideas in the *Action Catalogue* below under “Disaster Preparedness”.
- **F**ocus roadside fuel reduction efforts on priority ingress and egress routes for safe evacuation and emergency response, especially those roads used by the highest number of residents, single

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access roads, and roads leading to remote-hard to access residences. Priority roads for initial evaluation and outreach efforts include:

- Golden Gate Drive and offshoots (highly ranked community identified priority. Maintain exiting roadside demonstration project – BRD022a)
 - Sunset Ridge Road
 - Homestead Road (Maintain previously treated area – ALD034)
 - Homestead/Browning/Sylvan Glad (Maintain previously treated area – ALD014)
 - Kergerson Lake Road (BRD087)
 - Redwood House Road (BRD031)
 - Bear Creek Road (Maintain previously treated area – BRD083)
 - Burr Valley Road (Maintain previously treated area – BRD090)
 - McClellan Mountain Road (BRD148, BRD080, BRD066)
 - Upper Little Larabee Road (BRD065), BRD086)
- **C**ollaborate with Humboldt County Road Maintenance to strategically identify priority road maintenance and vegetation management projects in areas where conditions are impacting, or have the potential to impact, emergency response and safe evacuation. Review the Humboldt County Rural Transportation and Access Partnership program for applicability to local issues.¹⁶
 - **C**ollaborate with agency and local partners to plan and fund landscape level fuels reduction and management where appropriate and in observance of applicable environmental laws and regulations. Match the site with the best method of treatment including prescribed fire, forest thinning, landscape pruning, mowing, or targeted grazing. Evaluate the following priority areas:
 - Fuelbreak around Golden Gate Subdivision (highly ranked community identified priority – BRD139)
 - Ridgetop and lateral fuelbreaks around Lost Flat Ranch, along Alderpoint Road.
 - Reduce fuels in Grizzly Creek Campground areas.
 - Reduce fuels surrounding the Carlotta Pump site.
 - Reduce fuels around Swimmer’s Delight/Van Duzen Park area.
 - **W**ork with commercial timberland owners such as Humboldt Redwood Company, Green Diamond Resource Company, and Sierra Pacific Industries to identify priority areas for strategic vegetation treatments to increase forest resiliency to wildfire.
 - Design projects to buffer residences from wildfires that originate from the timberlands and to protect timber resources and ecological values from fires that start in adjacent developed areas and along roads.
 - Priority areas for such project development include timberlands adjacent to the Swain’s Flat community along Highway 36.
 - Seek opportunities to collaborate on vegetation management projects where public roads or private roads, leading to residences, transect timberlands.
 - **W**ork with the HCFSC to secure more funding to continue and expand the highly successful FLASH reimbursement program (or a similar program), which has promoted hundreds of acres of fuels reduction work around homes and access roads. Continue to educate landowners about fire hazard reduction and fire safety around homes.

¹⁶ Contact County Roads for more information: <https://humboldtgov.org/1405/Road-Equipment-Maintenance>

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- **C**oordinate with CAL FIRE, the BVFD, and the local FSC and Firewise groups to develop a strategy to ensure that unmaintained vegetation on parcels that pose a wildfire threat to neighboring homes is abated.
 - Start by reaching out to the property owner(s) with the goal of helping them understand the fire danger and the importance of working across property lines to reduce wildfire hazards. If there are many properties of concern, consider organizing a neighborhood meeting to discuss the issue; invite CAL FIRE, local fire department representatives, and/or fire safe council/Firewise® community representatives.
 - Request assistance from the local fire agency (for vacant properties, if there is a local ordinance) or CAL FIRE (for properties with a structure) and ask for an inspection.
 - As a last resort, send a certified letter that describes the hazard, including photos, and states that if a fire that originates on their property spreads to yours, resulting in damage, legal action will be taken.
 - Contact the HCFSC for more details and examples of how to address this situation.
- **W**ork with local organizations, the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors, Humboldt County FSC and GIS staff, state legislators, CAL FIRE, and/or utilities to address communications challenges including the lack of internet access in some areas; radio repeater dead zones; confusion about road names and local addresses; and more.
- **W**ork with residents to ensure adequate road and home address signage for more efficient emergency response. Signs should be large, reflective, and have lettering at least three-inches in height. Less noticeable but more sentimental address signs may remain but it is important to post reflective signs as well.
- **C**ontinue to explore options and make progress on local fire service sustainability efforts such as:
 - Recruiting and retaining volunteers (firefighters as well as auxiliary volunteers).
 - Communicate to the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors the importance of funding for the fire service.
 - Maintaining secure, consistent, and sustainable revenue sources to meet growing needs and costs.
 - Securing resources to build a fire station for the BFPD/BVFD and purchase a new water tender.
- **C**oordinate with the HCFSC Wildfire Ignition Prevention Work Group to provide input to the process of finding and/or developing informational materials and outreach strategies for marijuana/cannabis cultivators and processors to reduce ignitions and water source impacts associated with that industry and to educate their seasonal workers.¹⁷
- **C**oordinate with local FSCs, fire departments, CAL FIRE, and the County to develop a method of determining whether fire ignitions and risk are declining as a result of the regulation of marijuana/cannabis cultivation and processing; make recommendations as appropriate.
- **I**nform residents of the need to have accessible, mapped, and identifiable water sources for fire suppression, and the importance of sharing that information with the local fire department. This type of activity can be supported by a “Blue Dot” program, which identifies the location of firefighting water sources by marking them with blue reflective dots.

¹⁷ See countywide action plan *3.1 Wildfire Ignition Prevention* for more details.

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- Increase the availability of water for fire protection by investing in more community water tanks and ensuring existing tanks are outfitted with fittings compatible with firefighting equipment.

Action Catalogue:

This Action Catalogue lists additional wildfire mitigation actions that can be selected in addition to, or to compliment, the priority actions above. Action items are organized under each of the six countywide goal categories outlined in *Part 3, Countywide Action Plan*. Local groups are encouraged to implement these actions within their communities wherever possible and to actively seek opportunities to engage with and benefit from the associated work being done countywide by the Humboldt County Fire Safe Council (HCFSC). To contact the HCFSC, call **(707) 267-9542**, or email cimmitt@co.humboldt.ca.us.

Wildfire Ignition Prevention

- Implement One Less Spark education: www.readyforwildfire.org/One-Less-Spark-Campaign.
- Use *Living with Wildfire in Northwestern California* as a primary outreach tool and distribute widely: www.humboldt.gov/livingwithwildfire.
- Identify primary ignition sources in the local community and focus prevention efforts on reducing them.
- Increase community awareness and access to information about proper methods for safe pile-burning, prescribed fire, and other fuel reduction strategies that could result in an unintended wildfire.
- Inform residents about the importance of vigilance and caution during Red Flag conditions when a small ignition has a higher probability of growing into a large fire.

Wildfire Preparedness

- Develop a wide range of opportunities for community education on preparing for wildfire. This effort should involve the production and/or distribution of a variety of informational materials.
 - Use existing materials as much as possible and develop materials tailored to the local community as needed and able. Examples of new materials include locally based before-after fuel treatment and or home hardening pamphlet with high quality photographs.
 - Distribute materials through mailers (including already occurring mailers such as local utility bills); via community hubs such as the post office; at all community events; on community bulletin boards; through the use of social media and networks, local media outlets, and any means used by the local community to share important information.
 - Include compelling stories about past wildfire events.
 - Encourage local volunteer/service organizations or schools to help perform community service activities including delivering literature to homeowners or clearing around and painting fire hydrants.
- Provide residents with information about ways to reduce structural ignitability and maintain adequate defensible space around their homes.

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- **C**ollaborate to maintain defensible space for elderly, disabled, and low-income residents who are unable to do or fund the work themselves.
- **F**ocus roadside fuel reduction efforts on priority ingress and egress routes for safe evacuation.
- **W**ork with PG&E and local landowners to reduce fuels along power line easements.
- **S**upport or create community chipping programs.
- **C**ompile a directory of brushing crews and other resources for landowners seeking to reduce fuels on their property.
- **R**aise awareness of Sudden Oak Death and the fire hazard that afflicted trees pose. Determine whether there are hot spots for Sudden Oak Death infected trees in the area. Conduct fuels reduction projects as needed to prevent spread and mitigate fire hazard. Seek guidance from organizations such as University of California Cooperative Extension.
- **W**ork with commercial timberland owners to identify priority areas for strategic vegetation treatments to increase forest resiliency to wildfire. See details in the *Priority Action Recommendations* above.
- **C**ollaborate with agency and local partners to plan and fund landscape level fuels reduction and management. See details in the *Priority Action Recommendations* above.

Disaster Preparedness

- **E**vacuation preparedness and the identification of local evacuation routes and sites is a priority for this unit. See details in the *Priority Action Recommendations* above.
- **I**mprove community communication networks and explore ways to increase redundancy. This might include developing a community phone tree list and/or compiling a list of contacts to call in case of emergency or when help is needed from (or in) other areas. As another form of emergency communication, consider training or identifying a few community members to use HAM radios and secure funds to purchase radios and store them strategically throughout the community.
- **W**ork with a local fire or law enforcement agency to form a Community Emergency Response Team or CERT. Coordinate with the Humboldt CERT Coalition.
- **P**romote the creation of family disaster and evacuation plans.
- **I**nform residents about Humboldt Alert and encourage them to sign up to receive emergency notifications at <https://humboldtqov.org/alerts>.
- **W**ork with residents to ensure adequate road and home address signage for more efficient emergency response. See details in the *Priority Action Recommendations* above.
- **A**ddress road conditions that inhibit effective evacuation and access by emergency responders. Begin by systematically identifying and mitigating such access impediments.
- **I**nform residents about the importance of keeping gates open or accessible during Red Flag conditions. Community members should consider providing a key or access code to the local fire department.

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- **I**nform residents of the need to have accessible, mapped, and identifiable water sources for fire suppression. Included in the *Priority Action Recommendations* above.
- **I**ncrease the availability of water for fire protection. Included in the *Priority Action Recommendations* above.

Fire Protection

- **S**upport the local fire department by becoming a volunteer. Volunteer firefighters and volunteers who are emergency medical service (EMS) trained are essential to a functional local fire service. In addition, volunteers are needed for non-firefighting and EMS duties such as logistical support, traffic control, administration, fundraising, public education, and fire prevention.
- **A**ssist in the development of recruitment and retention strategies for volunteer fire departments.
- **H**elp local fire departments raise funds by making donations directly and/or organizing fundraising events or campaigns.

Restoration of Beneficial Fire

- **P**rovide resources to private landowners interested in implementing prescribed burns on their property, including the contact information for CAL FIRE, UC Cooperative Extension, the Humboldt County Prescribed Burn Association, and the Northern California Prescribed Fire Council.¹⁸
- **S**hare information about educational events that provide information about prescribed burning.
- **E**ncourage landowners with larger acreages to work with the Humboldt County Prescribed Burn Association to conduct prescribed burns on their lands.
- **H**elp federal and state land managers garner local support for using prescribed fire or managed wildfire on the public lands they manage.

Integrated Planning

- **I**ntegrate, where there are mutual benefits, the community preparedness and wildfire resiliency efforts of the Van Duzen Watershed FSC, Bridgeville Firewise, Bridgeville Community Center, Bridgeville Fire District, Bridgeville United, and YES.
- **C**ontinue to maintain participation in the Firewise Communities/USA® Recognition Program. This will include active implementation and maintenance of the Bridgeville Firewise® Action Plan and continuing to host the annual “Bridgeville Fire Safe Day”.

¹⁸ To learn more about UC Cooperative Extension, the Humboldt County Prescribed Burn Association, and the Northern California Prescribed Fire Council, contact Lenya Quinn-Davidson at lquinndavidson@ucanr.edu or call her at (707) 445-7351. To learn about CAL FIRE prescribed fire programs and support, contact Chris Ramey at chris.ramey@fire.ca.gov or call him at (707) 726-1206.

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- **S**hare GIS data sets between representatives within the Planning Unit and County staff to maintain the fire planning features included in the County Web GIS Portal (https://webgis.co.humboldt.ca.us/HCEGIS2.6_CWPP). In the absence of GIS data, share geographic information/descriptions about project planning and implementation so that it can be digitized and incorporated into the Web GIS Portal.