

Future Fuel Mitigation

The Hotchkiss Fire District will continue to apply for grants to assist landowners with defensible space projects, and has been awarded a \$40,000 grant for the upcoming year (2008). For the next 2 years:

- Provide landowners with grants and other assistance on Fuel Reduction projects, particularly in the north Hotchkiss area.
- Work with the BLM and other stakeholders to complete Fuel Reduction Projects on adjacent federal lands near the Fire District.

Mapping and Mitigation Work Hand-In-Hand

A significant number of landowners have undertaken projects to reduce their homes' risks from wildfire after noting their scores on the 2004 map. Many have stated that one of their main goals was to drop a level in the rating system. The many dynamic changes represented in the above graphs are a major incentive to update the maps, and have to be considered a community success story.

WILDFIRE SUPPRESSION

The Fire District's history and experience in fighting both small and large fires has driven the selection of strategies, tactics, training and the purchase of equipment. Simply put, we have emphasized delivering a strong, quick, and well-directed initial attack on wildland fires. The utilization of the Incident Command System is critical in these events.

Our brush engines are equipped with foam systems, can pump and roll, and have joystick controlled monitors that allow firefighters to accurately direct streams of water on wildfires from inside the cab as the fire engines are moving. Long hose packs designed to be quickly deployed by a single firefighter are used on fires that cannot be reached by the trucks.

In the initial attack phase, our firefighters are able to quickly put on Nomex jumpsuits over their street clothing, slip into boots that have zippers instead of laces, and get right into the fire engines. Each firefighter has been issued two radios: one VHF radio, and one GPS radio that can send a firefighter's location to each other and to the Incident Commander.

Fires that escape initial attack or directly threaten structures require a quick shift to a different strategy. Using our preplan maps, our firefighters can select homes that are possible to save based on fire conditions and behavior. In many homes that have Safe Zones, our firefighters choose to develop a flexible, high volume water supply utilizing multiple types of floating pumps, water tenders and other water sources used in combination with folding drop tanks. Water can then be sprayed on

the advancing fire, while foam is applied to structures from one of our two portable Compressed Air Foam Systems (CAFS).

Training



Hotchkiss firefighters examine preplan maps, summer 2004

All but our newest firefighters have S-130/190 Basic Wildfire Training, and many firefighters have taken advanced wildfire training and certification at the Colorado Wildfire Academy, such as:

- *Sawyer*
- *S-290*
- *Mapping*
- *Incident Commander*
- *Helicopter Manager*
- *NIMS 100, 200, 700, 800*
- *Communications Section*
- *Liaison*
- *Tactical Decision-Making*
- *Fire Operations in the Wildland/Urban Interface*
- *Engine Boss*

The Hotchkiss Fire District's in-house training includes:

- *Strategy and tactics utilizing our mapping system*
- *Familiarization and use of our fire engines*
- *Incident Command System*
- *GPS training*
- *Structure Protection training*
- *Review of all fires*
- *Firefighter Safety*
- *Sand Table Exercises*
- *Developing water supply for large fires*
- *Working with aircraft*

Inter-agency cooperation (essential on large fires)

The Hotchkiss Fire District has cultivated good working relationships with our other neighboring fire districts, particularly those in the North Fork, as well as at the County government level, especially with the Sheriff, Emergency Coordinator and Road and Bridge Supervisors. The Fire District enjoys close cooperation with Montrose Interagency Fire, Montrose BLM, and the Colorado State Forest Service on fire suppression, fuels management, and Wildfire/Urban Interface issues.

The Hotchkiss Fire District has written, sponsored, and implemented the County Mutual Aid Agreement, taken a leadership role in writing the County Wildfire Plan, and been active in the County's Planning process, particularly regarding wildfire issues.

The Hotchkiss Fire District regularly attends the Delta County Wildfire Annual Operating Plan (AOP) meeting each spring. The AOP provides the basis for interagency cooperative fire suppression in Delta County. Information in the AOP includes the mutual aid period, dispatch and ordering of suppression resources, interagency communications, and cost reimbursements. Though not signatory to the AOP, Hotchkiss and other fire districts provide important input to the details outlined in this agreement.

Fire Suppression Goals for the Future

The Hotchkiss Fire District will seek to improve its strategy, tactics, training and equipment across the board. Specifically, we will:

- Develop and improve our ICS skills.
- Commit to changing our radio system completely to 800 MHz DTR to enhance interoperability.
- Purchase a Heavy Brush Engine/Tender to replace our oldest truck, Engine 4
- Find a way to provide S130/190 training for new firefighters.
- Continue to send our firefighters to the Colorado Wildfire Academy and similar training opportunities.

SAFETY OF CITIZENS AND FIREFIGHTERS

Evacuation

Our mapping and data suggest that a “Protect in Place” (PIP) strategy is possible in the Hotchkiss Fire District, rather than a fully developed evacuation plan. The Protect in Place concept comes with certain risks and can only be implemented on a situation-by-situation basis. The Hotchkiss Fire District will obtain more information on Protect in Place strategies. By examining the pros and cons of this technique, firefighters and the public can get a basic understanding of how PIP could be applied on a wildfire in our Fire District.

Pros:

- Specifically in the HFD, safety zones exist near many of the residences, providing protection from wildfire for both firefighters and residents.
- At present, there are no large subdivisions in hazardous wildfire areas; instead, most lots are several acres or more in size, thus reducing the sheer number of people at risk in any one incident.
- Traffic on roads would be substantially reduced, allowing safer emergency vehicle traffic.
- Capable residents can assist with structure protection on low- risk (green dot) homes, freeing firefighters and equipment to work on other portions of the fire.

Cons:

- The Protect in Place concept is not widely accepted.
- Confusion may result if other officials order evacuation, particularly because the County Fire Plan includes plans and methods for evacuation
- The public and other organizations have come to expect evacuations as an integral part of wildfires. Not ordering evacuations has the potential to create a poor public perception of the Fire District's management of a fire incident and the mistaken idea that risk is low.
- Risks from mistakes made in the use of PIP, particularly concerning evaluation of resident's health and the suitability of the safe zone itself.

Resolution:

The Hotchkiss Fire District will create Public Service Announcements to explain to the public that we promise to use evacuations only when and where needed. We will include in the announcement the location of a Designated Evacuation Center, and advise any evacuated residents to check in, regardless of whether they plan to stay or seek other shelter.

We will further use this announcement to encourage people to stay away from the fire for the following reasons:

1) Most citizens in street clothing cannot help us because they are not part of our team, they are lacking in equipment and training, and may impede airdrops from slurry bombers, who will not drop slurry if people are present near the fire line. People who interfere with our fire operations will be removed by law enforcement and may be cited (this includes blocking the road while rubbernecking).

2) We would also encourage those who have livestock in the vicinity of a fire, particularly those in pastures, not attempt to remove animals on roads being used for fire fighting or evacuation, as these animals rarely need rescue.

3) Animals confined to stables, barns and corrals near fires are at risk and their owners should contact a firefighter or law enforcement officer on scene at the incident, so that a safe and orderly evacuation can be implemented.

The Fire District will devise several methods to deliver this message, as well as prominently including it in this CWPP.

TASK SCHEDULE TABLE 2006, 2007, 2008

who	What	When	How	
Hotchkiss Fire District	Projects and Programs:	2007- 2008	1. Conduct Biannual Building Surveys, obtain better mapping software.	COMPLETE
	1. update mapping system,		2. Continue current program of using matching grants to promote individual property owner's fuel reduction projects.	IN PROGRESS
	2. fuel reduction programs,		3. Conduct large-scale large wildfire training exercises within a 2-year planning cycle.	TBD
	3. improve wildfire response through planning and training,		4. Continue advocacy through participation in the County's plan review process. Obtain another type II tender.	ONGOING No purchase on tender in near future
	4. Improve water supplies,		5. Initiate an ongoing program of public presentations of Fire Wise type information emphasizing structure ignitability.	ONGOING
	5. initiate a continuous public education program,		6. hire mapping personnel	COMPLETE FOR 2007
	6. conduct a biannual survey of residences,		7. Select committee, schedule meetings	
	7. Administer the CWPP		8. see www.hotchkissfire.org	in progress
	8. Develop web site with comprehensive info for homeowners			
	9. develop plan to explain Evacuation to the District's citizens			
10. CWPP review	Nov. 08	Organize review meeting		

Delta County	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to provide Emergency Management support of significant wildfires. 2. Continue GIS support of the WUI mapping program. 3. Continue incident communications support. 4. Provide assistance in evacuation route planning and signage. 5. County trucks to have unit markings, visible from ground or air <p>County-wide EFF-type fund</p>	2007-2008	<p>Fire incidents in 2007 received great support</p> <p>GIS department effort to assist mapping, grants to pay for data collection, new addresses needing to be entered.</p> <p>Proceed with 800 DTR system, involve ARES-RACES at incidents</p> <p>NA</p> <p>Proposed</p> <p>Proposed</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
Colorado State Forest Service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide expertise and materials for public education program, fuel reduction projects, and support of this CWPP. 2. support on the leased CM2 fire engine, WERF funds, RFA/VFA admin, and GSA fire supplies 	2007-2008	TBD	
BLM, FS, and other federal agencies	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Accomplish mosaic fuel reduction on federal lands on the drainages north of the Town of Hotchkiss and Big Gulch 2. Provide technical support of the CWPP program. 3. continue fire suppression assistance to the Fire District 4. 	2007-2008	TBD	
Town of	1. Be a forum for public	2007-	Updates made to Board of Trustees,	Ongoing

Hotchkiss	awareness of wildfire dangers	2008	Trustee member of CWPP	Ongoing
	2. Assist in emergency planning for large wildfires.			
	3. Continue personnel and equipment support for fighting wildfires including the operation of an EOC for the Town.		Operations Center activation when needed, supply water, Law Enforcement personnel	
	4. Sign CWPP	Fall 07	Get copies to Trustees, Briscoe	
	5. Board of Trustee meeting in late winter of 08, to publicize CWPP, and assist on Structure Ignitability campaign.	February or March 08	Develop presentation over the winter	

Review and Updating of the CWPP

The Hotchkiss Community Wildfire Protection Plan is meant to be a living document, and a guidebook for future efforts to protect our citizens from wildfires. It is critical to review the efforts from the past, and to develop strategies and programs for the future. The surest method is to schedule public meetings for the upcoming years, and to develop possible agendas or goals that could be discussed at these meetings.

It is also important to recognize that no plan can be effective very far into the future without revisions to accommodate not only the changes in our community, but also the innovations in Wildland/Urban Interface strategies being developed by dynamic fire service organizations throughout the world.

Therefore, each year on the second Wednesday in November, a review of the CWPP will take place at the Hotchkiss Fire Station at 7 p.m. The purpose of this meeting will be to:

- Review and evaluate the accomplishments and efficiency of the previous year's efforts.

- Decide upon strategies to implement for the upcoming year, particularly the upcoming fire season.
- Reviewing potential changes of land use that may require specific plans for fire protection, fuel mitigation, or mapping.
- Suggest any possible updates or changes that should be made to the CWPP.
- Every even year, beginning in 2008, provisions to update the maps in time for the following year's fire season must be made.

At the meeting in 2012, a committee consisting of Fire District Personnel, representatives from the Colorado State Forest Service, the Delta County Emergency Manager, and members of the Board of Trustees from the Town of Hotchkiss shall determine if the existing CWPP meets the current requirements for a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and develop a suitable process for updating the plan.

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Mutual Agreement Page

| The Community Wildfire Protection Plan developed for the Hotchkiss Fire District:

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties and federal land management agencies managing land in the vicinity of Hotchkiss Colorado have been consulted.
- This plan identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment that will protect The Hotchkiss Fire District.
- This plan recommends measures to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

The following entities mutually agree with the contents of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

Doug Fritz, Fire Chief, Hotchkiss Fire District

Larry Jakubiak, Mayor, Town of Hotchkiss

Frank McPherson, President of the Board,
Hotchkiss Fire District

R. Olen Lund, Chairman, Delta County Commissioners

Rob Fiedler, Delta County Office of Emergency Management

Lela J. McCracken, Delta County Commissioner

Steve Ellis, Bureau of Land Management

Wayne E. Wolf, Delta County Commissioner

Kelly Rogers, District Forester,
Colorado State Forest Service

The Plan in Action