

P o t r e r o & T e c a t e | 2 0 1 9

Community Wildfire Protection Plan



S a n D i e g o C o u n t y



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Photo Courtesy of Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council

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Preface: What is a Community Wildfire Protection Plan?



Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP) are blueprints for preparedness at the neighborhood level. They organize a community's efforts to protect itself against wildfire, and empower citizens to move in a cohesive, common direction. Among the key goals of the Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council's CWPP, which was developed collaboratively by citizens, and federal, state, and local management agencies, are to:

- Align with San Diego County Fire/CAL FIRE San Diego Unit's cohesive pre-fire strategy, which includes educating homeowners and building understanding of wildland fire, ensuring defensible space clearing and structure hardening, safeguarding communities through fuels treatment, and protecting evacuation corridors
- Identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatment
- Recommend the types and methods of treatment that will protect the community
- Recommend measures to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan
- Cooperatively work with other fire safety and preparedness groups to better prepare our community and our residents
- Encourage programs that promote our Fire Safe Council's mission and goals

Formed in 2015, the Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council is a community-based group of volunteers dedicated to an all-inclusive team. This team is focused on fire safety, wildfire, home fire and preparedness programs, as authorized by our many partnerships and collaborators.

Our core efforts are in education, home hardening and safety, defensible space, fuels projects and other mitigation and safety projects in and around our community. The work of the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County (FSCSDC) is greatly appreciated and valued. The FSCSDC team, including the leadership and fantastic support group, are a constant source of assistance and information. We thank them.

This updated version of the FSC's CWPP is also a step forward in making our efforts easier to appreciate, review and utilize for our community and others seeking our work in and around Potrero and Tecate, California. Thank you for this project and for letting us use the new template format, making it personal with photographs of our community.

The inclusion of the evacuation portion with evacuation corridors and TSRAs is a milestone in the joint effort to keep our most valuable resource safe: people.

The final portion of this CWPP recognizes the additional efforts of FSCs partnering and service-related projects, when seen as an overall effort in assisting our fire agency partners, and our residents.

Our local Potrero & Tecate FSC has always taken an all-inclusive, comprehensive approach to community preparedness, action, and resilience. The FSC is at the core of many facets of community interests. Those involved with Fire Safe Councils, CERT, animal services, senior services and amateur radio all find a home with our organization. Networking and a cooperative spirit are the rule. Again, thank you for the updated format.



The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County produced this report in partnership with the San Diego County Fire Safe Council. Funding is provided by a National Fire Plan grant from the Cooperative Fire program of the U.S. Forest Service through the California Fire Safe Council. In accordance with federal law and U.S. Dept. of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Section I: Snapshot of the Community



Each community in San Diego County has a unique history and identity. Below is a description of what sets this area apart, including its landscape, preparedness and firefighting resources.

A. Overview

The communities of Potrero and Tecate are located just north of the international border, west of Campo and east of the communities of Barrett and Dulzura. Potrero and Tecate together cover nearly 65 square miles, housing approximately 1,200 people in nearly 500 housing units.

Potrero is a small community that enjoys its proximity to the hills and rocky terrain and open spaces. Appreciated as a recreational center for horseback riders, hikers, and bike riders. Horses and cattle are a common site. Potrero means “pasture” in Spanish.

Potrero County Park draws many people and events throughout the year. It has been the site of many wildfire base camps over the years.

Tecate, California is a US- Mexico Border Port of Entry community. The community is a commerce and trucking terminus where the few residents service business found here.

The historic border building was built in 1933 and still serves the pedestrian traffic of the busy port. Nearby sacred Kuuchamaa Mountain or Tecate Peak is a popular hiking destination.

The Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council covers the areas in and around Potrero and Tecate. Both are considered Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. Public lands adjacent to or within these areas include the United States Forest Service’s Cleveland National Forest, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, San Diego County Parks, and CAL FIRE jurisdictions.

The average elevation for this FSC is 2,500 feet.

The Potrero & Tecate FSC areas are located approximately 55 miles east of San Diego along the Hwy 94 Corridor.

B. Landscape (Topography, Fire History, Key Infrastructure, Maps)

Topography:

Potrero and Tecate have similar vegetation types and topographical features. The region is characterized by steep slopes, rocky terrain, deep canyons, and high hills with large swaths of wildlands between homes and communities. Major topographical features include Tecate Peak, Potrero Peak and Barrett Lake, located just south of the Cleveland National Forest.

Vegetation is a mosaic of predominantly chaparral shrubs including: Chemise, Ceanothus, Manzanita, Buckwheat, and Sage scrub, along with grasslands. Riparian systems line several of the valley floors. Some oak woodlands are interspersed throughout the region. The vegetation class is predominantly chaparral with oak woodlands. An especially large concentration of oaks exists in Potrero County Park.

Key features of the Potrero and Tecate areas include canyons and large flat areas of fuel loads that can result in rapid spread of fire. Winds are common, with the dry strong north and east winds (Santa Anas) the deadliest in relation to fire. The usual winds blow from the west and south and can be quite strong at times.

Fire History:

San Diego County has experienced some of the largest wildfires in California, most notably the Cedar Fire in 2003 and the Witch Creek Fire in 2007. The map in Appendix B labelled Figure 3 outlines this area's fire history. Fire hazard levels are high in both Tecate and Potrero, and in Potrero that hazard level runs to extreme.

Tecate burned in the 2007 Harris Fire and 2016 Border 3 Fire, along with a regular wildland fire history. Meanwhile, approximately 1/3 of Potrero burned in 2007 Harris Fire. Nearby, firefighter injuries occurred during this fire. In 2016, Potrero lost several homes and outbuildings. There were two local fatalities during the Border 3 Fire. The community north of Potrero Park Dr. and Round Potrero Rd. was not impacted by the Harris Fire, and has experienced typical initial attack wildland fire activity. Age class of fuels in this area is approaching 45 plus years.

TECATE – Fire Hazard Severity is primarily Very High with Regular wildland fire history.

POTRERO -- Fire Hazard Severity is primarily Very High with regular wildfire threats to the community.

For both Potrero and Tecate, values at risk within the communities are:

- Homes, local businesses, and other infrastructure
- Local habitats such as manzanita forests and live oak woodlands
- Sensitive species such as Tecate cypress, Englemann Oak, live oak
- Mixed chaparral and sage scrub habitat that host sensitive local flora and fauna
- Watershed function: public and private water system integrity and local aquifers
- Aesthetics: preserves, open space land trusts, wildlife refuge, viewsapes, etc.
- Historical and cultural resources

Foothills vegetation consists of:

- Mixed chaparral
- Chamise chaparral
- Mountain chaparral
- Grassland/meadows
- Oak woodland
- Riparian scrub
- Buckwheat scrub

Key Infrastructure:

Homes and other structures are scattered throughout the region. Local sources indicate that most of the homes in Potrero are over 20 years old. There are some historical homes in the communities that date back 100 or more years. These were identified as old ranches.

Potrero is home to a U.S. Post Office, an elementary school, a grocery store, a County library, a cemetery, and some smaller local businesses. There is also an 800+ acre farm in the community and some smaller, home-grown farms supplying hemp, pomegranates, Christmas trees, and other agricultural products. Ranches and smaller grazing areas can also be found, as horses and cattle are always part of this community.

Tecate has a U.S. Post Office, an elementary school, grocery stores, a gas station, and some local businesses. Tecate serves as an international border crossing point.

There are some dense clusters of housing that are highly vulnerable to fires. These include Twin Lakes, Potrero Circle, Coyote Holler, and the Tecate Mission area.

Major water storage can be found at Lake Morena and Lake Barrett. In addition, the area has some small lakes and ponds. These provide the area with a potential water supply for firefighting, particularly by air via helicopters.

The railroad is a potential hazard because of the types of freight it can haul (i.e., propane tank cars). There have been situations in which wheel sparks, overheated brakes, or carbon sparks from the engine exhaust have resulted in brush fires.

The proximity of the U.S.-Mexico border creates its own challenges, as fires starting in one country sometimes spread to the other. Cooperative fire efforts are encouraged via planning and communications.

One primary road, Potrero Valley Road, can be used for north/south traffic to connect with Hwy. 94, which runs east/west. This road can, and has been, blocked by natural hazards such as flooding, snowfall, and/or fire. In Tecate, Highway 188 is the primary traffic route, and can easily be blocked. Tecate is a U.S. Port of Entry.

Values at risk within the communities are:

- Homes, local businesses, and other infrastructure
- Local habitats such as oak and manzanita stands
- Sensitive species such as Tecate cypress, live oak
- Mixed chaparral and sage scrub habitat that host sensitive local flora and fauna including endangered species
- Watershed function: public and private water system integrity and local aquifers
- Public recreation areas including Potrero County Park
- Aesthetics: views and natural landscapes, etc.
- Historical and cultural resources including Native American artifacts

Maps:

Using technology and local expertise, the sponsors of this CWPP have included a series of maps depicting the site and situation of the Potrero and Tecate communities (Appendix B). The following maps are visual aids from which Potrero & Tecate FSC and other community members can assess and make recommendations:

1. Area Communities Map
2. Fire Hazard Severity Map
3. Fire History (1910-2010)
4. Evacuation map
5. Fuel Treatment Projects (optional)

C. Firefighting Resources

Everyone plays a role in protecting the Potrero & Tecate FSC communities from wildfire. Below are the primary agencies responsible for firefighting and community emergency response in the community:

- [San Diego County Fire/CAL FIRE](#) – structure and emergency medical service (EMS) through Fire Station 31; wildland protection on public lands and state parks
- [U.S. Forest Service \(Cleveland National Forest\)](#) – wildland protection of federal lands

Along with the volunteers of this FSC, there are Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members active locally. Additional volunteers are involved with: Ham Radio, Red Cross programs, County Animal Rescue Team (CART), County Sheriff's Senior Volunteer Patrol, and other efforts within the communities served by the Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council.

This FSC supports our community members as a cooperative organized and authorized effort during emergencies and training. The Community Center can be used in several ways to support emergency efforts.

Additional resources can be provided by faith-based groups and spontaneous volunteers.

One additional point to note: The Border Agency Fire Council is an international organization that works to address border fire issues and ensure the safety of firefighters, citizens, and unauthorized international travelers from Mexico. Additionally, this group coordinates on a firefighting operational plan, firefighter training and a resource conservation program.

Section II: Collaboration



Strong working relationships are critical in ensuring that our communities are well-prepared. This section describes those key partners and their roles in developing this CWPP.

A. Key Partners

The Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council led the development of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), with guidance and support from several partners. The development team included representatives from the agencies described in the table below.

Organization/Name	Roles / Responsibilities
Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide local information and expertise. This may include community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.• Participate in CWPP Review Committee; review all CWPP applications and approve completed applications for submittal to CAL FIRE for final authorization.
Fire Safe Council (FSC) of San Diego County/Resource Conservation District	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programmatic administration, management, and support.• Primary development of CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.• Assist with maps for community Fire Safe Councils.• Participate in CWPP Review Committee, review all CWPP applications, and approve completed applications for submittal to CAL FIRE for final authorization.• Primary development of CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.• Educational outreach and support for pre-wildfire disaster planning, defensible space, fuel reduction, and hazard assessment.• Participate in CWPP Review Committee, review all CWPP applications, and approve completed applications for submittal to CAL FIRE for final authorization.
San Diego County Fire/CAL FIRE San	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assistance with the development of CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment,

Diego Unit	<p>development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of planning process and approval of CWPP process and minimum standards. Provide input and expertise on forestry, fire, fuels, and Fire Safe and Firewise concepts. • Participate in CWPP Review Committee, design, edit and review all CWPP applications and approve completed applications for submittal for final authorization. • Preparation of CWPP maps.
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input and expertise on federal lands, fire, fuels and Fire Safe and Firewise concepts. • Participate in CWPP Review Committee and review all CWPP applications.
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input and expertise on federal lands, fire, fuels and Fire Safe and Firewise concepts. • Participate in CWPP Review Committee and review all CWPP applications. • Provide input and expertise on federal lands, fire, fuels, and Fire Safe and Firewise concepts.
San Diego County Dept. of Parks and Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide local information and expertise for County Dept. of Parks and Recreation-managed lands, wildland urban interface, including fire prevention, fuels treatment and activities.
San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input and expertise on planning and hazard mitigation. • Provide input, advice, programs, grants in support of the Fire Safe Council.
Sunrise Powerlink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide input, expertise on planning and support in fuels mitigation projects and direct FSC support. • Provide grant opportunities to eligible homeowners for Defensible Space and Structure Hardening. • Provide grant opportunities to FSC for larger scale community protection projects to improve fire safety and structure protection.
San Diego County Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide community information distribution, program support and internet access

Section III: Community Engagement & Education



Understanding wildfire risk is a key building block in preventing the loss of property and life. This section discusses efforts to build awareness, starting with the individual.

A. Completed Projects

The Potrero & Tecate FSC provides education and training on all aspects of our authorized projects. A friendly team of community members has worked together to advance projects related to home hardening, defensible space, fuel reduction programs and outreach, including the following:

- **Outreach and education activities and resources:**
 - Training at monthly meetings of our FSC at our community center
 - Annual training, including a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) class in our community
 - Quarterly training at our fire safety fairs during our scheduled chipping events
 - Fliers and info sheet handouts during our annual waste community clean-up day event
 - Flier and info sheet handouts during cooperative events with the fire crews, other community groups, and during smoke alarm installations in our community
 - A website with schedules, educational information and outreach contacts at <https://www.potrero-center.org/fire-safe-council>
- **Community education focus areas:**
 - Fuel reduction programs and community-based solutions
 - Emergency preparedness including evacuation planning and options
 - Education on personal survival tools and temporary refuge safety areas in the community
 - Assisting homeowner's awareness and understanding with defensible space
 - Assisting homeowner's awareness and understanding with structure hardening
 - Assisting homeowner's awareness and understanding with natural fire resistive vegetation landscaping
 - Education on improved reflective code compliant road and address signs
 - The BLM and San Diego County Fire/CAL FIRE to develop the Yerba Santa/Hartley Fuel Break
 - Eucalyptus tree removal (various sites)
 - Hazardous vegetation removal Letter of Authorization
 - Harris Ranch Rd. Brushing (BLM w/CAL FIRE)

- Ongoing utility safety programs provided by contractors for SDG&E, AT&T and cable providers
- **Fuel breaks**
 - Round Potrero Road project on the west end of Potrero in cooperation with BLM, CAL FIRE and USFS
 - Harris Ranch Road Potrero Valley Road connector project on the east end of Potrero in cooperation with BLM, CAL FIRE and USFS

B. Priorities

The Potrero & Tecate FSC supports the following regional and local priorities:

1. Chipping for fuel reduction and abatement
2. Assist with 100' of defensible space around structures
3. Roadside vegetation management along roads
4. Removal or treatment of dead, dying and diseased trees
5. Wood splitting as part of fuels management, using local firewood only (containment of potentially contaminated wood)
6. Develop program to educate residents about defensible space and natural fire resistive vegetation concepts
7. Research and identify resources for maintaining defensible space and vegetation reduction
8. Assist seniors and disabled in creating defensible space
9. Perform hazardous brush abatement around homes – reservoirs, tanks, pump stations and distribution facilities
10. Pursuit of green-waste and/or vegetation reduction transfer station in East County, Campo
11. Continuing to educate residents on the Sempra Energy “Sunrise Powerlink” grant programs, including structural hardening, defensible space improvements and fire safety items
12. Purchase Smokey Bear signs for Fire Danger warnings. Community education for fire danger awareness and limitations
13. Continued partnership with San Diego County Library on Fire Safe Council education programs and meetings

C. Future Projects

The Potrero & Tecate FSC will continue to work towards the above projects and education in the future. We will also continue and enhance our outreach to our Spanish speaking community and get the word out.

Section IV: Structural Hardening



Long before a wildfire sparks, there are numerous steps that residents can take to protect their homes and other structures. This section describes some of those efforts.

A. Completed Projects

Treatment of Structural Hardening

In cooperation with the County of San Diego, the Potrero & Tecate FSC supported and promoted fire safe activities and supported and educated its citizens in ways to reduce structure hardening (and lessen structure ignitability/flammability) through meeting the requirements of the County of San Diego Building and Fire Code.

Following is a description of structural challenges, including proposed methods of improvement and implementation proposed for the community:

- In cooperation with San Diego County Fire, Potrero & Tecate FSC support and promote natural fire resistive vegetation concepts
- The FSCs support and educate their citizens in ways to reduce structure ignitability through meeting County of San Diego Building and Fire Code requirements. We encouraged home hardening within our community
- The partnership that exists between the listed organizations (federal, state, and local) allows the Potrero & Tecate FSC to reduce hazardous vegetative fuels that could ignite residences and commercial facilities during wildfires. The Natural Resource Conservation Service has already declared removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees an "exigency" task. Maintaining properties with the appropriate defensible space and utilizing fire-resistant building materials are key factors to protecting lives and property in the wildland urban interface

B. Priorities

Following is a description of structural challenges, including proposed methods of improvement and implementation proposed for the community:

- Pursue ongoing home hardening projects, and expanded cooperation with home protection techniques
- Pursue ongoing projects above for home ignition prevention
- Educate our community on safe locations for wood storage piles, away and out of the line from prevailing and Santa Ana wind directions
- Continue the education of "add no new fuel" to your property. When possible, use non-combustibles instead of wood-based construction, products, or items
- Continue the education of the critical "first five feet" along the sides of your homes, and having no combustibles
- Home hardening including fire resistive and ember resistant vents
- Home hardening including ember education, ember awareness education

The following priorities were identified as steps the communities can take to reduce structural ignitability:

- Retrofitting homes to meet natural fire resistive vegetation and structural hardening standards, making it more difficult for fire to ignite homes or businesses
- Providing community education regarding reducing structural ignitability, enhancing wildfire readiness, proper defensible space, yard maintenance and other natural fire resistive vegetation practices
- Educating homeowners about proper storage of hazardous/flammable materials. This material and education be provided in English and Spanish
- Encouraging home hardening through
 - Ember resistant home vents
 - Ember resistive techniques
 - Fire resistive siding and materials
 - Related education and grants
- Offering Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) training classes
- Distributing information handouts and community events

C. Future Projects

The Potrero & Tecate FSC will work towards the following efforts in the future:

- Encouraging and lobbying for updated ember studies for rural homes, manufactured homes and homes that are site built in our rural communities today
- Encouraging and lobbying for updated ember studies, ember dams, for ground borne ember reduction practices. Separation and acknowledgment of two different ember or fire brand types, wind and ground borne ember-based ignition aspects of wildfires

Section V: Defensible Space



Creating a buffer between buildings and the grass, trees, shrubs and other wildland areas surrounding it are essential to improving their chance of survival. This section looks at efforts to build this key layer of protection.

A. Completed Projects

The Potrero & Tecate FSC participated in the following activities to increase defensible space.

The partnership that exists between the listed organizations and citizens in this CWPP allowed the communities of Potrero and Tecate to reduce hazardous vegetative fuels that could ignite residences and commercial facilities, particularly during Santa Ana wind fire conditions.

Maintaining properties with the appropriate defensible space was a key factor to protecting lives and properties.

In terms of regional and local projects, the Potrero & Tecate FSC has completed:

- Annual outreach programs set each year for our community.
- Evaluating existing fuel breaks within the community and reporting needs to our cooperators.
- Setting annual fuel reduction and chipping events for each year.
- Setting annual education goals and reaching those set goals with partners.

B. Priorities

Key priorities for the Potrero & Tecate FSC related to defensible space include:

- The creation of defensible space around homes, driveways, and access/egress routes.
- As a source of inspiration, assisting in keeping free from fire those threat areas where our fire crews drive, access and work while responding and defending our homes. And likewise, keeping free those areas that our residents and visitors must use while evacuating and escaping danger.
- Chipping for fuel reduction and abatement, using Potrero's chipping program.
- Assisting with 100' defensible space around structures.
- Roadside vegetation management along roads.
- Removal or treatment of dead and diseased trees.
- Wood splitting as part of fuels management and using local firewood only (containment of potentially contaminated wood).
- Develop program to educate residents about defensible space and natural fire resistive vegetation concepts.
- Research and identify resources for maintaining defensible space and vegetation reduction.

- Assist seniors and those with access and functional needs in creating defensible space either directly with volunteers or directing them to the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County's Defensible Space Assistance Program (DSAP).
- Perform hazardous brush abatement around homes, as well as reservoirs, tanks, pump stations and distribution facilities.

C. Future Projects

The Potrero & Tecate FSC will continue to work toward the above efforts, with a goal of expanding contacts with hard-to-reach customers in our community. Projects will also include:

- Encouraging and creating defensible space, including zones around homes, roadways, driveways.
- Promoting community "Add No Fuel" concept in building material, garden planning, patio additions.
- Raising home ember awareness, prevailing and Santa Ana wind placement of wood piles, cribs.

Section VI: Fuels Treatment



Fuels are combustible materials such as grasses, leaves, plants, shrubs and trees that feed flames. This section describes efforts to treat and manage these materials in the community.

A. Completed Projects

Completed fuels treatment-related projects by the Potrero & Tecate FSC include:

Fuel breaks:

- Round Potrero Road project on the West end of Potrero in cooperation with BLM, CAL FIRE and USFS.
- Harris Ranch Road Potrero Valley Road connector project on the East end of Potrero in cooperation with BLM, CAL FIRE and USFS.

In terms of regional and local projects, the Potrero & Tecate FSC completed annually set goals of the group to service our community members, including:

- Roadside vegetation management along roads to meet SD County standards
- Removal or treatment of dead, dying and diseased trees

B. Priorities

The Potrero & Tecate FSC has designated the following priorities:

- Continuing our program to educate residents on Sempra Energy "Sunrise Powerlink" grant programs, including related to structure hardening, defensible space improvements and fire safety items.
- Continued partnership with San Diego County Library for Fire Safe Council education programs.
- Yerba Santa/Hartley Hill project near Round Potrero Road in cooperation with BLM, CAL FIRE and USFS.
- Potrero Peak fuel break - improve as per CAL FIRE fuel manager guidance.
- Develop private road vegetation clearing projects to improve clearances and for critical evacuation corridors.
- Mason Refuge near Potrero Park - Improve safety of this TRA.
- Sol Valley Ranch area, Round Potrero Rd. - Improve safety of this TRA.
- CAL FIRE fuels projects. Improve safety of community, evacuation corridors, and potential TRAs.
- Improve road between Potrero Valley Rd. & Harris Ranch Rd. for alternate escape route.
- Encourage SD County graded road improvements for Harris Ranch Extension, Horizon View, Coyote Holler, Hartley Hill, and Yerba Santa roads.

- Maintain roadside vegetation along Stagecoach Road, Grapevine Road, and the unpaved road between Horizon View & Barrett Smith (Crosses BLM land; BLM does not recommend this road as an evacuation corridor).

Further develop roadside clearing at secondary routes to evacuation corridors to safety.

- Fuel Breaks at Round Potrero Rd.
- Fuel Breaks at Potrero Valley/Harris Rd. connector (BLM)
- Fuel Breaks at Tecate Border Rd.

C. Future Projects

The Potrero & Tecate FSC has designated the following as future priority projects:

- Review and update existing fuel breaks in our FSC area.
- Review and propose evacuation corridor proposals as changes to the communities occur.
- Educate residents about proper vegetation management that maintains and/or restores native habitats.
- Create and maintain list of qualified/licensed vegetation management and/or fire resistive building construction contractors for each Fire Safe Council, in or around the Potrero and Tecate communities.
- Purchase plants and/or hire crews to plant natural fire resistive vegetation in defensible space zone.
- Proposed Fuel Breaks in our FSC area:
 - Fuel Breaks at Yerba Santa Rd. (BLM)
 - Fuel Breaks at Mason Refuge/SD County Park (East)
 - Fuel Breaks at Long Potrero Valley.
 - Discuss and develop a fuels plan to protect our TSRAs.

Section VII: Evacuation Planning



Identifying key corridors in and out of a community -- as well as temporary safe refuge areas -- is essential to being prepared for evacuation. This section provides an overview of the PACE system (primary, alternate, contingency and emergency) used to plan ahead.

Evacuation planning is a dynamic process subject to the nuances of each community. Below is an overview of the key entrances and exits, designated evacuation corridors, and Temporary Safe Refuge Areas (TSRA) in the Potrero & Tecate FSC area. This section also addresses completed projects, priorities and future projects that relate to evacuation planning. A Potrero & Tecate Evacuation Map is included in Appendix B as Figure 4.

A. Overview of Ingress and Egress

Highway 94/Campo Road is primarily a two (2) lane (one in each direction) paved highway lying in an East/West direction for egress. (Some portions of 94 have turnouts for passing)

Highway 188/Tecate Road is primarily a two (2) lane (one in each direction) paved road primarily lying in a North/South direction. This is primary road into and out of Tecate. (North to 94 is the primary route for egress)

Potrero Valley Road is primarily a two (2) lane (one in each direction) paved road primarily lying in a North/South direction. This is primary road within the community. (South to 94 is the primary route for egress)

Harris Ranch Road is a two (2) lane (one in each direction) paved road primarily lying in a North/South direction. South to 94 is the primary route for egress.

Round Potrero Road is a two (2) lane (one in each direction) paved road primarily lying in an East/West direction. This is primary connector to three neighborhoods, Coyote Holler, Hartley Hill, Horizon View, and the Sol Valley Ranch Farm. (South to Potrero Valley Rd. is the primary route for egress)

Potrero Park Road is a two (2) lane (one in each direction) paved road primarily lying in an East/West direction. It is the only paved road accessing the County Park (TSRA). (East to Potrero County Park, to evacuate to TSRA)

Harris Ranch/Potrero Valley Road Connector is a one (1) lane wide unimproved dirt/gravel road primarily lying in an East/West direction. The connector is not regularly maintained, and rough and steep in places. It is designated a Fire Access Road and should not be considered an evacuation corridor.

Emory Road is primarily a two (2) lane (one in each direction) dirt road primarily lying in a North/South direction. This is secondary road into and out of Tecate. (North to 94 is the primary route for egress)

B. Designated Evacuation Corridors and Temporary Safe Refuge Area(s)

Using the PACE system, the Potrero & Tecate communities have these options designated for use during emergencies (see Appendix B for maps)

For Potrero:

Primary: Highway 94, East or West, Potrero Valley Road, Round Potrero Road to Potrero Valley Road then on to Highway 94. Harris Ranch Road to Hwy 94 East or West.

Alternate: None

Contingency: None

Emergency: TSRAs (Potrero County Park, Potrero Elementary School, and dirt fields)

For Tecate:

Primary: Highway 94, East or West, Highway 188 (Tecate Road) to Hwy 94 East or West.

Alternate: None

Contingency: Emery Road North to 94 then East or West

Emergency: TSRAs (CHP Border Facility, Clear/Open Parking lots, and dirt fields)

C. Completed Projects

- Fuel breaks, 100 feet on each side, Round Potrero Road.
- Fuel breaks, 100 feet on each side, Harris Ranch Rd./Potrero Valley Road connector.

D. Priorities

The following are key priorities to maintaining evacuation access for residents and visitors to Potrero and Tecate:

- Further develop roadside clearing at secondary routes to evacuation corridors to safety, including:
 - Fuel breaks at Round Potrero Rd.
 - Fuel Breaks at Potrero Valley/Harris Rd. connector (BLM)
 - Fuel breaks at Yerba Santa Rd. (BLM)
 - Fuel breaks at Mason Refuge/SD County Park (East)
 - Fuel breaks at Long Potrero Valley
 - Fuel breaks at Tecate Border Rd.
 - Fuel reduction in and around TSRA areas
- Collaborate with animal and pet service groups:
 - Our Fire Safe Council supports animal and pet education, preparedness and evacuation programs utilizing guidance from San Diego County Department of Animal Services (DAS) and their staff. The website for DAS' Pet Disaster Planning: https://www.sddac.com/content/sdc/das/adopt/care/pet_disaster_plan.html
 - We recommend that everyone prepares for an emergency by gathering necessary supplies ahead of time and practicing your family disaster plan. For most of us, pets are part of our family, so we need an emergency plan to protect them as well.
- Support the Community Neighbors Helping Neighbors and NET programs:
 - Our Fire Safe Council supports CERT Neighborhood Evacuation Teams, Community Volunteers assisting in Education, Planning and Evacuation preparedness for neighbors, seniors, those with access and functional needs and children.

E. Future Projects

The following are future priorities for the Potrero & Tecate FSC:

- Expand and maintain above fuel breaks.
- Continue to expand our FSC education and services to underserved and non-English speaking community members.
- Work with private property owners and other options for Temporary Safe Refuge Area(s) in and around our communities. Possibly adding an approved TSRA near Harris Ranch Road and another at the north end of Round Potrero Road.
- Continue to work with private and government landowners to develop an emergency access corridor (hike/bike path) to Potrero County Park.
- Expand our cooperative efforts to work with organized groups such as CERT and Animal Services as described below.

CAL FIRE's "If you become trapped by a wildfire" education CAL FIRE Ready Set Go! Program

In your home:

Stay calm and keep your family together.

Call 911 to advise officials.

Save and have a water supply ready.

Keep doors and windows closed but unlocked.

Stay inside your house, away from exterior walls and windows.

In your car:

Stay calm and park away from vegetation.

Call 911 to advise officials.

Close all windows and vents.

Cover mouth with dry cloth to protect airway.

Cover yourself with a wool blanket or jacket.

Lay on vehicle floor and stay in the car until the fire passes.

On foot:

Stay calm and find an area clear of vegetation, a ditch, or a depression on level ground.

Call 911 to advise officials.

Lay face down and cover up your body.

Cover mouth with a dry cloth to protect airway.

Call 911 for all emergencies or if you cannot self-evacuate.

Report new fires. If you are elderly, infirm, and physically unable to assist yourself and cannot evacuate yourself, notify 911. Preplanning for evacuation should include friends, family and neighbors who can assist you during an emergency. If you cannot self-evacuate, call 911.

Individuals within our communities are encouraged to plan, prepare, and practice a personal and specific household evacuation planning. Personal plans should indicate PACE planning for their location, noting the TSRAs for evacuation survivability.

Section VIII: Other Mitigation & Preparedness Projects



There are countless ways that communities can act ahead of wildfires to protect themselves. This section details additional past, current and future efforts underway not previously mentioned.

A. Completed Projects

The following are projects that have been accomplished by the Potrero & Tecate FSC:

- Community Clean-Up Days: Working with both private companies and County recycling staff, we assist community members with yard waste and debris removal.
- Power Outage Support Program: In collaboration with SDG&E, we offer all residents education and support during planned and unplanned power outages.
- Authorized FSC Programs: In collaboration San Diego County Fire/CAL FIRE, support partner organizations, such as Red Cross, Senior Care, CERT, Animal Services, Amateur Radio groups and SDG&E. These focus primarily on fire safety and emergency preparedness projects.
- Grant Support: Work with homeowners, property owners to assist with funding grants for our FSC projects.
- Wildland-Urban Interface Workshops: Host and coordinate support for community education for WUI workshops in and around our community.

B. Priorities

The following actions were identified as steps the community can take to further prepare for wildfire:

- Standardize addresses, street names and use non-combustible signage with reflective lettering; include color-coded signage indicating water availability, blue for a water supply access for fire crews, green for no water supply.
- Continue to encourage code compliant water tanks and associated non-combustible piping standpipes.
- Create and maintain a list of qualified/licensed vegetation management and/or fire resistive building construction contractors for each Fire Safe Council.
- Smoke Alarm Program: In collaboration with the Red Cross, Burn Institute, and San Diego County Fire, offer all residents a free smoke alarm, including installation.
- Residential Knox Box Program: In collaboration with San Diego County Fire, we will begin offering qualifying residents a home Knox Box, including installation.
- Animal Support Program: In collaboration with the San Diego County Animal Services, offer education and assistance on pet and animal preparedness and evacuation.
- Senior and Elderly support: In collaboration with Sheriff's Department, San Diego County Fire, and HHSA assist and support seniors and elderly residents.

C. Future Projects

Our Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council always adjusts and remains open to future projects in our effort to keep our communities fire safe. Some future projects include:

- Green Waste Disposal Sites: Pursue and lobby for a green-waste and or vegetation reduction transfer station in East County, Campo and/or Barrett.
- Smokey Bear Fire Danger Signs: Purchase and install Smokey Bear signs to indicate fire danger warning. Community education for fire danger awareness and limitations. Red Flagpole with a red flag.
- Community Water Supply Tanks: Installation and maintenance of emergency water supply firefighting storage tanks. One at every County or public property, at each community at major intersections of Highway 94.
- Community Info Boards: Installation of community education boards and displays in and around our community.
- Community Water Supply Effort: In collaboration with the County, private owners, and CAL FIRE, develop a corridor of water supply tanks (2 x 10,000 gallon) at each major intersection and in every community along the Hwy 94 corridor. Mark clearly and maintain with FSC assistance. Support water supply alternatives within our community.
- Amateur Radio Program: In collaboration with the Community Based Amateur Radio groups, we support a liaison, or contact person, who acts to assist our FSC on education and support of communications alternatives within our community.
- Purchase emergency generator for our local community center.

Section IX: Signatures



This plan must be approved by the following key parties: the local Fire Safe Council president, chief of the primary responding fire agency and chair of the CWPP review committee. This section includes these signoffs.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan as developed for Potrero & Tecate FSC:

- Was collaboratively developed and meets the intent of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) in emphasizing the need for agencies to work collaboratively with communities in developing hazardous fuel reduction projects, and places priority on treatment areas identified by communities themselves in a CWPP. Interested parties and federal land management agencies in the vicinity of this CWPP have been consulted.
- Identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment that will protect areas within this CWPP.
- Recommends measures to reduce ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.
- Is intended for use as a planning and assessment tool only, utilizing a compilation of community issues/goals and projected fire mitigation strategies. The CWPP is not to be construed as indicative of project “activity” as defined under the “Community Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act, Chapter Three, Projects Subject to CEQA.” Per the Community Guide, Section 3.1.1, “CEQA only applies to public agency decisions to approve, or actions to carry out, a discretionary project.” Any actual project activities meeting this definition of project activity and undertaken by the CWPP participants or agencies listed shall meet with local, state, and federal environmental compliance requirements.
- Assists and encourages compliance with current county and state fire code standards.

RD Uribe Jr.

President of Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council

Apr 2020

Date

Doreen Ortmeier

Secretary of Fire Safe Council submitting this CWPP

May 2020

Date

Participating State, Local fire agency representatives (add or delete as required):

Patrick D. Walker

Patrick D. Walker (Jul 9, 2020 12:01 PDT)

Jul 9, 2020

CAL FIRE

(Patrick Walker Battalion Chief)

Date

Signatures page 2

This CWPP was reviewed and recommended for approval by the San Diego Community Wildfire Protection Plan Review Committee as demonstrated by the signature below.



Chair of CWPP Review Committee

Don Butz

Chief, Lakeside Fire Protection District

President, Fire Safe Council of San Diego County

5/21/2020

Date

The CAL FIRE Unit Chief has final signing authority on CWPPs in San Diego County. The signature below attests that the standards listed in the section above and the content of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan are proposed to be met and mutually accepted:



Tony mechem (Jul 9, 2020 17:43 PDT)

STATE AGENCY
(authorizing entity — required for finalization)

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)
San Diego Unit
Tony Mechem, Unit Chief

Jul 9, 2020

Date

Section X: Appendices



This section includes important additional information that complements other portions of the plan.

Appendix A: Meeting Tracking Documents

This CWPP was developed for the communities of Potrero and Tecate, through a series of community meetings.

Meeting Tracking Documents

Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council

Members contributing to this document:

Mrs. Doreen Ortmeier
Mr. Frank Ortmeier
Mr. Bob Uribe
Mr. Ken Hansen
Mrs. Micki Hansen
Mr. Ed Boryla
Mrs. Marilyn Boryla
Mr. Eric Berger
Mr. Sid Lehman
Ms. Nanc Baer

Fire Representatives:

Battalion Chief Pat Walker, CAL FIRE
Fire Captain Kari Thompson, CAL FIRE
Fire Captain Mark Rimmer, CAL FIRE
Fire Captain Justin Stoll, CAL FIRE
Captain Rex Hambly, BLM

Meeting Dates:

Nov.10, 2019 - Attended Fire Safe Council Workshop Meeting, Lakeside Offices
Nov. 28, 2019 - Initial CWPP planning meeting, Potrero Community Center (New Format)
Jan 16, 2020 - Follow up, Update document Meeting CWPP, Potrero CC v.2
Jan 24, 2020 - CWPP clean-up, review. Community Center, Potrero v.3
Jan 30, 2020 - CWPP clean-up, Final community inputs, Potrero CC v.4

Potrero & Tecate Fire Safe Council Photo Credits

Mr. Ken Hansen, PTR TKT FSC
Ms. Bonnie Burchill, SPL Program Manager

Appendix B: Maps

Figure 1: Area Communities Map

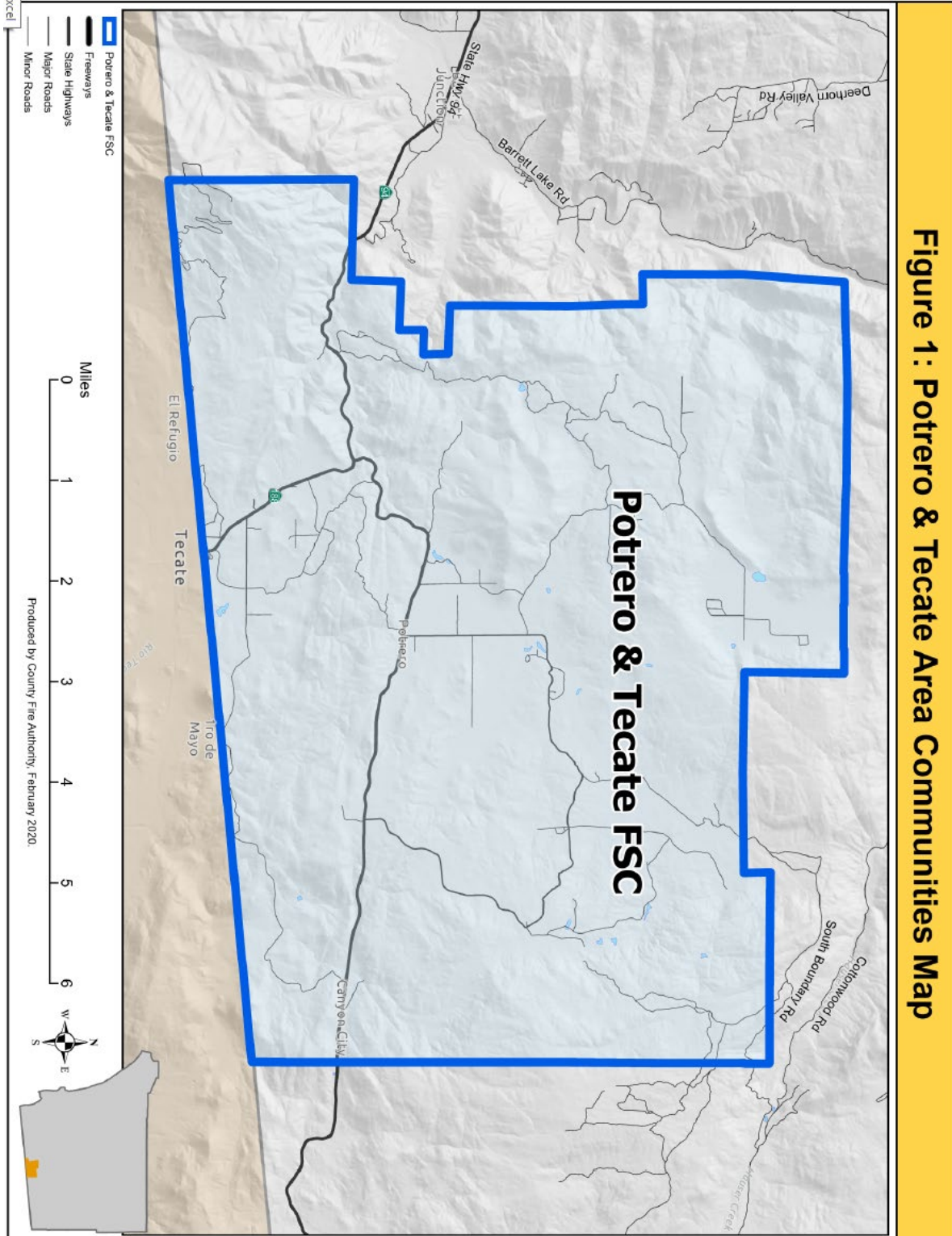


Figure 2: Fire Hazard Severity Map

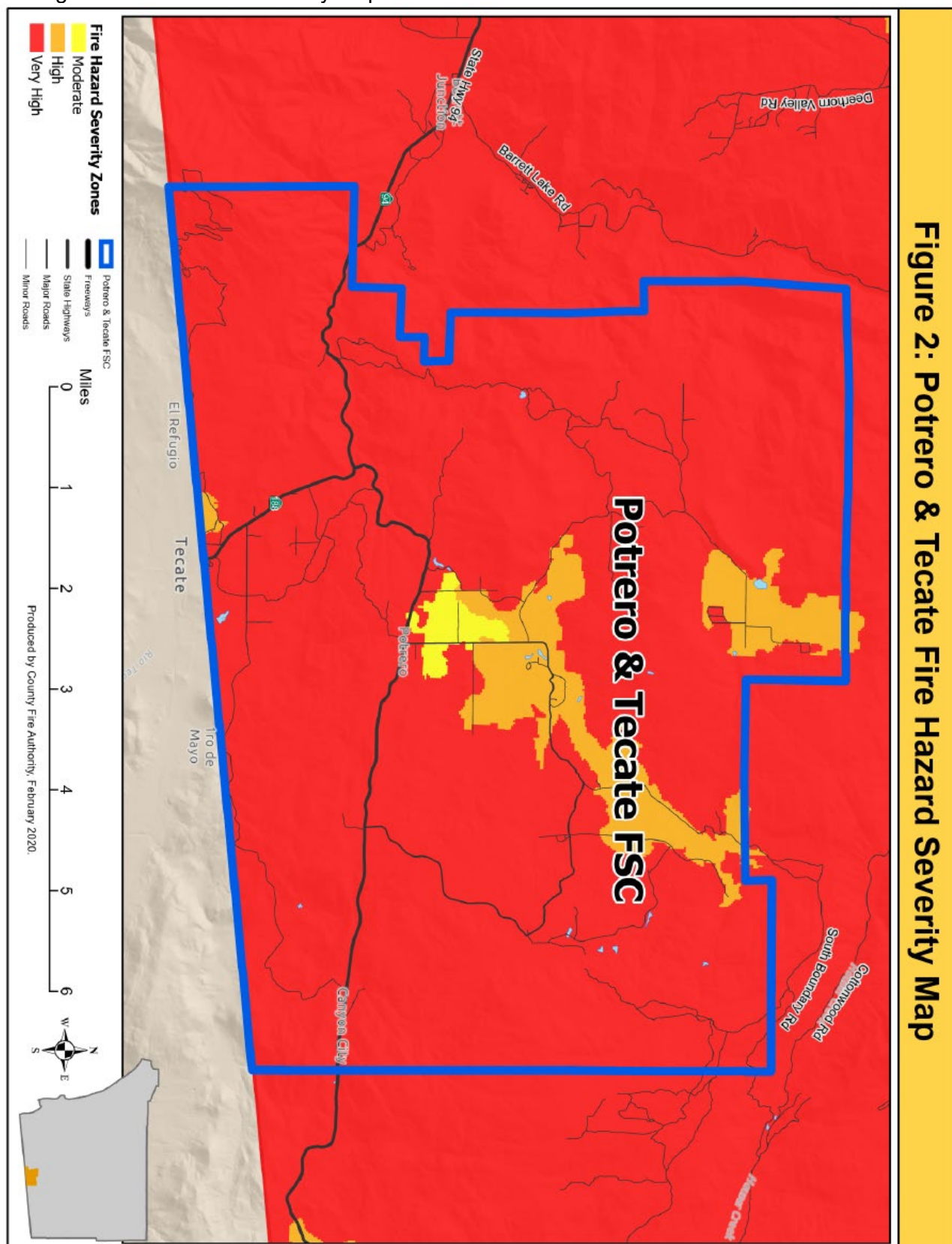


Figure 3: Fire History 1910-2010 (CDF FRAP)

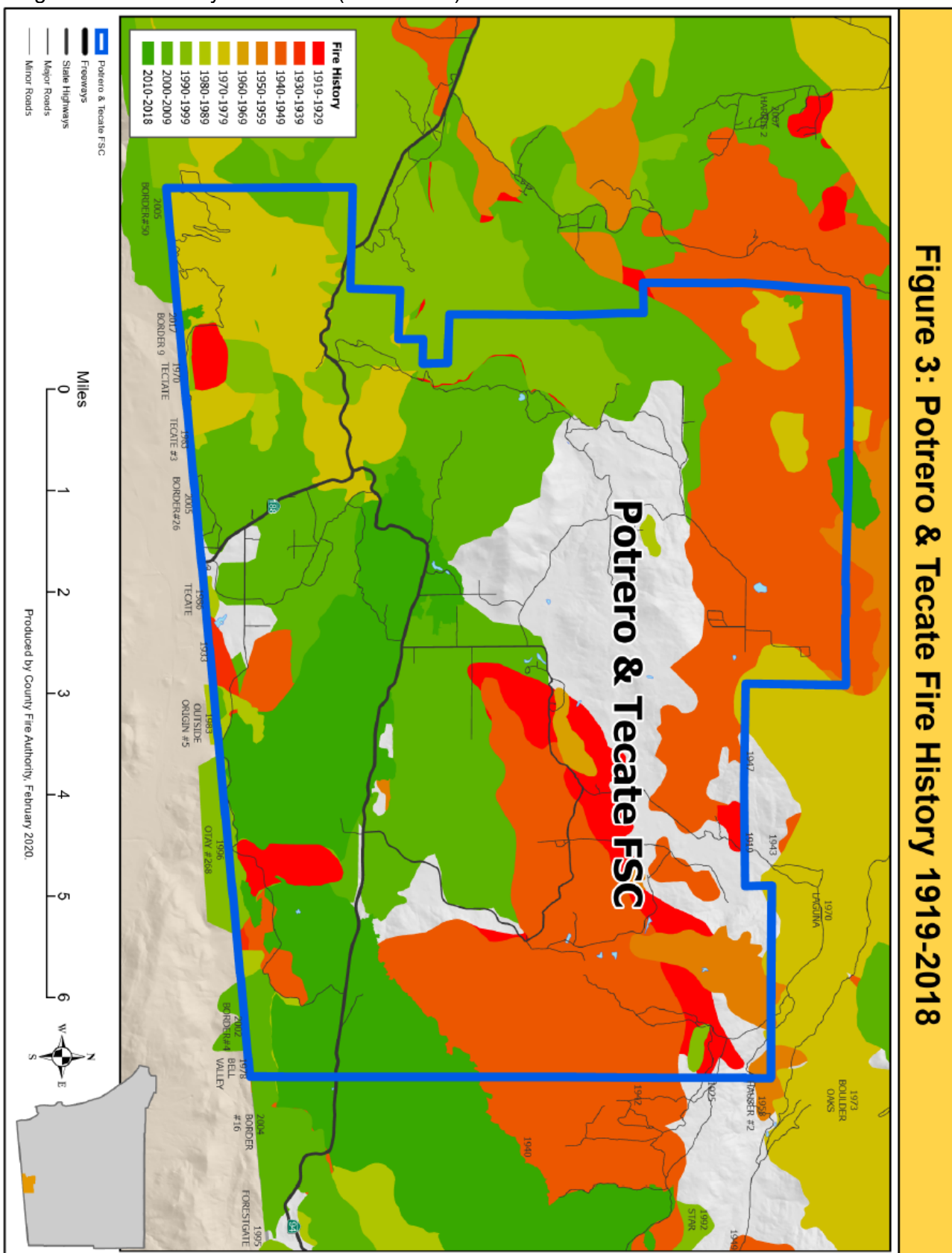


Figure 4: Evacuation Map

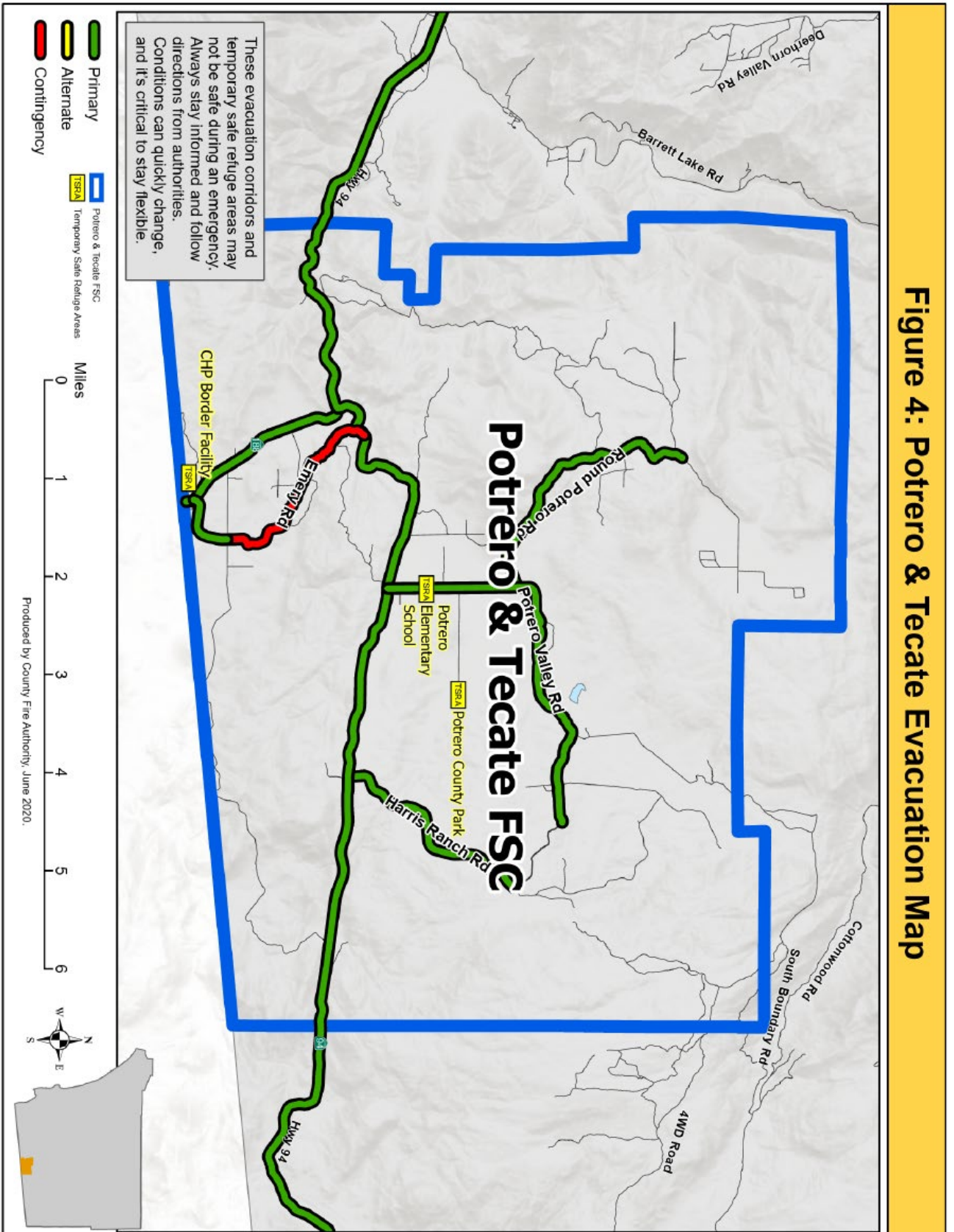
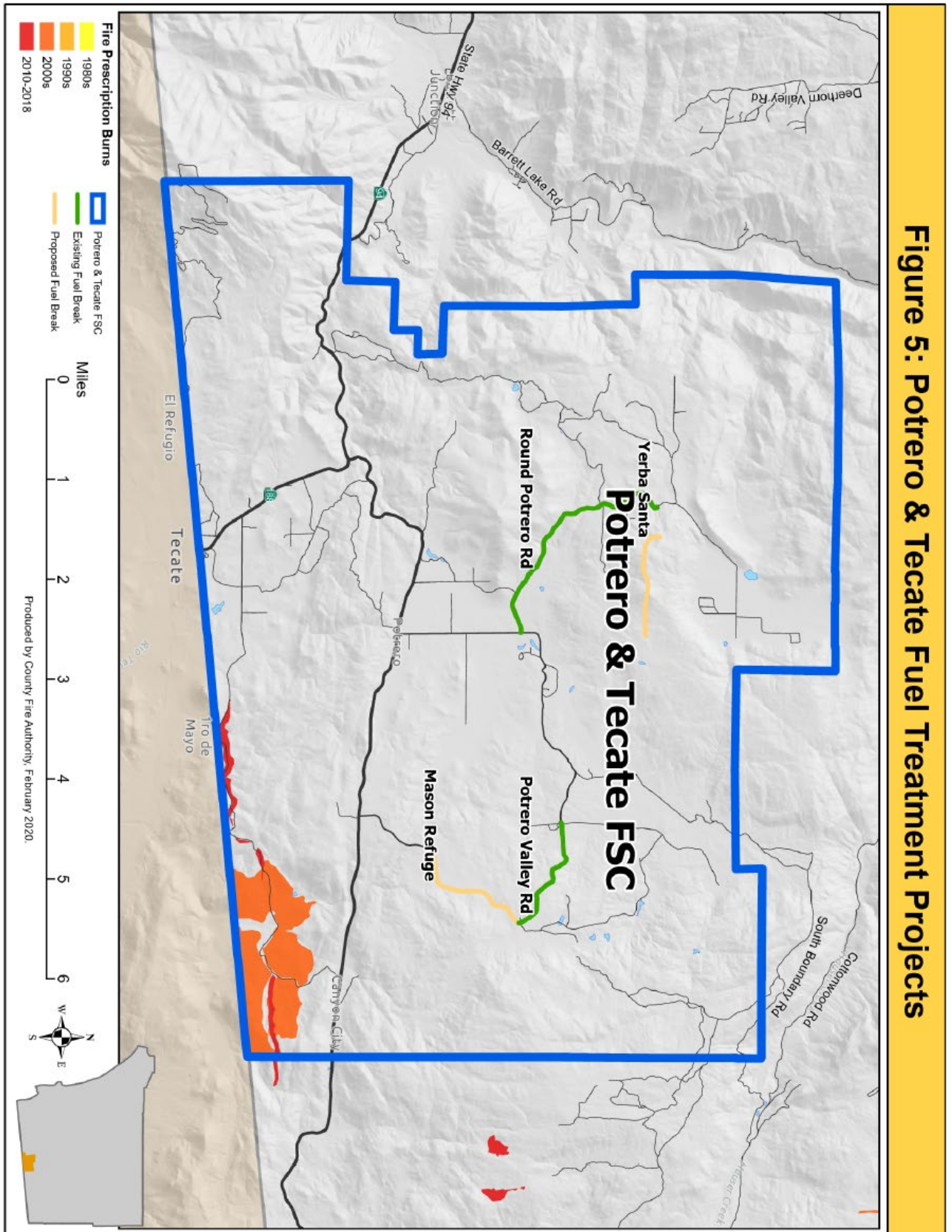


Figure 5: Fuel Treatment Projects



Appendix C: 1st Amendment (as applicable)

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Amendment

For

(Community)

Date Amendment Submitted: _____

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 SIGNATURE PAGES.....

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Appendix D: 2nd Amendment (as applicable)

Community Wildfire Protection Plan Amendment
For
(Community)

Date Amendment Submitted: _____

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 SIGNATURE PAGE(S)

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