

## ***Crest Community Wildfire Protection Plan***

San Diego County, CA

Revised June 01, 2019

### ***Introduction***

This Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was developed by Crest Fire Safe Council with guidance and support from the County of San Diego, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, and the San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District. This CWPP supplements San Diego County, Department of Planning and Land Use documents referenced in Appendix A.

The process of developing a CWPP is to help our community clarify and refine its priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical infrastructure in the wildland-urban interface. It can also lead our community members through valuable discussions regarding management options and implications for the surrounding watershed.

### **COLLABORATION: COMMUNITY/AGENCIES/FIRE SAFE COUNCILS**

Agencies involved in the development of the Original Crest CWPP are include:

#### ***CWPP Development Team:***

| <b>Organization</b>  | <b>Roles/Responsibilities</b>  |
|--|--|
| Crest Fire Safe Council<br>(a 501c3 Organization)                | Primary development of CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuel treatment project areas and methods.   |
| California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) | Facilitation of planning process and approval of CWPP process and minimum standards. Provides input and expertise on forestry, fire and fuels, and FireWise concepts.  |
| San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District                 | Provides local information and expertise. This includes community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities to include the involvement of the Crest Elementary School, the three local churches, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.   |
| San Diego County Sheriff's Office                                | Primary responsibility for evacuations and repopulation  |
| County of San Diego, Land Use and Environment Group              | Primary development of CWPP and decision-making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuel treatment project areas and methods. Work with Crest Fire Safe Council to establish South Lane Park as the secondary evacuation site for residents of Crest.   |
| County of San Diego, Office of Emergency Services                | Provides input and expertise on planning and hazard mitigation, and to establish an evacuation plan for the Community of Crest, to work with Crest Fire Safe Council in establishing the utilization of Crest Elementary School as a Safe Zone as well as the County Park known as South Lane Park to be utilized; local evacuation site and the gathering of large animals. |
| San Diego County Fire Safe Council                               | Provides educational outreach and support for pre-wildfire disaster planning, defensible space, fuel reduction, and hazard assessment.   |
| California Department of Fish & Wildlife                         | Provides input and expertise on federal lands forestry, fire and fuels, and FireWise concepts and a vegetation management plan.  |

### Community Overview: Crest

The ridge top community of Crest includes Crest, La Cresta, and Suncrest. Perched atop a granite mountain, it is surrounded by El Cajon to the west, Lakeside to the north, Harbison Canyon to the east, and the Dehesa Valley to the south. Steep slopes limit access to two main roads, La Cresta Road from the west and Mountain View Road to the east. Much of the mountain slopes are owned by the state and other government agencies and dedicated as permanent open space. Structural fire protection is provided by San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District, while the responsibility for wildland fires rests with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

Forester Creek drains the area to the west, Rios and Los Coches Creeks to the north, s, Harbison Canyon Creek receives stormwater from the eastern slopes, and runoff from the southern slopes reaches the Sweetwater River.

Vegetation is coastal sage scrub on the drier slopes, with mixed chaparral on the northern aspects and in the steep canyons. Finger canyons intersect with the developed lands at the ridge top. 600 acres of avocados south of Rios Canyon provide a green fuelbreak to the northwest. The serpentine Valley View Truck Trail that connects northern Crest with Intestate 8 at Los Coches Road has been maintained by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as a Fire Agency access road.

Crest has a history of relatively frequent fires along the slopes, especially in the Dehesa Valley and Valley View Truck Trail areas. Large fires burned the north and east slopes in the 1940's. The Laguna Fire (1970) destroyed many homes in Crest and adjacent Harbison Canyon when Santa Ana winds pushed fire from Laguna Mountain to El Cajon. History repeated itself in 2003 when the Cedar fire swept the north eastern slopes and destroyed or damaged over 308 homes and other buildings.

### FIRE HISTORY:

| <u>Fire Name</u> | <u>Acres</u> | <u>Cause</u>  | <u>Month</u> | <u>Day</u> | <u>Year</u> |
|------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
|                  | 126          | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1920        |
|                  | 324          | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1925        |
|                  | 3159         | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1940        |
|                  | 3186         | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1947        |
| VALLEY VIEW      | 2445         | Unknown       | 8            | 6          | 1950        |
| EAST SUNCREST    | 932          | Unknown       | 11           | 11         | 1950        |
| DEHESA           | 351          | Unknown       | 7            | 20         | 1952        |
| DEHESA #2        | 330          | Unknown       | 8            | 28         | 1953        |
| TUNNEL HILL      | 1298         | Unknown       | 10           | 4          | 1953        |
| SINGING HILLS    | 406          | Unknown       | 8            | 22         | 1956        |
| VALLEY VIEW #2   | 1205         | Unknown       | 8            | 9          | 1958        |
|                  | 56           | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1963        |
|                  | 45           | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1963        |
| SUNCREST         | 1434         | Unknown       | 10           | 21         | 1965        |
| HARBISON CANYON  | 381          | Unknown       | 8            | 30         | 1967        |
| LAGUNA           | 174162       | Miscellaneous | 9            | 29         | 1970        |
|                  | 107          | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1973        |
|                  | 83           | Miscellaneous | 0            | 0          | 1975        |

|           |        |                 |    |    |      |
|-----------|--------|-----------------|----|----|------|
|           | 265    | Miscellaneous   | 0  | 0  | 1978 |
|           | 132    | Miscellaneous   | 0  | 0  | 1979 |
| DEHESA    | 106    | Miscellaneous   | 8  | 3  | 1981 |
| DEHESA #5 | 71     | Unknown         | 8  | 19 | 1982 |
| DEHESA #6 | 124    | Arson           | 9  | 21 | 1982 |
| EUCLID    | 401    | Equipment Use   | 7  | 13 | 1983 |
| DEHESA #7 | 59     | Miscellaneous   | 8  | 2  | 1983 |
| HARBISON  | 42     | Miscellaneous   | 10 | 11 | 1983 |
| DEHESA    | 223    | Miscellaneous   | 5  | 29 | 1984 |
| FLINN     | 605    | Playing w/ Fire | 6  | 27 | 1986 |
| PARK #2   | 106    | Arson           | 7  | 6  | 1987 |
| DEHESA #2 | 61     | Miscellaneous   | 8  | 20 | 1987 |
| DUNBAR    | 197    | Arson           | 6  | 26 | 1990 |
| SLOANE    | 107    | Unknown         | 10 | 12 | 1999 |
| DEHESA    | 52     | Unknown         | 6  | 30 | 2003 |
| DUNBAR    | 43     | Unknown         | 8  | 29 | 2003 |
| CEDAR     | 270865 | Miscellaneous   | 10 | 25 | 2003 |

### ***Identification of Values at Risk***

Using technology, forensic fire science of the 2003 Cedar fire, the fire history of the 1970 Laguna Fire, and local expertise, the CREST Fire Safe Council supported by the County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use has developed a series of maps depicting the site and situation of the CREST Community (Appendix B). A narrative of the community and adjacent landscapes of interest was also prepared. The maps will act as a visual aid from which community members can assess and make recommendations. The maps include the following:

1. Inhabited areas and values at potential risk to wildland fire.
2. Fire threat designated by California Department of Forestry and East County Fire Protection District.
3. A preliminary designation of the community's Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) zone
4. USGS topographic quad map of the community.

### ***Local Preparedness and Firefighting Capability***

Initial response to all structural fire, medical and associated emergencies is the responsibility of the San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District. The San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District maintains Auto Aid Agreements with the surrounding fire agencies of Alpine, Lakeside, Santee, El Cajon, Lemon Grove, La Mesa, Sycuan Indian Reservation, CAL FIRE, and US Forest Service. The district is also a signatory to the San Diego County Mutual Aid Agreement and the State of California Mutual Aid Agreement. Ordering any resources under this plan can be made by the unified command from the Incident Commander or Unified Incident Command. All mutual aid agreements, training, equipment, and response are the responsibility of the local fire department and the agencies listed above. San Miguel Fire District will work cooperatively with the response partners, community members and the Endangered Habitats Conservancy (EHC) which maintains the Crestridge Ecological Preserve and the South Crest Preserve Complex. The EHC partnership will support the continued availability of the Suncrest Truck Trail as a potential route of emergency egress when deemed appropriate by incident commanders. San Miguel Fire & Rescue will host this agreement on their website and in computer file archives for reference and distribution.

## **STRUCTURE IGNITIBILITY**

1. In cooperation with the County of San Diego, and the San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District, Crest Fire Safe Council supports and promotes Firewise activities. Crest Fire Safe Council supports and educates its citizens in ways to reduce structure ignitibility through meeting County of San Diego Building and Fire Code requirements. See definition of these methods of education and activities in Appendix C.

The partnership that exists between the listed organizations (federal, state, local, and citizens) allows the community of Crest to reduce hazardous vegetative fuels that could ignite residences and commercial facilities during Santa Ana wind fire conditions. The Natural Resource Conservation Service has already declared removal of dead, dying, and diseased trees as an "exigency" task. Maintaining properties with the appropriate defensible space is a key factor to protecting lives and property in the Crest community (*Fire Defensible Space and You...*, 2005).

## **HAZARD REDUCTION PRIORITIES**

### **1. South Lane County Park**

1. Conduct brush management projects whereby fuel loads are reduced along selected ingress/egress routes, and homes in the community.
  - a. The roads surrounding South Lane Park as well as Suncrest, Albatross, & Crest Dr. are included in this first important project.
  - b. The Crest Fire Safe Council to work with community members, county entities, the school and churches to establish utilities, construct restrooms, facilitate temporary showers, and purchase a sea container which will act as the Crest Fire Safe Council building headquarters housing emergency equipment.
2. Map all roads, maintain road markers, and identify water sources in the communities.
3. Measures to reduce structural ignitibility:
  - a. Weed abatement inspections are conducted with enforced abatements are completed by the County of San Diego, the San Miguel Fire Protection District, and CAL FIRE Defensible Space Inspection (DSI) teams
  - b. Construction enhancements through San Diego County Building and Fire Code requirements.
  - c. Class A re-roofing enhancements through San Diego County Building and Fire Code requirements, residential sprinkler systems, and other fire protection equipment which would aim at further protecting Crest residents.
  - d. Education and information seminars completed on a regular basis through the Crest Sun newsletter, the Crest Community web site, the Crest Elementary School's newsletter, the Crest Community Association, the church's newsletters, and monthly town meetings. All of the mentioned above, are for information dissemination on fuel reduction and communication with the community for protection of life and structures. All of the mentioned above, are for information dissemination on fuel reduction and communication with the community for protection of life and structures.

## **2. Brush Abatement for vacant land surrounding the community of Crest**

Property owners along Crest Drive, Highline Truck Trail, Canyon Rim Road, Sunrise Mountain Road, as well as properties on the North side of the Crest Community abutting the Crestridge Preserve will be offered weed and brush abatement opportunities around their properties all following within the guidelines established by San Diego County Offices of Planning and Development and other environmental services.

## **3. Water line upgrades for the community of Crest**

The Crest Fire Safe Council and Crest Community Association of residents will work with Padre Water Dam District in the implementation of their upgraded water line plan for the community of Crest. CFSC will assist in the distribution of information of the projects, time schedules, and conduct community meetings to inform the residents.

## **4. Information dissemination to residents at risk of structure loss**

1. Crest's Fire Safe Council will gather and disseminate information to the community.
2. Classes will be offered in First-Aid, protections of structures, Fire Wise Planting etc

## **Current/Planned Projects**

1. The Crest Fire Safe Council is a 510c3 organization.
2. The San Miguel Consolidated Fire Protection District now has in place the Vegetation Management Plan as outlined in the MOA between CAL FIRE, the Fire Districts, California Fish and Wildlife, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
3. The Crest community and Crest Fire Safe Council are working with the Amateur Ham Radio Operators of El Cajon in support of re-establishing a new communications tower at the Crest water tanks, (property owned by Padre Dam Water District) at the end of Alta Lane, and to work in coordination with Crest Fire Safe Council for delivery of emergency information and practice drills.
4. The County of San Diego, Department of Planning and Land Use has funding and is currently collecting water source, road, and road marker data and plans to have these data completed and mapped.
5. The current phone-based communication will serve as a means of disseminating information related to Fire Safe Council meetings and business. This phone system will serve as a means of dispensing routine information regarding the function of the Fire Safe Council. In the event of the need for emergency communication, it shall be understood that this system is a back up to the San Diego County OES Wireless Alert System, Reverse 911 and information made available through the AlertSanDiego website and the SDEmergency App.
6. An educational effort should be undertaken to ensure residents are signed up for notifications through AlertSanDiego available at [www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego](http://www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego)
7. Collecting and disseminating information to large vacant landowners regarding the use of goats for habitat management on the fringes of the community of Crest.
8. Crest Fire Safe Council is working with the Crest Elementary School and the San Miguel Fire District to educate through Fire Safe activities, sponsor Family Health and Science nights, and conduct fire information assemblies.




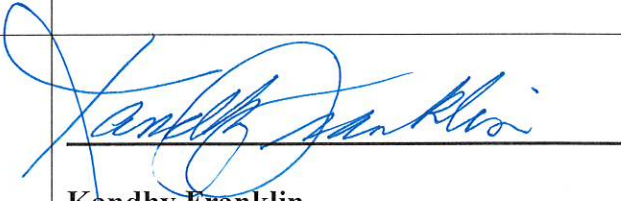
Crest Fire Safe Council will work with the Crest School Administration and PTA to develop information handouts, brochures or materials related to the activities of the Fire Safe Council or Wildland Fire Preparedness. These materials shall be approved by the Cajon Valley School prior to distribution to students or staff.

**The Community Wildfire Protection Plan developed for Crest:**

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties and land management agencies in the vicinity of Crest have been consulted. This 2019 update was conducted by representatives from CAL FIRE San Diego and San Miguel Fire & Rescue in conjunction with members of the Crest Fire Safe Council.
- This plan identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment that will protect Crest.
- This plan recommends measures to reduce ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

The following entities attest that the standards listed above are proposed to be met and mutually agree with the content of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

**Signatures:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <br><b>Criss Brainard, Fire Chief<br/>San Miguel Fire &amp; Rescue</b> | <br><b>Tony Mecham, Unit Chief<br/>CAL FIRE, San Diego</b> |
|    | <br><b>Kandhy Franklin<br/>Crest Fire Safe Council</b>   |

## Appendix A

### Documentation Affecting Fuels Reduction, Building Construction, and Community Fire Protection

1. County of San Diego Building Code (2004)
2. County of San Diego Fire Code (2004)
3. County of San Diego Combustible Vegetation and Flammable Material Ordinance (2004)
4. County of San Diego, OES *Hazard Mitigation Plan* (2004)
5. County of San Diego, *Fire, Defensible Space and You...* (2005)
6. County of San Diego, *Fire Safety and Fuels Reduction Program Overview* (2005)
7. <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov> for additional maps, data, and documents
8. <http://www.cafirealliance.org> California Fire Alliance website for additional documents.
9. <http://wildfire.cr.usgs.gov/fireplanning> California Fire Alliance mapping tool for additional planning and documents.

## **Appendix B**

Figure 1: Crest Street Map (Thomas Brothers)

Figure 2: Communities Map  
Shows the main population centers.

Figure 3: Map of Sheriff's coverage areas in emergencies.

Figure 4: Crest Vicinity Map- San Diego County Evacuation Planning Map



## Appendix C

- A. Education and information seminars are presented on a regular basis through the Crest Sun newsletter, the Crest Community web site, the Crest Elementary School, town hall meetings. Information for these meetings is from the Crest Fire safe council utilizing published information from fire entities, San Diego Fire Safe Council, County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services, and San Diego County Planning and Land Use.
- B. Information to be disseminated will utilize the Crest web site, newsletters mentioned above, and the reverse call method of Crest Elementary School.
- C. Information shall be distributed to encourage registration through AlertSanDiego through [www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego](http://www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego)
- D. Residents shall be encouraged to have the SDEmergency App installed on their mobile phones

Figure 1-- Crest Vicinity Map Thomas Brothers Maps

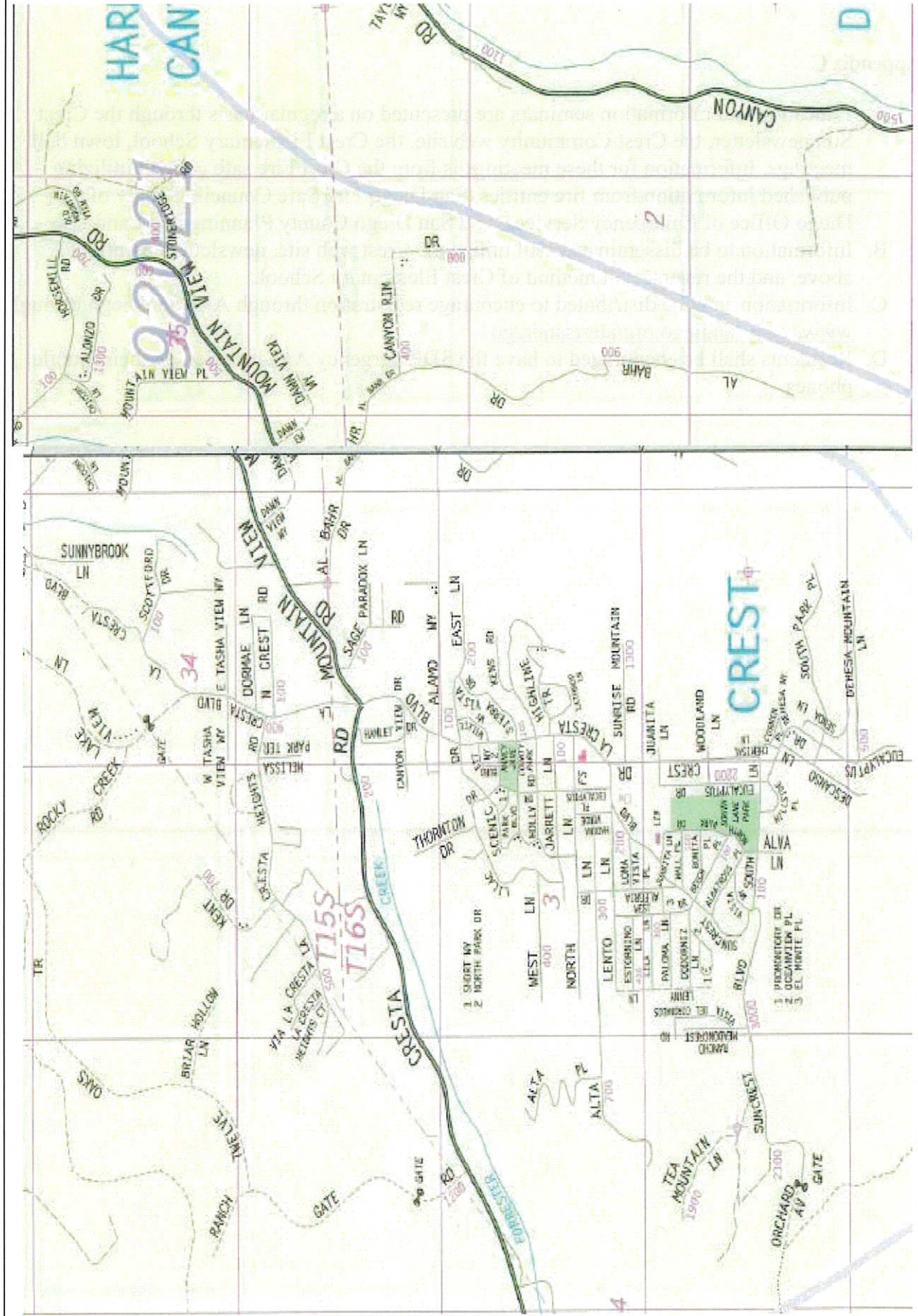






Figure 2 – Communities Map

## Figure 3-Sheriff Coverage Map

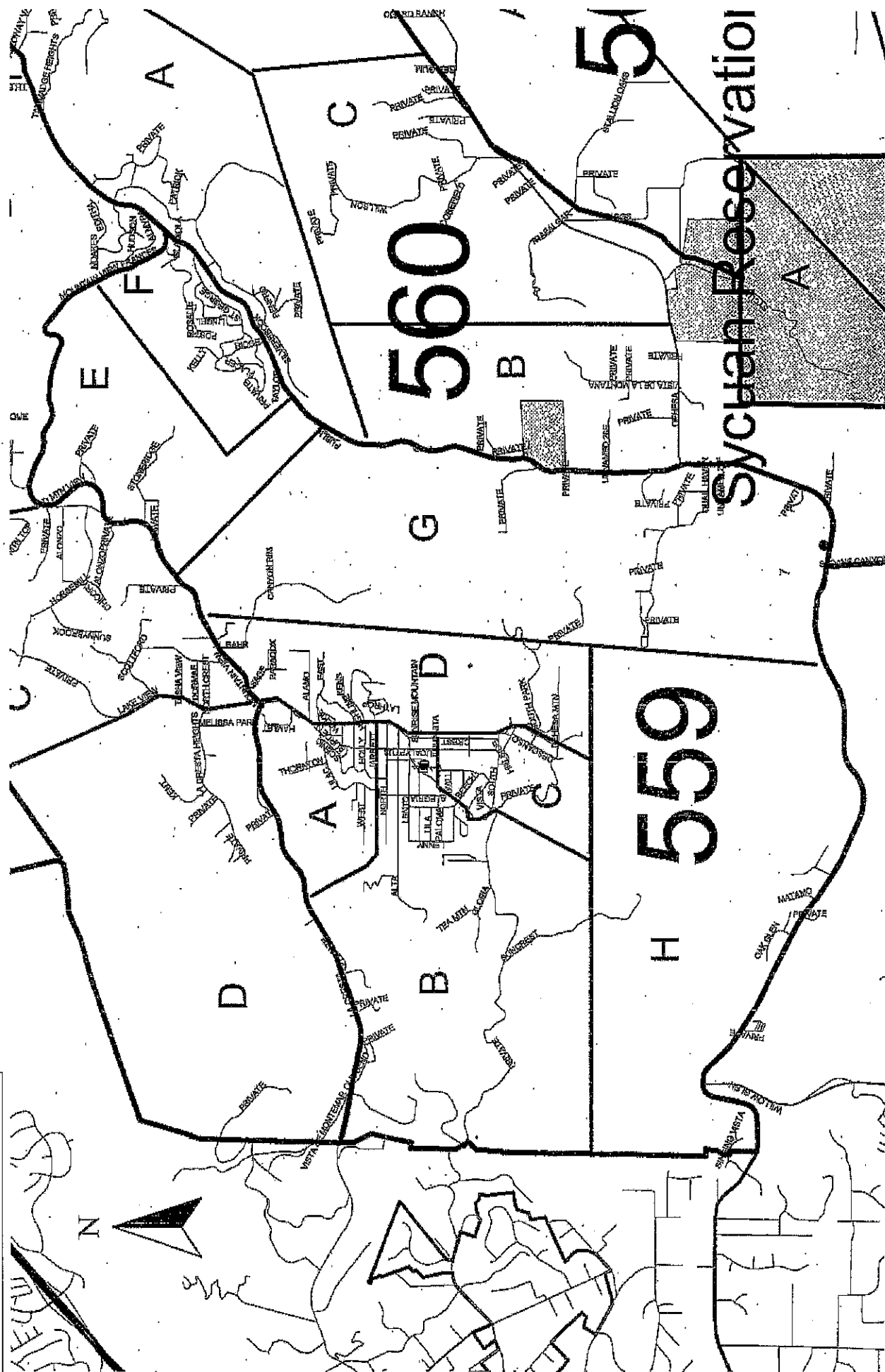
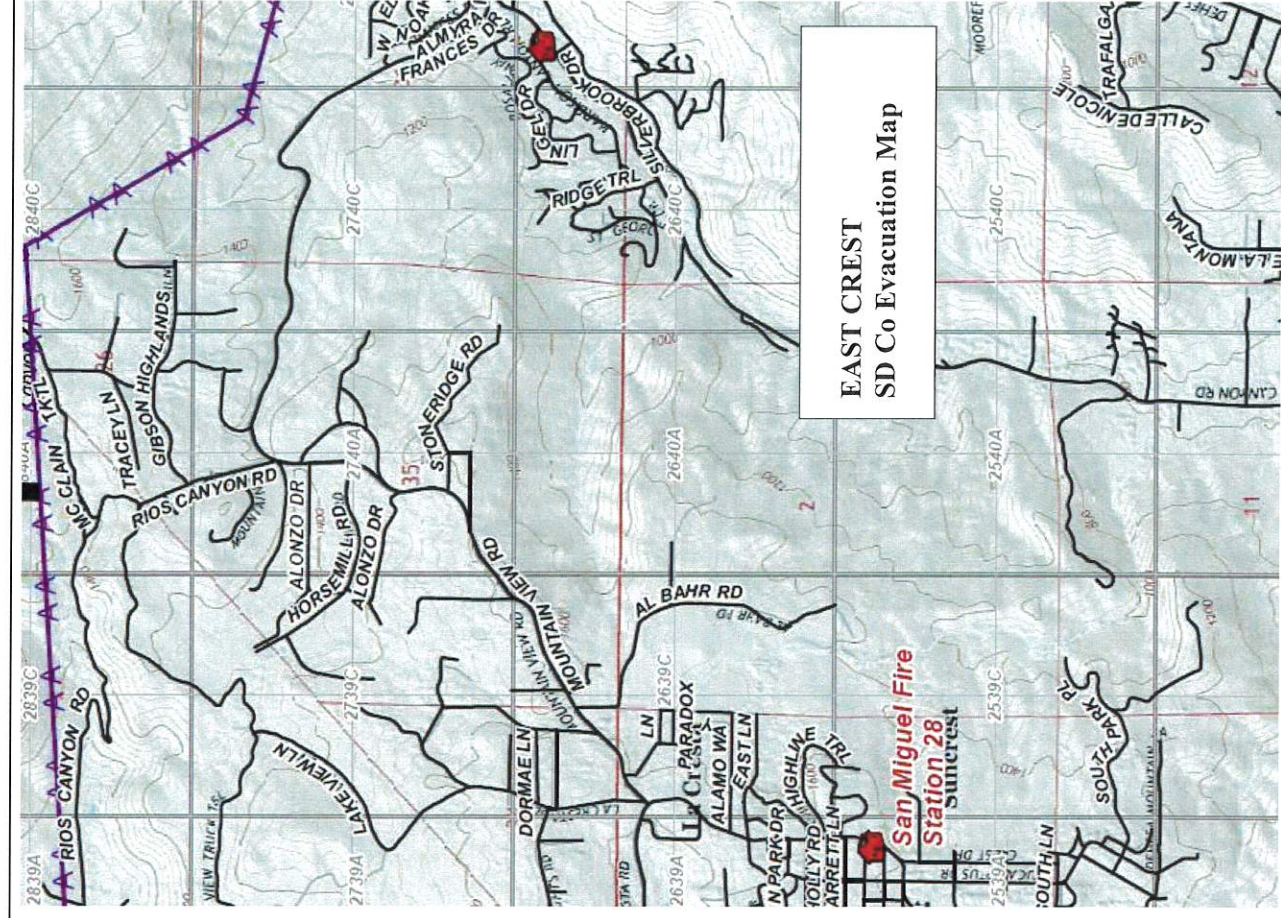
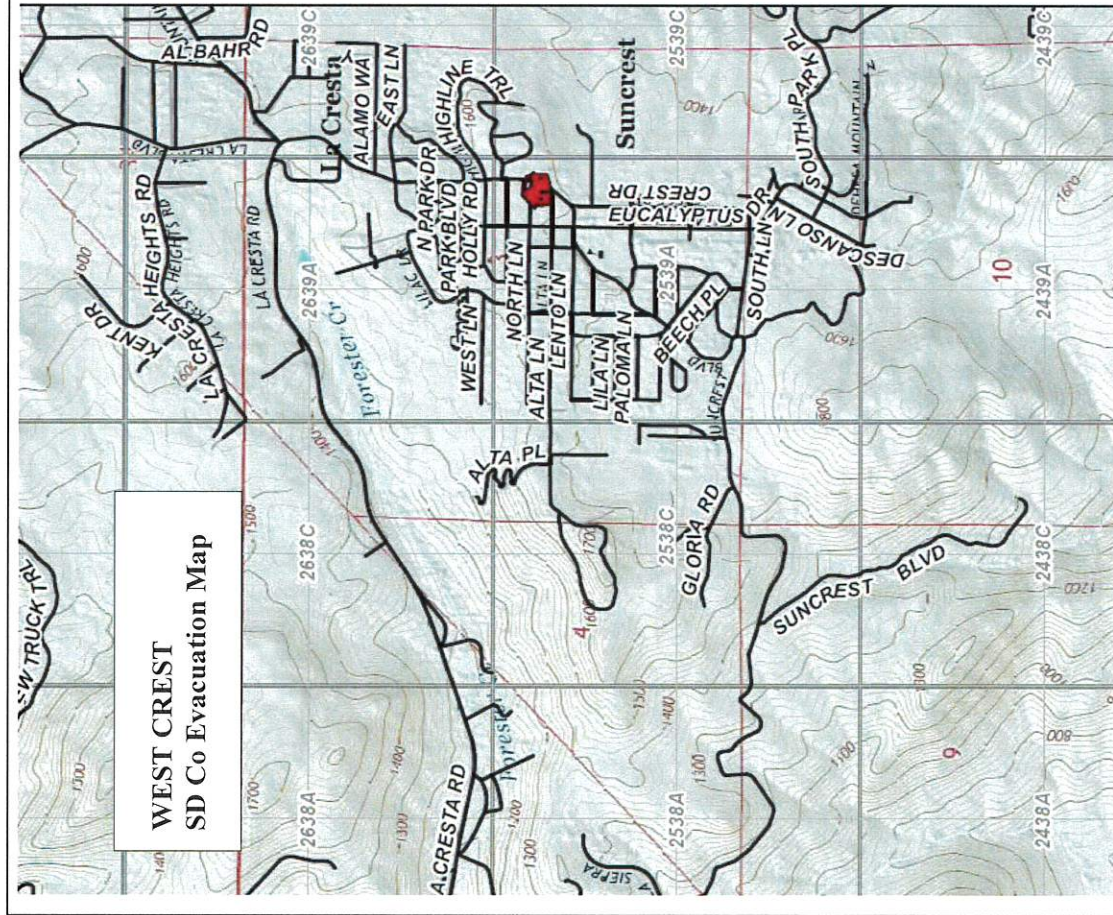




Figure 4- CREST Vicinity Maps  
SD Co Evacuation Planning Maps



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