

Fire Safe Council of Greater Julian Community Wildfire Protection Plan

DATE: 11/30/2005

A. Overview

This Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was developed by the Fire Safe Council of Greater Julian with guidance and support from the County of San Diego Fire Safe Council, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Julian Cuyamaca Fire Protection District, and the Bureau of Land Management.

The CWPP was developed to help clarify requirements and priorities for protection of personnel, land, and animals. It will also provide community guidance, support and education for preparing in the event of a wildfire.

B. Collaboration

The representatives involved in the development of the Greater Julian CWPP are included in the following table. Their organization, and roles and responsibilities are indicated below:

CWPP Development Team:

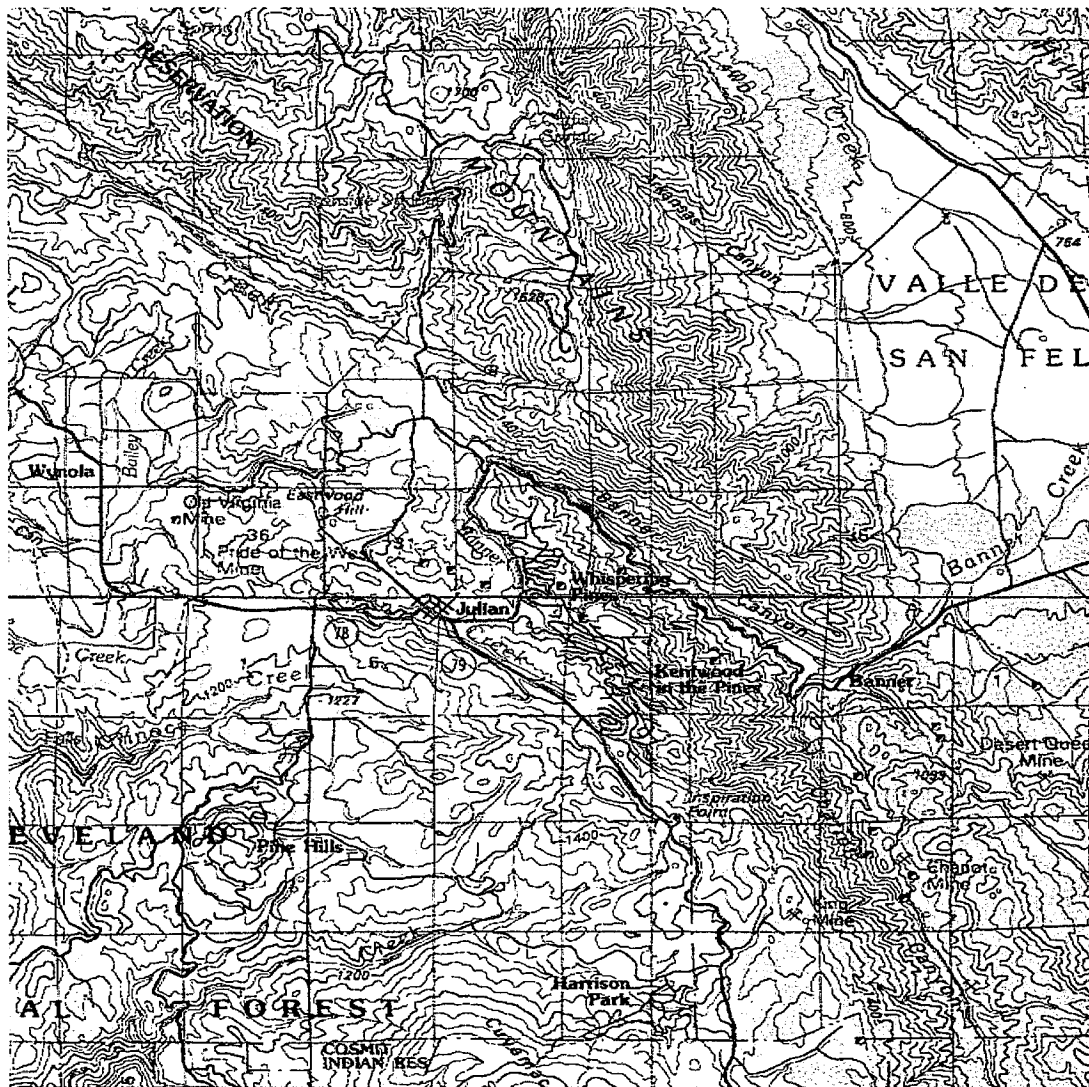
Organization	Roles/Responsibilities
Greater Julian Fire Safe Council	Primary development of the CWPP and the decision making, community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities, establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods and education of the community on fire safe methods.
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF)	Facilitation of planning process and approval of the CWPP process and minimum standards. Provides input and expertise on forestry, fire and fuels. Is the county inspection agency for Julian to ensure property owners meet the minimum fire safe requirements.
Julian/Cuyamaca Fire Protection District	Provides local information and expertise. This could include community risk and value assessment, development of community protection priorities and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.
United States Forest Service	Provides input and expertise on federal lands forestry, fire and fuels and fire safe concepts.
San Diego County Fire Safe Council	Provides information support for hazard assessment, and defensible space, as well as grant information and maps support.

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C. Community Overview:

Julian is located at 33°4'15" North, 116°35'8" West; at an altitude of 4,235 feet Julian is an official California Historical Landmark No. 412. Also, the Julian townsite and surrounding area is defined by the San Diego County Zoning Ordinance Section 5749 as the Julian Historic District which requires that development adhere to certain guidelines that are administered by the Architectural Review Board of the Julian Historic District, appointed by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. The historic town site of Julian has approximately 300 full- and part-time residents. The surrounding area of desert and hills boasts a population of 3,000. The small communities that surround the Julian Townsite include Pine Hills, Whispering Pines, Kentwood I, Kentwood II, Wynola, Harrison Park and Cuyamaca. The Julian area is oak woodland, with pines and chaparral.



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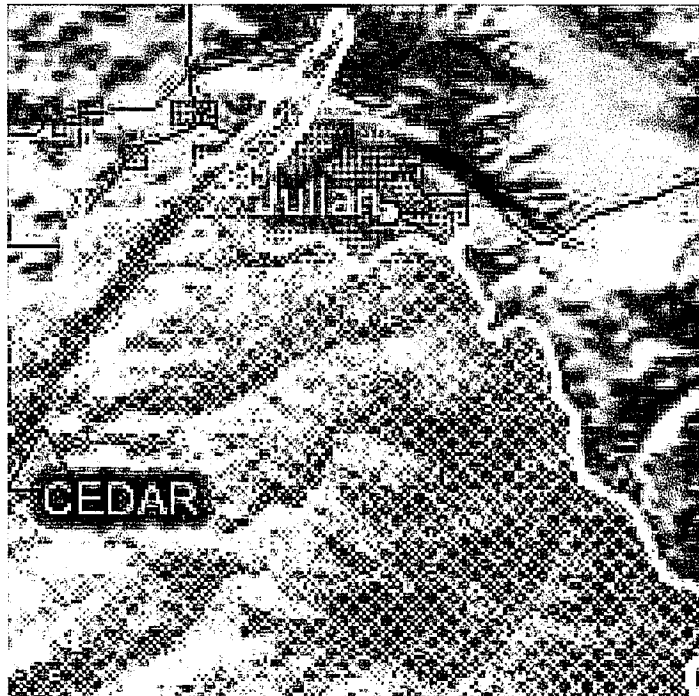
Below are the latest wildfires that have affected the Julian area:

July 2002: The Pines Fire (Vulcan Mountain and Julian area) burned approximately 61,700 acres, destroyed 37 homes, 116 other buildings and 165 vehicles in and around Julian. Two fire engines were destroyed. The fire was started when a National Guard helicopter hit a power line.

October 2003; The Cedar Fire burned approximately 280,000 acres, destroyed 2,232 residence, 22 commercial properties, 566 outbuildings, 148 vehicles, 14 fatalities and over 104 firefighter injuries in the San Diego County area. The town narrowly escaped destruction in the 2003 Cedar Fire, which destroyed much of the surrounding area.

September 2005; The Vulcan Mountain fire burned approximately 300 to 500 acres. The fire burned an area between Farmer Road and Wynola Road that was not burned by the October 2003 Cedar Fire which had formed a natural fire break.

Although the Cedar and Pines Fire have burned much of the surrounding areas, the internal highly populated areas of Julian have not burned and a fire in any of those areas could cause major damage and destruction to homes and property if local residents do not take the proper precautions of clearing combustible materials away from their homes and outbuildings.



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D. Mitigation Strategy

It has been estimated that 1/3 of the Julian Area has not burned. Years of drought and destructive Bark Beetle have wreaked havoc on the health of our forests and open spaces. Foresters estimate that in some communities as much as 80% of pine trees are dead or dying. This means many communities still face extreme fire danger. Our local strategy is based on personal and community property protection.

Any strategy for effectively reducing the loss of personal property in a Wildfire area must initially focus on residential fire resistance. Firebrands are an extremely important source of ignition on and adjacent to a structure. Vegetation management needs to start from the inside out. Vegetation management adjacent to the structure would prevent ignitions from flame exposure; but vegetation management away from the structure would not affect ignition from flame exposure and would not significantly reduce ignitions from firebrands. Based on past wild fire experience roof flammability greatly influences home loss. The most effective step is to assure adequate clearance between structures and flammable vegetation. Such clearance would reduce the potential for flames of a crown fire to reach the structure. It would also reduce the potential for firebrands to ignite the house or set significant fires near the house. Multiple researchers and agencies have identified the necessary precautions that individual landowners and homeowners must take to protect their houses and properties. Recommendations generally apply to the house and adjacent vegetation, and an area up to a 200 foot radius around the home.

These recommendations include:

- Using fire-resistant materials in the building of houses, especially roofs;
- Removing flammable materials such as firewood and woody debris from directly adjacent to the house;
- Thinning dense groups of trees within 200 feet of the house;
- Pruning lower limbs from trees near the house;
- Mowing grasses, raking needle litter, and pruning ornamental shrubs; and
- Cleaning roofs and gutters of dead branches, leaves, and needles.

Fire suppression effectiveness in real-time situations is unpredictable and, therefore, structure survival depends strongly on structure ignitability. Therefore, individual properties and houses need to be treated so that they may withstand fire should the fire department be unable to reach the houses during the fire, and also so that the fire department has increased success in protecting the house if they do reach it. In summary, protecting houses from wildfire requires treating the house itself and the immediately surrounding area. This treatment does not necessarily require the removal of trees, and certainly not all trees, but is more of a cleanup of the area. Proper treatment will provide protection from crown fires, surface fires, and firebrands. Treating the property surrounding a house not only allows firefighters to more easily defend the house, but also increases the chance that the house can survive wildfire on its own.

To save our homes, it is mandatory to clear 50 feet around our homes. This means that all fire fuel, including dead trees within a 30 foot radius needs to be cleared. Out from another 70 to 100 feet, the fire fuel and dead trees need to be removed and the live tree

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limbs cut up 8-10 feet from the ground on mature trees. This creates a defensible space around our homes.

As we recently found out those people living a top a canyon are particularly vulnerable. The canyon walls must be cleared as well. Fire running up a canyon must be stopped before it gets to the top. Slopes present the most hazardous fire potential. The steeper the grades, the faster the fire will creep up the slope. Also fires going up a slope are hotter. As many of us live on steep slopes in the Julian area, it would be a good idea to trim the fire fuel two hundred feet down the slope away from homes.

We should be able to stand at the entrance of our driveway and look towards our home. Can we see a clear path to our house? Is the path wide enough to get a fire truck down the driveway or road? Would a fire chief feel safe enough to risk his truck and his personnel to drive down our driveway or street and would his personnel be able to make a hasty retreat if necessary? If the answers to any of these questions are NO, then we must make this a YES, or at least understand why a fire chief would not put his personnel at risk to save our home. Standing at ground level, we should see the perimeter of the 100 feet clearance under the trees.

To reduce the fuel loading it is necessary for the land owners to continually maintain their defensible space, either by manual or mechanical methods. Controlled burning is not a possible alternative in the Julian area at this time for local residents, burning is limited to pile burning. The Fire Safety and Fuels Reduction project will continue to reduce the number of dead and dying trees. The reduction of hazardous fuel accumulation will be accomplished through voluntary and enforced compliance with the San Diego Consolidated Fire Code. Inspections by CDF have recently started in the Julian Area with enforcement back up by the County of San Diego.

Protection of community property is also vital to a successful plan to defend against destruction from wildfire. This plan is also based on working from the inside out. The most efficient and effective strategy is to reduce the fuel load in the areas directly adjacent to houses and communities. Clearing ingress and egress routes are vital to a community's survival. Firefighting and Emergency personnel need to be able to maneuver through the community and local residents need to be able to evacuate at the proper time. The most appropriate treatment for community protection is a significant fuels reduction in the intensive zone within 20 to 200 meters of the community. A light thinning treatment for 1/2 mile into the forest could allow prescribed fire to be utilized to maintain lowered fire potentials. As the fire protection area extends further from the houses and the edge of the community, the treatment will need to balance other objectives, such as ecosystem health and wildlife habitat.

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E. Action Plan

In cooperation with the Julian Cuyamaca Fire Protection District and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF), the Fire Safe Council of Greater Julian supports and promotes Firewise activities. The Fire Safe Council of Greater Julian is responsible for educating and supporting the local community in ways to reduce structure ignitability through meeting the County of San Diego Building and Fire Code requirements. Implementation of the structure ignitability plan includes local community education and supporting community fuels reduction projects with volunteer workers.

Our partnerships with local, state, federal and citizens allows the Greater Julian Area to work together to reduce hazardous vegetative fuels that could ignite residences and commercial facilities during wild fire conditions. 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 is a key factor to protecting life and property in the mountain community. (Fire Defensible Space and You..., 2005). The Greater Julian Fire Safe Council has the action to educate local citizens on defensible space, types of plants that are drought resistant, different programs that are available to help clear defensible space, and understanding fire behavior. The Greater Julian Fire Safe Council in conjunction with the Julian Cuyamaca Fire Protection District and CDF are working on disseminating the evacuation plan for each community, including how a evacuation will be disseminated, in case of a wild fire.

a. Hazard Reduction Priorities:

- i. Support local residents in the clearing of fuel hazards around structures.**
- ii. Remove all dead and dying, and diseased trees 80 feet on either side of evacuation routes.**
- iii. Remove all dead and dying, and diseased trees in areas such as Whispering Pines, Pine Hills, and Kentwood deemed to have a significant fuel load and that could place the Greater Julian Area at risk to wild fire.**
- iv. Map all roads, road markers, and water sources in the communities.**
- v. Work with local citizens and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to extend the defensible space of the Sunrise Fire Break.**

b. Current/Planned Projects

- i. Weed abatement inspections are being conducted by CDF and forced abatement by the County of San Diego. The Fire Safe Council of Greater Julian is providing support by coordinating volunteers to help citizens who are in violation but cannot help**

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themselves and by providing for sale and delivery emergency approved address signs.


- ii. The Greater Julian Fire Safe Council has been provided a grant to develop a Fire Safe educational display for the community.
- iii. BLM is in the process of finishing the Sunrise Fuel Break.
- iv. The Greater Julian Fire Safe Council is working on brush management projects, whereby fuel loads are being reduced in each of the communities.
- v. The Greater Julian Fire Safe Council is working with the Julian Cuyamaca Fire Protection District and CDF to identify streets that require county street sign and a grant request is being written to support purchasing and installing the signs by the County of San Diego.

F. Core Signature Approval

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan developed for the Greater Julian Area:

- o Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties and federal land management agencies in the vicinity of the Greater Julian Area have been consulted.
- o This plan identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends types and methods of treatment that will protect the Greater Julian Area.
- o 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:

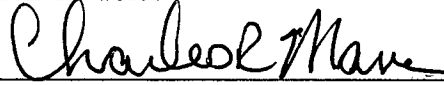


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