

2026



Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Descanso 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 Descanso CWPP, which was developed collaboratively by citizens, and federal, state and local management agencies, are to:

- Align with the San Diego region'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.



Note: 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.” Any actual project activities undertaken that meet this definition of project activity and are undertaken by the CWPP participants or agencies listed shall meet with local, state, and federal environmental compliance requirements.

The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County produced this report in partnership with the San Diego County Fire Safe Council which is comprised of a 15-member board of directors consisting of leading representatives from federal, state, and local agencies and stakeholders throughout San Diego County. Funding is provided by the California Fire Safe Council through the 2022 CAL FIRE County Coordinator Program. In accordance with the federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

01

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.

I. OVERVIEW

Descanso Overview

Descanso is a small rural mountain community that is located approximately 40 miles east of downtown San Diego at an ASL elevation between 3450 and 3700 feet located in the foothills of the Cuyamaca and Laguna Mountain ranges just off of Interstate 8 on the north side at the southern foot of Cuyamaca Rancho State Park [CRSP]. Access to CRSP as a hiking route is via a small parking lot off of Viejas Blvd., whereas the rest of CRSP along with Julian and other mountain destinations can be accessed via automobile northward up State Route 79 from the eastern edge of town center. The communities of Guatay and Pine Valley are to the east along Old Highway 80, while the sister community of Sherilton Valley is to the north by way of Boulder Creek Road.

The town of approximately 30 square miles and over 1,400 residents is surrounded by the Cleveland National Forest, and is approximately 5 miles due south of Cuyamaca Peak. The community is bordered on the south by State Route 79 [Old Highway 80]. The Sweetwater River and Samagatuma Creek flow through the geographic center of the community approximately alongside

Riverside Drive and Viejas Blvd. The Samagatuma backs up against a spillway forming a very small reservoir before feeding into the Sweetwater. This reservoir can and often has acted as a resource for firefighting helicopter fills. The residential core are on lots of nominally 0.1- 2.5 acres each. These are supported by a public water district operated under contract by the state-sponsored Specialized Utilities Service Program (SUSP) and has approximately 315 residential and commercial customers supplied by 2 wells, one primary and one backup, with 800,000 gallons of gravity-fed storage capacity. Outlying homes are supported by independent residential wells. All homes are custom-built [no tracts] and are on their own independent septic systems for sewage management. There is no residential natural gas supply; most homes that are not all-electric have their own propane tanks that are serviced by any number of out-of-town private supply companies. Many of these private properties border on the Cleveland National Forest.

This CWPP includes the smaller communities of Sherilton Valley just north of Descanso off of

Boulder Creek Road, and Los Terrinitos off of Old Highway 80 between the town center and I-8. Although Los Terrinitos technically has an Alpine Zip Code, it is essentially part of the Descanso community, and the residents identify as such.

Descanso is the gateway to the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park via the Merigan Fire Road and Trailhead which is used by many locals as well as visitors. The USFS has an ongoing fuel management program in and around the community, along with planned future projects sponsored by CAL FIRE in the area. Also, Descanso has retained a formalized emergency preparedness group (DEPG) since 2004 consisting of concerned community members that was subsequently expanded to include Fire Safe Council affiliation for public education in fire-wise concepts, defensible space, and generalized advance disaster planning.

We are a rural community that cherishes our peaceful and quiet environment without sidewalks, streetlights, and stop lights, and our dark night skies. As a community we respect and strive to preserve our existing undeveloped lands as natural habitat and open space areas; not only for ourselves, but for all the residents of San Diego County. We are a community that believes in and lives by community spirit, and we promote a "know your neighbors" environment.

Population: 1452

II. LANDSCAPE

Topography

Generally, the Descanso area comprises a large valley with the Sweetwater and Samagatuma Rivers sometimes flowing through the central meadow (when not in drought conditions), with a

surrounding mixture of smaller hills and meadows. Vegetation ranges from oak woodlands in the valley to mixed chaparral on the mountain slopes. This natural setting is home to annual and perennial grasses. Oat hay farming is popular for some of the local ranches. Wildlife populations include deer, turkey, opossum, raccoon, squirrel, fox, migratory birds, coyote, bobcat, and mountain lion.

Descanso is normally a four-season area that can experience approximately double the amount of rainfall as that found within the city (represented by measurements at Lindberg Field Airport), along with frost, ice, and snow. This level of moisture replenishment results in significant growth of trees, brush, and grass on a yearly basis. Three-digit summer temperatures with low humidity results in significant wildfire risk, as opposed to the infrequent presence of freezing winter temperatures often down into the 'teens. Most significantly, severe Santa Ana winds that have been known to meet category 1 hurricane-force levels of 75 miles per hour offer a highly dangerous combination of elements that significantly increase the potential risk for spread of wildfire.

Fire History

Descanso is federally designated as a community-at-risk for wildfires and has been subjected to numerous large fires over the years due to the hot/dry Santa Ana wind conditions that the fall season brings.

The most recent fire was the Cedar Fire in October of 2003 which mandated evacuation of all residents. While this fire did not overtake central Descanso, many outlier homes were burned. The Descanso Community Water District with its storage tanks was invaluable for replenishment of water supplies

expended by various agency resources in the local suppression of ember-driven starts.

Prior to that, the Laguna Fire of 1970 also skirted the borders of the town.

Descanso has never been completely overtaken by wildland fire, so far.

Key Infrastructure

The virtual center of town is Perkins Store which provides groceries, sundry items, and both gas and diesel fuels for the community. Adjacent to Perkins is the USPS office for the 91916 Zip Code, and a Mexican restaurant [Veronica's].

The historic [built in 1898] Descanso Town Hall is just up Viejas Grade from Perkins and is a central meeting place for community activities including monthly pancake breakfasts, a yearly Fair [coincident with a Parade], parties, weddings, celebrations, school activities, polling place, and meetings, including yoga, line dance, and cooking classes. It is a 501[c]3 non-profit entity, however fundraising events are held for building maintenance.

The community supports two churches, Our Lady Of Light [Catholic] and Chapel Of The Hills [UMC]. The Our Lady Of Light Catholic church sponsors a Labor Day BBQ that is very well attended by residents all over the county. Chapel Of The Hills UMC is the home of the Country Treehouse Preschool which has provided state-licensed child care and instruction for over 50 years.

Descanso Elementary School is adjacent to the CRSP Merigan Trail Head south parking lot and co-located with that is the Descanso branch of the San Diego County Public Library system.

Descanso is also home to the USFS Laguna Hot Shots and is co-located with the USFS fire station just up from the Perkins town center. Almost directly across Viejas Grade from Perkins is a San Diego County Roads maintenance yard that has transitioned into the San Diego County Fire Descanso Station 45. This facility also hosts storage of an American Red Cross Mass Care Center shelter support trailer that is available for use anywhere in eastern San Diego County.

Camp Oliver is a non-profit retreat center and residential summer camp for underprivileged children that is owned and operated by the Sisters of Social Service. It is currently inactive.

There is a major SDG&E electric utility substation dealing with both high-voltage transmission and low-voltage distribution located near the intersection of Oak Grove and Boulder Creek Roads that is a major area resource for electric utility. An AT&T switching center for landline telephones and cable-based Internet sourcing is located adjacent to and on the property of the Our Lady of Light [OLL] Catholic Church. These centers typically have battery backup for a minimum of 72 hours of functional use for such copper wireline services in the event of utility power outages.

Various terrestrial hubs for a local wireless system carrying Internet service (Mountain Mesh) are spread throughout the community, the head-end for which is located near the Viejas Blvd and SR79 intersection. It is supplied at this location by AT&T fiber derived from the OLL church switching center. Additionally, a major distribution hub for the LAN signals emanates from a small hill east of the intersection of the Sweetwater and Samagatuma Rivers. This is an isolated site not supplied by utility power and is therefore a solar-powered installation

with battery storage. Nearly all of the sub-hubs within the system located at residential houses also have battery backup.

One critical point to note is that several of these infrastructure locations were selected and implemented by SDG&E to receive electric utility distribution by undergrounding. These sites are the entire Perkins complex including the gas and diesel pumps, Descanso Fire Station #45, the Town Hall, Descanso Elementary School, the DCWD primary Well #5, and the Descanso branch of the county library system. Additionally, the library was provided with a backup generator should grid power disappear. As such, these facilities represent an invaluable means for community support during power outages when residential electric power might be shut down by PSPSs [Public Service Power Shutoffs] in times of high wind events, or any other unforeseen interruption of distribution service as long as transmission grid power remains. Retention of power at Perkins is particularly important because it represents a community resource for both refrigerated and non-refrigerated supplies along with gas and diesel fuel which is also valuable for first responders in the area. The other sites are nearly as important for potential Temporary Refuge Area [TRA] purposes, unofficial overnight sheltering, and, in the case of the library facility and/or parking lot, even an Incident Command Post [ICP]. CalFire Descanso Station 45 also includes a county automotive fuel supply for both gas and diesel.

Maps

Using technology and local expertise, the sponsors of this CWPP have included a series of maps depicting the site and situation of the Descanso community (Appendix C). The following maps are visual aids from which the Descanso Fire Safe

Council and community members can assess and make recommendations.

1. Area Communities Map
2. Fire Hazard Severity map
3. Fire History (1995-Present)
4. Evacuation Map
5. Know Your Zone Map

III. FIREFIGHTING RESOURCES

San Diego County Fire/CAL FIRE provides primary response to all fire, medical, and associated residential and vehicular emergencies within the community of Descanso and its surrounding areas. Staffing for Station 45 is provided under contract by CAL FIRE personnel. Assistance is provided for these emergencies by the USFS and other nearby CAL FIRE resources stations, including the fire department at the Viejas Indian Reservation, utilizing the "closest resource" concept.

Responsibility for wildland fire protection within the Descanso area is sharply defined and shared by CAL FIRE in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and by the US Forest Service in the Federal Responsibility Area (FRA). Both agencies' dispatched responses are based on jurisdictional boundaries and on the closest-resource concept as defined by aid agreements. San Diego County Fire collaborates with both agencies to support wildland fire operations.

The Descanso Community Water District has hydrants and standpipes spread throughout the central municipal area that are gravity-fed via combinations of 2-, 4-, and 6-inch diameter pipeline from an 800,000-gallon storage capability and replenished by both a primary well [designated #5] and a backup [designated #6], both commercial. The primary well [River Road] is fed via the

underground utility, but it also has an onsite power utility transfer switch with a standardized connector enabling provision of emergency power via a portable generator should SDG&E utility power fail during an incident. The district does have access to a generator locally which can be moved on-site as needed. Otherwise, once the storage capability is depleted, there will be no additional water available for either residents or agencies responding to area incidents beyond what is already in their possession (on-site residential storage or mobile storage) in the absence of suitable electric generation capability if there is no utility grid power.

Summary:

Fire protection for the Descanso CWPP region is provided by the San Diego County Fire Protection District in cooperation with CAL FIRE. They provide the primary dedicated fire protection and EMS services. One local San Diego County Fire station is staffed full time.

The area includes intermixed State and Federal Responsibility Areas. CAL FIRE is the primary state wildland provider, and the US Forest Service is the primary federal properties provider in the area as this community is within the Cleveland National Forest.

- CAL FIRE/San Diego County Fire Station 45, Descanso 24592 Viejas Grade Road, Descanso
- U.S. Forest Service Descanso Fire Station 24321 Viejas Grade Road, Descanso

Mutual Aid Resources include Viejas Fire and Alpine Fire, 10 miles West.

02

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.

I. KEY PARTNERS

Descanso 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	ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES
Descanso Emergency Planning Group / Fire Safe Council	Educates local public on structure hardening, fire safety, fire news, local cleanups and chipping
Sherilton Valley Fire Safe Council	Collaboration with the Descanso Emergency Preparedness Group and Fire Safe Council regarding Sherilton Valley wildfire prevention projects and education.
San Diego County Fire	Primary development of CWPP decision-making, community risk and value-assessment, development of community protection priorities, and establishment of fuels treatment project areas and methods.

<p>California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)</p>	<p>Facilitation of planning process and approval of CWPP process and minimum standards. Provides input and expertise on forestry, fire, fuels, and fire-wise concepts. Assists in the development of community protection projects and priorities. CAL FIRE personnel now staff Descanso Station 45 under contract to the San Diego County Fire</p>
<p>US Forest Service</p>	<p>Provides input and expertise on forestry, fire, fuels, and fire-wise concepts. Assists in the development of community protection projects and priorities. Participation in CWPP Review Committee.</p>



03

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.

I. PRIORITIES

The Descanso Emergency Preparedness Group & Fire Safe Council seeks to provide an avenue for community members to have two-way input/feedback with the overall municipal structure for fire prevention and mitigation through education and training, preparation, grant application, and communication. We are a 501(C)3 non-profit organization comprised of volunteers within the community of Descanso.

The DEPG/FSC holds regularly scheduled quarterly meetings with public participation during which new developments and issues are discussed, along with input from local agencies that are in attendance.

II. COMPLETED & ONGOING PROJECTS

- Continue to provide fire/evacuation information on our social media platforms, Descanso Fire Safe Council meetings and local outreach opportunities.
- Continue to provide information on the Home Assessment Program and Defensible Space Assistance Program on various social media platforms, Descanso Fire Safe Council meetings, and local outreach opportunities.



- Continue to provide information on Smoke Alarms for Seniors Program from the Burn Institute on various social media platforms, Descanso fire safe meetings and local outreach opportunities.
- The Sunrise Power Link Grant Program has regularly been made available for funding to help with residential defensible space and structure hardening. For defensible space, this kind of program can be very important for those not in a position to physically do the work themselves, and for those not in a position to pay for having it done. The DEPG/FSC continues to educate our residents on structure hardening, defensible space and fire safety. As part of this effort, we promote the SDG&E Sunrise Power Link Mitigation Grants Program.
- The Descanso Fire Safe Council plans to host and promote the Wildland Urban Interface Training and others such as First Aid and CPR training and certification.
- Participation in yearly community events at fairs and BBQs to provide educational information on structural hardening, defensible space, and wildfire preparedness.
- The DEPG/FSC has established a website with downloadable brochures and other resources to aid in educational efforts beyond attendance at community events [<https://descansofiresafe.org>]. The website also hosts links to other resources (FEMA, CERT, 1st aid and CPR, TV news stations, weather services,

mountaintop webcams for tracking of fire behavior, large and small animal evacuation support, etc.) A portion of this information is also provided to the Descanso Fire Safe Council Facebook page.

- SDG&E [specifically the Sunrise Power Link Grant personnel] gave a presentation regarding Fire-Wise gardening techniques as part of the Descanso Garden Club.

III. FUTURE PROJECTS

- Descanso Fire Safe Council strives to continue to offer workshops and seminars on various wildfire mitigation and preparedness topics.
- Hold monthly Descanso Fire Safe Council meetings to include community members to gather feedback/concerns and disseminate information.
- Descanso Fire Safe Council plans to train its volunteers to perform educational home assessments in order offer community members a free service where they can find out directly from qualified personnel what they need to do to improve their wildfire preparedness, structural hardening, and defensible space.

04

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.

I. PRIORITIES

Structural hardening will remain a subject of DEPG/FSC education efforts. Class A non-combustible roofing upgrades, dual-pane window retrofit and/or window shutters, ember-resistant roof and gable vent installation, decking and fence improvements, sprinklers, boxing-in of eaves, and emphasis on location/storage of both permanent and portable propane tanks away from structures are just a few of the techniques that are being recommended. Even actions as simple as keeping windows closed during potential fire events can make a difference. The availability of spray-on gel coatings as a fire-retardant for eaves and siding will be encouraged for use in conjunction with the retrofits listed above.

II. COMPLETED & ONGOING PROJECTS

Many cabins and homes in Descanso were built before the current fire building codes, including attic ventilation, roofing materials and window design.

Descanso Fire Safe Council strongly encourages eligible homeowners to apply for a Sunrise

Powerlink Fire Mitigation (SPFMG) annual grant to assist with retrofitting and home hardening.

III. FUTURE PROJECTS

In the future, Descanso Fire Safe Council plans to apply for grant funding for larger-scale community protection projects [non-residential] within Descanso.



05

Defensible Space

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

I. PRIORITIES

Defensible space for residences remains the most important factor for reducing structural ignitability. This includes removal of trash and debris from any portion of residential property, stacking of firewood more than 50 feet away from homes, and introduction of fire-retardant landscaping immediately adjacent structures, and meeting current fire code requirements of zone 0 [zero to 5'], zone 1 [5' to 50'], and zone 2 [50' to 100']. The DEPG/FSC will continue to focus on education regarding these issues throughout the year via community events and our website [<https://descansofireSAFE.org>].

The partnership that exists between the listed organizations and citizens in this CWPP allows the community of Descanso 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 is a key factor to protecting lives and properties.

II. COMPLETED & ONGOING PROJECTS

SDG&E Sunrise Power Link Grant Program has provided independently funded clearing and chipping programs to aid in residential defensible space projects, including E-waste and debris removal.

We will continue to advertise available programs from the Fire Safe Council of San Diego County such as the Home Assessment Program, Defensible Space Assistance Program, and the Community Chipping Program.

III. FUTURE PROJECTS

In the future, Descanso Fire Safe Council plans to apply for grant funding for larger-scale community protection projects [non-residential] within Descanso.

06

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.

I. COMPLETED & ONGOING PROJECTS

U.S. Forest Service community fuel breaks are present in Alpine, Carveacre, Lake Morena, Pine Valley, and Mount Laguna. These efforts are continually rotating, and maintenance is ongoing.

Cuyamaca Rancho State Park (CRSP) will continue their work to maintain fire roads so that they are clear for CAL FIRE equipment. They are also working with CAL FIRE to create and maintain defensible space within the State Park.

Additionally, CRSP is continuing maintenance work on the Merigan Fire Road that terminates within Descanso at Riverside Drive.

II. PRIORITIES

Ongoing comprehensive assessment of existing hazards, values at risk, and identification of pertinent actions to address identified hazards will be performed. Fuel management projects whereby fuel loads are reduced along selected ingress/egress routes and in proximity to homes and other critical infrastructures in the community.

III. FUTURE PROJECTS

Landscape Leveling: Weed abatement inspections are normally conducted by either CAL FIRE or USFS and forced abatements of non-compliant properties are dealt with by the County of San Diego. CAL FIRE and USFS are also responsible for burn permits locally. The County is responsible for weed abatement alongside county roads within their normal easements.

Fuel Breaks: Existing breaks will continue to be maintained. Future fuel breaks identified by the communities will be completed to work effectively with fuel break projects that are accomplished by USFS and CAL FIRE.

Per the USFS, there is a plan to create a new fuel break in the Descanso area. The current proposal we are going to push forward is from I-8 to Wildwood Glen/ Viejas reservation/Viejas Grade Rd. to Boulder Creek. This is a proposed project and still has to go through the NEPA process and be reviewed by Resource Specialists which takes time. The capacity of this staff is limited and they are currently working on several other large projects across the Cleveland National Forest.

Descanso Community Defense is the next priority project for the district as staff wraps up work on their current projects.

Descanso is unique to other rural communities in the Forest because the Forest boundary (where we are permitted to do projects) doesn't border a lot of private residences, so we plan to collaborate with CalFire, they are responsible for fire protection of the private land in Descanso. They also have ownership of the land on the East side of Descanso from Mizpah area to Hwy. 79.

Roadside Vegetation Clearance: The Resource Conservation District of Greater San Diego County recently received a grant from SDG&E to clear up to 20 feet on certain roads and private driveways.

Improvement of ingress/egress roads both to Sherilton Valley via Boulder Creek Road to allow passage of multiple private vehicles and/or emergency response vehicle access to the community at the same time, and within the smaller access roads inside the communities of Sherilton Valley and Descanso for residential egress purposes. These roads specifically include Echo Hills Road [Sherilton], and both Sundance Lane and Burrell Way [Descanso]. These roads have been prioritized for attention within Descanso, while other roads have been identified as needing assessment.

07

Evacuation Planning

Identifying key corridors in and out of a community – as well as temporary 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 Descanso's key ingress and egress, as well as designated evacuation corridors, Temporary Refuge Areas, completed projects, priorities and future projects.

I. OVERVIEW OF INGRESS AND EGRESS

Descanso is situated along the southern end of the Highway 79 corridor, one of East County's primary evacuation routes for the residents of Julian. This route intersects with Old Highway 80 that goes east to Guatay and Pine Valley and west to Interstate 8. Only two other graded dirt roads serve as potential evacuation routes from the metro area, that being Boulder Creek proceeding northward past the community of Sherilton Valley towards the Cuyamaca Lake area and ultimately to Julian through substantially remote forest land, and Viejas Grade which terminates at the northward rear of the Viejas Indian Reservation. These roads can represent choke points for outlying residents with minimal opportunities for turnaround.

Riverside Drive south to SR79 [Old Highway 80] south/west to I-8 east or west is a primary route and would be the ideal option if conditions allow.

SR79 south to SR79 [Old Highway 80] north/east through Guatay and Pine Valley to I-8 east or west serves as an alternate option.

An emergency route is truly a last resort and should only be used if conditions allow.

One emergency route is Viejas Grade Rd north and west thru the Viejas Indian Reservation to Willows Road to I-8 east or west.

Another emergency route is Boulder Creek Road north past Sherilton Valley to Julian or Engineer Road to Lake Cuyamaca. This route travels through open forest land and would also be an evacuation route for Sherilton Valley, creating potential congestion.

Additionally, Highway 79 north up through Cuyamaca Rancho State Park to Lake Cuyamaca and/or Julian serves as an emergency route. This route is heavily wooded and could be very risky depending on the location of a fire.

There are many other winding roads and horse trails within and surrounding this community. Two bridges span drainages. One is on Riverside Drive at the southern entrance to Descanso and is a narrow, curved bridge subject to two-way congestion or possibly risk from a flooding event. The other is mid-town near the intersection of River Road and Viejas Blvd near Descanso Elementary School. As such, these two bridges may also represent choke points during potential evacuations. Any issue with either or both could substantially impact ingress/egress by fire personnel or residents.

II. DESIGNATED EVACUATION CORRIDORS

Access and egress is via 4 total routes: Riverside Drive from I-8 to the south [paved], Viejas Grade coming up from behind the Viejas Indian Reservation from the west [dirt], Old Highway 80 from the east via Pine Valley and Guatay [paved], and SR 79 via CRSP [paved]. A fifth route is Boulder Creek Road which proceeds northward passing by Engineer Road coming in from the town of Lake Cuyamaca and terminating in the Pine Hills region near Julian. This road would be the singular road to be used by the residents of Sherilton Valley for egress, and not necessarily by Descanso residents to exit north. Other roads within the community are mostly county-maintained with the exception of longer driveways necessary to access private residences.

Descanso PACE Plan:

PRIMARY Highway 79 (south of Viejas Blvd), I-8, Old Highway 80 (Hwy 79 to Sunrise Hwy)

ALTERNATE Riverside Dr, Viejas Blvd, Oak Grove Dr

CONTINGENCY None

EMERGENCY Viejas Grade Rd (to Viejas Indian Reservation), Boulder Creek Road, Highway 79

III. TEMPORARY REFUGE AREAS

A large dirt parking lot area off River Road between Descanso Elementary School and the Descanso Branch County Library (County Park location) can be used as a temporary refuge area for residents.

IV. PRIORITIES

N/A

V. COMPLETED & ONGOING PROJECTS

Community meetings can and will be held to formally identify evacuation routes for all residents. These should be presented by representatives of SDSO and/or CHP since they would be responsible for traffic control during situations mandating evacuation.

DPW should also be involved in these meetings to ensure regular maintenance is performed, particularly well in advance of typical fall Santa Ana wind events.

VI. FUTURE PROJECTS

N/A

08

Other Mitigation & Preparedness

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

I. PRIORITIES

N/A

II. COMPLETED AND/OR ONGOING PROJECTS

Reflective Address Signage: The DEPG/FSC will continue to provide reasonably priced compliant address signs for reference by first responders consistent with standards for overall sign size, green/blue colors representative of on-site water storage capability, and reflective number size. This effort represents a valuable fund-raising element for the group to further enable other education and training activities.

We plan to continue to offer these reflective property address signs with color-coding (blue background for 5000-gallon minimum water storage with approved interface for fire vehicles, green for none) This will help to ease the burden of navigation by fire personnel within the community when emergency services are needed at homes and/or businesses. DEPG/FSC provides

these signs for nominal cost using prefabricated blanks and stick-on lettering, provides hardcopy ordering blanks, and there is a downloadable softcopy version available on the website. Raw materials for the signs are stocked by DEPG/FSC members, and turnaround time is tied more to timing of delivery than actual production of the sign.

Backup Power Generator for Commercial Wells:

The DEPG/FSC will continue to work in collaboration with the Descanso Community Water District and it's governing board in efforts to secure a permanent and dedicated installation of backup power generation for commercial wells used to replenish water storage in the event of grid failure for the district via grants on an as-available basis through statewide FSC-based sources and/or independent private sources.

III. FUTURE PROJECTS

In principle, an important goal is to become re-certified as a Fire Wise Community for any

potential future advantage relative to home insurance purposes. The availability of this CWPP as an updated, signed off, and released document should be a positive influence to that end.

Information on smoke detector programs, as they become available, will be disseminated throughout the community.

Meetings can also be held for instruction on selection, application, and installation of residential backup generators. SDG&E would be the most likely participant/driver for this training. Household waste collection events will be coordinated that will provide centrally located roll-off containers for disposition of mattresses, tires, and E-waste.

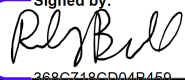
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Signatures

This plan must be approved by the following key parties: the local author (examples include Fire Safe Council President, Firewise Community, Tribal National, HOA, etc.), the chief of the primary responding fire agency, the CAL FIRE Unit Chief, and chair of the CWPP review committee. This section includes these signoffs.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan, as developed for as developed for Descanso Fire Safe Council:

- 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.


Signed by:

 X _____
 268C718CD04B450...
 President of the
 Fire Safe Council Submitting this CWPP

Signed by:

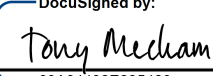
 X _____
 473D1B252BDE4C6...
 Participating Fire Agency representative
 (State, Local, or Tribal)

San Diego County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Review Committee:

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

Signed by:

 X _____
 05EBDCB2A0B0460...
 Don Butz, President
 Fire Safe Council of San Diego County

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.

DocuSigned by:

 X _____
 69A84432E225429...
 Tony Mecham, Unit Chief
 CAL FIRE San Diego Unit

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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 community of Descanso, through a series of community meetings. The Descanso FSC members who contributed to the document include the following:

Community Representatives

- Carole Dearman, FSC Chair
- Elena Vega, FSC Secretary
- Mollie Jacques, FSC Treasurer
- Kerrie Forrest, FSC Member At Large
- Riley Anderson, FSC Member At Large
- Dave Somes, FSC Member At Large

Agency Representatives

- Bonnie Burchill, Sunrise Powerlink
Mitigation Grants Program
- Thomas Shoots, CAL FIRE/San Diego
County Fire
- Sally Goodrich, US Forest Service

Meetings Dates

- February 27, 2024
- March 5, 2024
- March 26, 2024

**APPENDIX B.
MAPS**

Figure 1 Area Communities Map

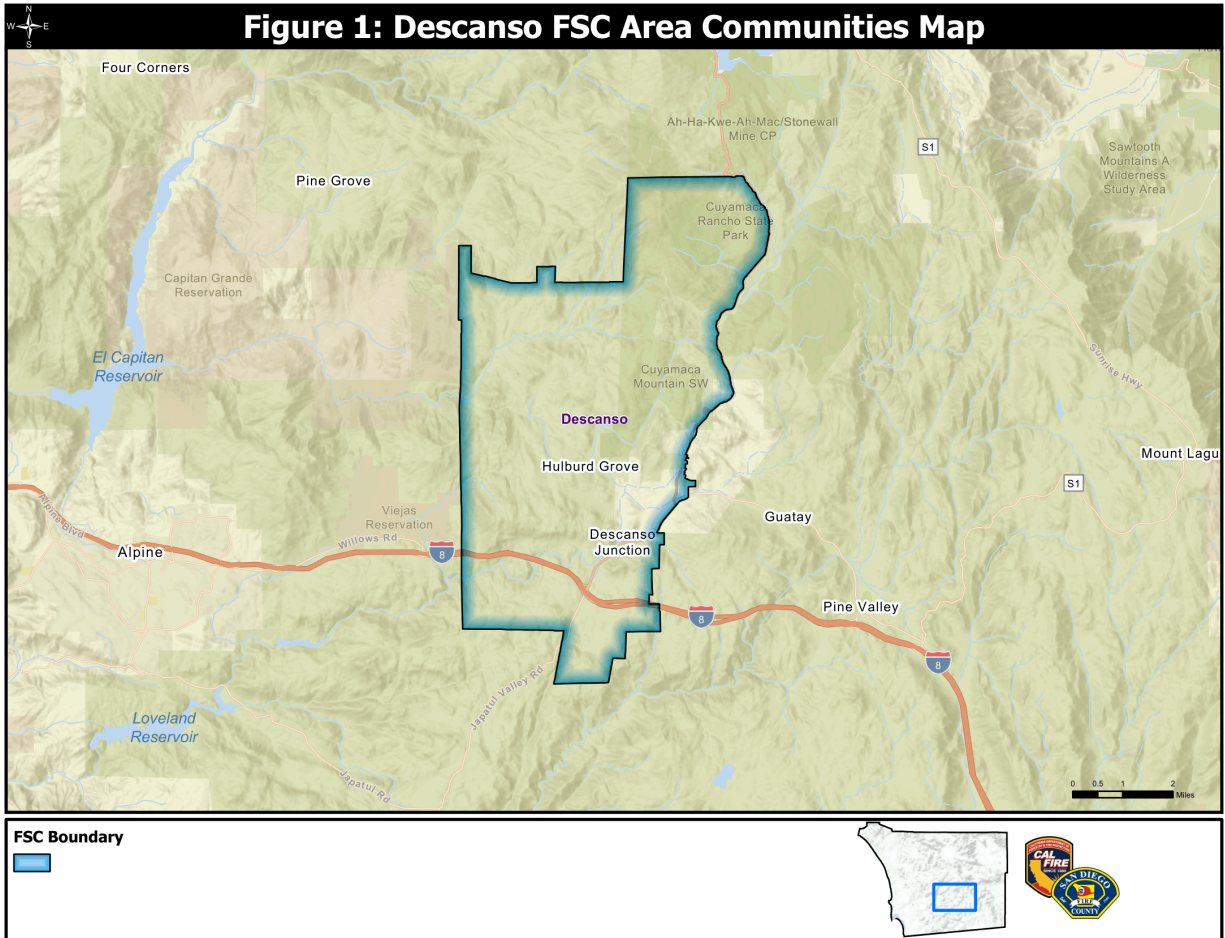


Figure 2 Fire Hazard Severity Map

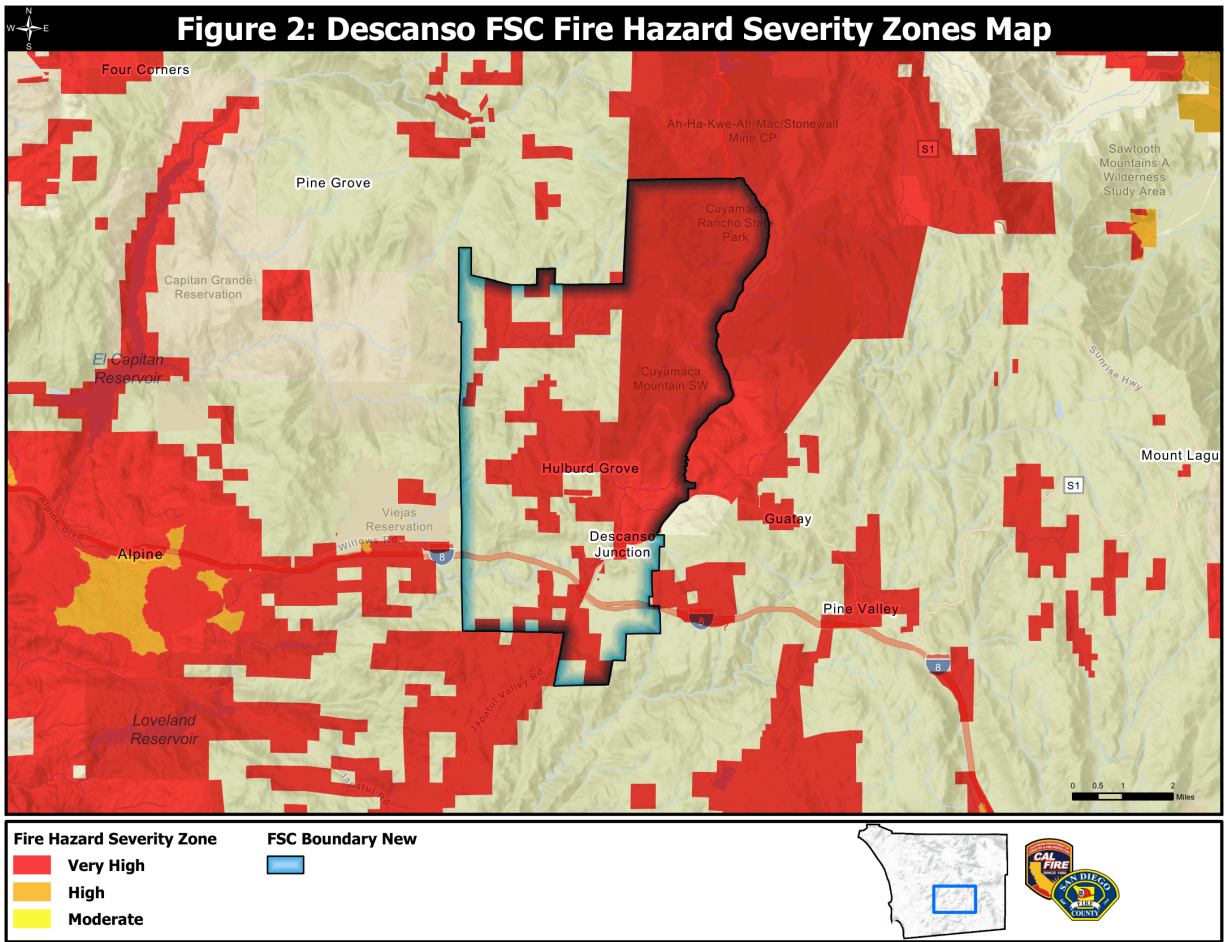


Figure 4 Evacuation Map

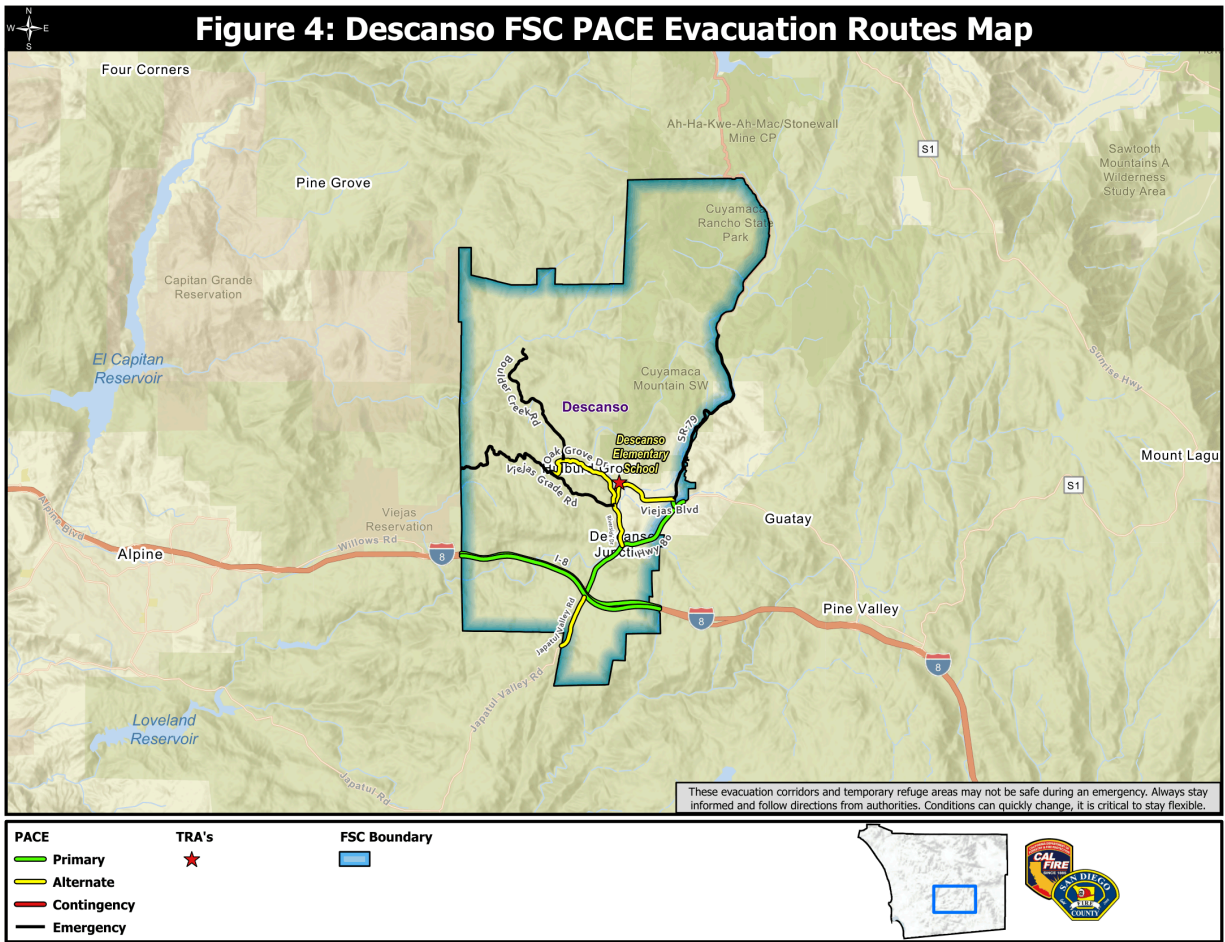


Figure 5 Know Your Zone Map

