

News Release

Subject: New Wildfire and Evacuation Planning Documents

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Sheriff Matt Kendall and the County Fire Chiefs Association President Chief Sue Carberry are pleased to announce the development of three new planning documents that will significantly improve the wildfire safety of Mendocino County residents. At the request of the County and funded with a Caltrans grant, the Mendocino Council of Governments hired Category Five Professional Consultants, Inc. (CFPC) to develop a Public Outreach Plan, a Fire Vulnerability Assessment, and a Wildfire Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan. At the onset of the project, a Technical Advisory Group was formed comprised of technical experts and community stakeholders including local fire chiefs, law enforcement, government and tribal representatives, and the Mendocino County Fire Safe Council. Planning that occurred is as follows:

Public Outreach Plan (POP)

The goal of this outreach initiative was to understand the community's concerns regarding a wildfire threat and an emergency evacuation, increase the community's awareness of the wildfire risk, encourage residents to take steps to protect themselves, their family and property, and improve their knowledge of evacuation planning. In November of 2019, CFPC conducted a widely advertised online survey to solicit public concern regarding the local fire threat and evacuation fears and to gain insight into the diverse needs of various communities and groups residing within the County.

Fire Vulnerability Assessment (FVA)

A Fire Vulnerability Assessment was developed for Mendocino County which identifies County areas and populations that are most vulnerable to wildfire and provides recommendations on how to best improve the County's existing strategies and practices. The ultimate goal of the FVA is to prevent loss of life, minimize property damage caused by wildfires, and reduce recovery effort spending.

Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan

The Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan describes the strategies for managing evacuations which exceed the day-to-day capabilities of the various public safety agencies in Mendocino County. This plan has the ancillary benefit of being applicable to non-fire related threats as well. The planners developed 35 preparedness recommendations and an action plan that identifies the responsible agencies, funding sources and target completion dates. These completed plans bring Mendocino County significantly closer to reducing their wildfire risk to residents and property while also providing clear and concise guidelines for first responder agencies when an emergency evacuation is needed.

Public Invited

On Monday, June 22nd at 10 am, the public is invited to join a Zoom Public Forum where CFPC in conjunction with MCOG and local public safety officials will share the planning that has occurred, in addition to wildfire and emergency evacuation preparedness and safety tips. Please visit the Mendocino Council of Governments website, www.mendocinocog.org, for participation options, or use the following link with Password 924390:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87209580733?pwd=eWJ4OVZCbGcrS1I4SnZ2M3F0VHovQT09>