

APPENDIX 9 – LONG TERM

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9. FACILITATING FIRE SAFETY IN THE LONG TERM

9.1. MONITORING

9.1.1. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PROJECTS

The Amador Fire Safe Council hosts an annual meeting of all public and private entities that manage fuels to improve forest health and reduce damage from wildfire. This meeting is intended to coordinate efforts of all agencies and private industrial land managers. While this meeting has a countywide focus, projects relating to this plan are also discussed.

With regard to landscape scale projects designed to reduce damage from wildfires that are not within the planning unit but have a direct affect on wildfires threatening values within the planning unit, these projects are ongoing as part of an overarching fuel modification scheme (Cooperative Fire Defense System, see Plate 17-Landscape Scale Fire Defenses).

The CAL FIRE is in the process of designing a Geographical Information System (GIS) database that will catalog all proposed fuel reduction projects in this and future updates to the Amador County Community Wildland Protection Plan (2005). This database will incorporate existing projects regardless of location or responsible agency(s).

The design and function of this database is currently being developed. Some minimum criteria will be required. These are:

1. The ability to retrieve maps of projects on demand by type, agency, year, treatment, etc
2. Identified safety islands along with size and potential capacity
3. Color coded maps that estimate fuels projects current effectiveness against wildfire
4. Polygons representing identified fire defense systems
5. Projects within fire defense systems. Fire defense systems are differentiated from projects in that projects are used to create a system (i.e. Antelope Fuelbreak is a fire defense system while projects are the building blocks of a system.) This can be used to determine the completeness of a fire defense system and to identify key parcels needed to complete the system.
6. Include a priority field to track progress against priorities established by the fire plan
7. Extract on demand completed projects that meet a selected maintenance interval

Development of this database is not a product of this planning effort. It is a longstanding project of the council and will be developed and tested by the council.

9.1.2. PROJECT-SPECIFIC ECOLOGICAL MONITORING

All landscape scale projects require an environmental study. Depending on location and funding source, this study can be either a California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document or National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) document. These environmental studies identify potential negative impacts of specific projects and require measures to mitigate these impacts.

The Amador Fire Safe Council has developed a set of standards for all its fuel reduction projects. These standards have two broad goals. The first goal is to achieve the desired fire safety result. Second goal is to improve forest health. Landowners participating in council funded projects must sign an agreement to allow the fuel reduction work to be done in a manner that will meet these two goals.

Almost without exception, agencies providing grant funding for council project require both written and photographic progress reports. This information will be included in the database described in section 9.1.1.

9.2 PROJECT MAINTENANCE

Amador Fire Safe Council's maintenance committee periodically conducts on site inspections of completed projects. Where re-growth of vegetation is sufficient to render the fire protection and forest health benefits of the project ineffective, the council applies for grant funding to rehabilitate the project. Even when grant funding is not available, CAL FIRE may provide resources to maintain fuel reduction projects where the project improves public safety (public good criterion).

9.3 UPDATING THIS PLAN

No plan is ever permanent. This plan was written in 2010 based on current conditions and best available information. The field of fire safety is rapidly changing. It is likely that new developments will occur in the coming years. Therefore, it will be important to review this plan at least every five years and update it as needed. Copies of this plan will be available for public review at Amador County libraries, Amador County Office of Emergency Services website www.co.amador.ca.us and on the Amador County Fire Safe Council's website www.amadorfiresafe.org.

Progress on the plan's implementation and other projects affecting the planning unit will be reviewed at least annually at the Upcountry Community Council or similar meeting hosted by the Amador Fire Safe Council. Since not all projects are public agency projects, community

associations and citizens can provide input on progress towards meeting fire safety goals in local neighborhoods at this meeting.

9.4 RESOURCES NEEDED TO SUPPORT ONGOING EFFORTS

The Amador Fire Safe Council is a non-profit corporation that is funded through grants and the 15% administrative fees charged to some grant projects. Originally funded by Federal Title III grants to the County of Amador, this funding source is no longer available for general operating expenses. Currently the council is solely dependent on administrative fees and specific projects such as this plan. The annual operating expenses of the council are \$50,000.

If the council is unable to obtain enough grants on an annual basis to generate its operating expenses it will go out of business. To maintain in business the council needs to generate between \$300,000 and \$500,000 in new grant awards annually. Ideally, these projects need to be spread over eighteen months to allow for two burning seasons and to level out income over multiple fiscal years.