

# **SOUTHERN GILA COUNTY COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN (CWPP)**



**LAST UPDATED:  
11/23/2015**

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## PLAN APPROVAL

The Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 requires that the following entities must mutually agree to the final contents of a CWPP: the applicable local government (i.e., counties or cities); the local fire department(s); and the state entity responsible for forest management. The following entities have approved the 2015 Update to the Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

| Agency                            | Signature | Date |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Arizona State Forestry Department |           |      |
| United States Forest Service      |           |      |
| Globe Fire Department             |           |      |
| Tonto Basin Fire Department       |           |      |
| Tri-City Fire Department          |           |      |
| San Carlos Apache Fire Department |           |      |

***Final Approval by:***

| Agency                                     | Signature | Date |
|--|-----------|------|
| Gila County Office of Emergency Management |           |      |
| Gila County Board of Supervisors           |           |      |



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## SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was originally developed in 2010 in response to the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 for at-risk cities and communities in Southern Gila County, Arizona. The Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 points to increased federal emphasis on reducing wildfire hazards on federal lands and promoting actions to protect Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) communities<sup>1</sup>. HFRA established incentives for communities to develop comprehensive wildfire protection plans in a collaborative, inclusive process. The HFRA legislation also directs the United States Forest Service (USFS) and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to address local community priorities in fuel reduction treatments. The cities and communities in Southern Gila County are located around public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Tonto National Forest (TNF), and National Park Service (NPS) Tonto National Monument.

The HFRA requires federal agencies to collaborate with communities in developing hazardous fuel reduction projects and places a priority on treating areas covered by a CWPP. Completing a CWPP required the development and agreement of local government, local fire departments, and districts, federal agencies, and the state agency responsible for forest management. In Arizona, that state agency is the Arizona State Forestry Division (ASFD). For the initial 2010 CWPP to remain current, Gila County Department of Emergency Management (GCDHES) initiated a process of reviewing and updating the 2010 CWPP. A “Review Team” of key stakeholders was engaged in the spring of 2015 to begin the review and update process.

### A. Background

The 2010 Southern Gila County CWPP was developed by a “Core Team” of members of local fire departments and districts, local governmental agencies, BLM, TNF, NPS, ASFD and interested community members. The Gila County Department of Emergency Management (GCDHES) was designated the lead agency and was responsible for maintaining records and mitigation action results. The 2010 CWPP incorporated all at-risk communities in southern Gila County, and defined and located interface and intermix communities in the planning area.

The primary objectives of the 2015 Update to the Southern Gila County CWPP are to: identify any at-risk communities or areas that were not identified in the initial Southern Gila County wildfire assessment, to document changes in community hazards and values at risk, and to recognize community activities related to reducing the threat of wildfire and efforts to improve public and firefighter safety. The CWPP review was completed by a “Review Team” with representatives from several of the Southern Gila County communities identified in the original CWPP. The

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<sup>1</sup> Terry Haines, Cheryl Renner, Margaret Reams, and James Granskog. The National Wildfire Mitigation Programs Database: State, County, and Local Efforts to Reduce Wildfire Risk.



“Review Team” also included representatives from local fire departments, government agencies and community groups including Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)

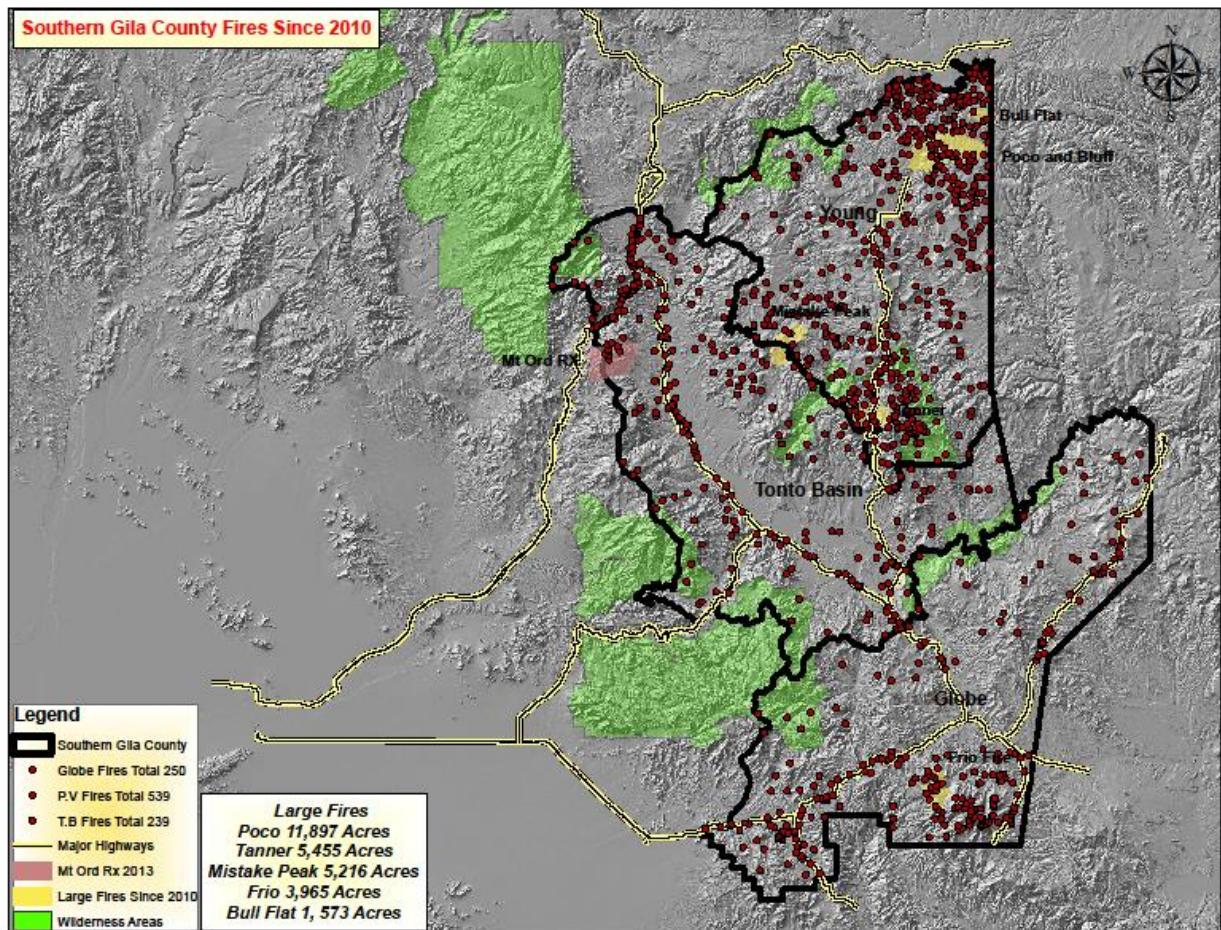
The 2015 Review Team met and discussed the goals for fuels treatment projects, potential fire department and agency improvements, and community preparedness recommendations established in 2010. Another critical element for the Review Team was to determine if the fuels treatment and readiness project priorities remained the same as when they were established in 2010.

The 2015 Review Team analyzed the reported wildfire ignitions in Southern Gila County and determined that there have been over 1028 reported wildfire ignitions in Southern Gila County CWPP area in the 5-year period following the completion of the Southern Gila County CWPP in 2010. The majority of the ignitions have occurred along roadways and the WUI areas, and were human caused. The second leading source of ignitions is lightning. Major fires have been occurring throughout Arizona with increased frequency following a continual drought and wildland fuel buildup. Major fires that have occurred in Arizona since the 2010 CWPP was written include the Schultz, Horseshoe 2, Monument, Wallow, Gladiator, and Yarnell Hill fires. All but the Yarnell Hill fire were human caused. The Wallow Fire in 2011 is the largest fire in Arizona history and burned over 538,000 acres. The Yarnell Hill Fire in 2013 took the lives of 19 firefighters and caused the loss of 129 homes and structures. The Yarnell Hill Fire was started by lightning.





Map 1. Southern Gila County Fires Since 2010



Recent notable fires in Gila County include the Poco Fire in 2012 north of Young, the Mistake Peak fire in 2012, the Bull Flat Fire, and the Tanner Fire south of Young in 2011. One of the critical elements in firefighter safety that poses an extreme hazard to personnel is the exposure of the firefighters to extreme environmental conditions. Two firefighters were transported by helicopter suffering from heat exhaustion after working shifts on the Mistake Peak and 257 fires in Gila County. Forest Service personnel began focusing their efforts on reducing heat related injuries to firefighting personnel on fires occurring in the region, state and nationally. These efforts include recognizing the operational challenges of managing an Incident-Within-An-Incident and the impacts on firefighter safety and operations.

The map above was developed from Tonto Basin fire statistics and further demonstrates the high risk of fires along the Highway 188 corridor. Recognizing the danger, ongoing development of wildfire mitigation measures along the highway will continue to be a major area of emphasis for the Forest Service and Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).





Map 2. Large Scale Fires in Southern Gila County

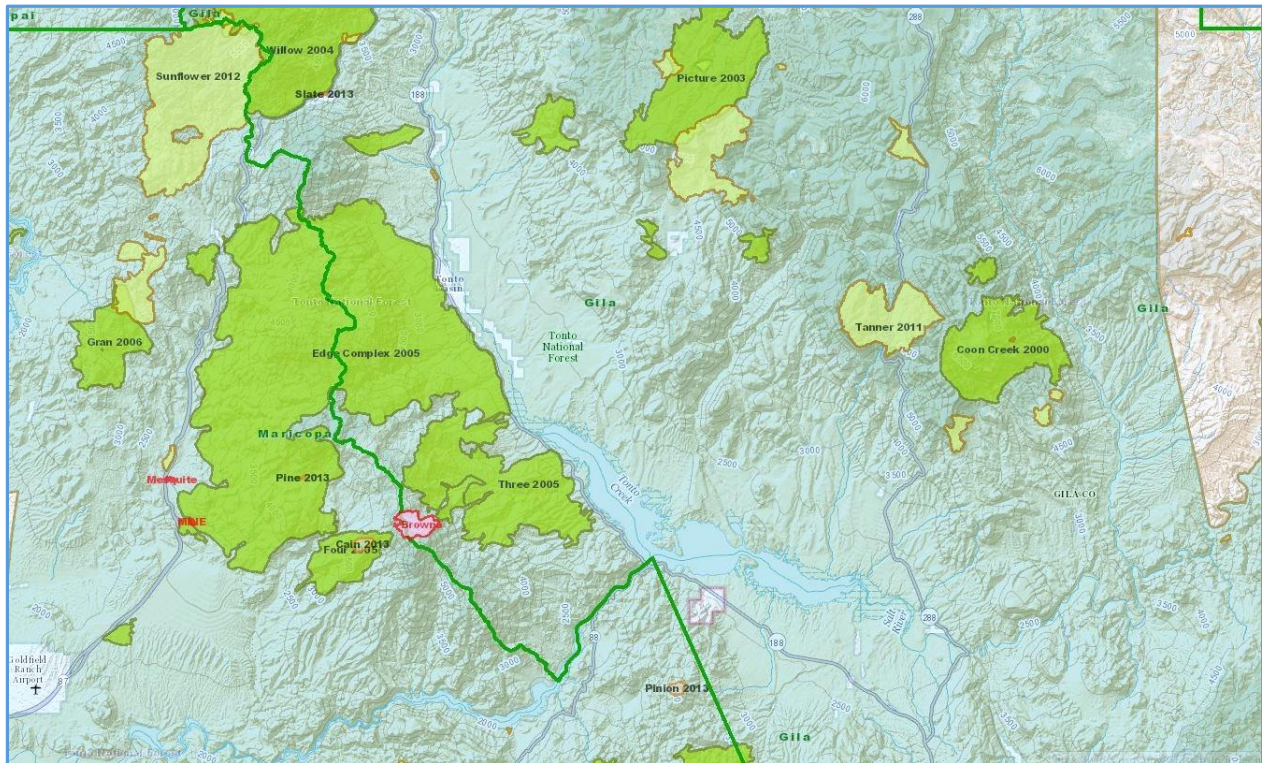


Table 1. Gila County Major Wildland Fires

| Incident Name            | Year | Location             | Acreage |
|--------------------------|------|----------------------|---------|
| Poco                     | 2012 | N. of Young          | 11,897  |
| Mistake Peak             | 2012 | N. of Punkin Center  | 5,216   |
| Bull Flat                | 2012 | N. of Young          | 1,573   |
| Tanner                   | 2011 | N. of Roosevelt Lake | 5,455   |
| Frio                     | 2011 | S. Of Miami          | 3,965   |
| Source US Forest Service |      |                      |         |

## B. WUI Identification Process

In 2009, the Arizona State Forestry Department under the direction of the Governor of Arizona, issued an Arizona-Identified Communities at Risk rating for nearly 200 communities located throughout the State. These communities were given WUI ratings, with 39 communities located in Gila County. The ratings were based on the following criteria:

- Fire Behavior Potential,
- Social, Cultural and Community Factors,
- Fire Protection Capability



Based on the three evaluation criteria, each community was given a Risk of Catastrophic Fire rating. The 2010 Core Team further evaluated communities in Southern Gila County and added an additional 8 communities that were at-risk of wildfire devastation to the Southern Gila County CWPP Communities At-Risk.

The task of the 2015 Review Team required members to consider community safety needs along with the requirements of the HFRA including the fuels condition class, fire regime, resource management plans, and Federal Land exclusions, including Wilderness areas. The committee determined that no further areas or communities met the definitions of the HFRA. The Review Team did recommend moving the community of Young and the Pleasant Valley Fire department to the Northern Gila County CWPP planning area. The team also reviewed the Gila County CWPP's compliance with State, BLM, TNF, NPS and tribal government objectives for the lands administered by each agency.

**Table 2. Southern Gila County Communities at Risk**

| Community                     | WUI Risk | Fire District/Department               |
|-------------------------------|----------|--|
| Claypool                      | Moderate | Tri-City Fire Department               |
| Cutter                        | Moderate | San Carlos Reservation Fire Department |
| Dripping Springs              | Low      | None                                   |
| El Capitan                    | High     | None                                   |
| Globe                         | Moderate | Globe Fire department                  |
| Haigler Canyon                | Moderate | None                                   |
| Hayden                        | Low      | Hayden Fire Department                 |
| Miami                         | Moderate | Miami Fire Department                  |
| Nail Ranch                    | Moderate | None                                   |
| Rose Creek-YMCA               | High     | None                                   |
| San Carlos                    | High     | San Carlos Reservation Fire Department |
| Tonto Basin-Roosevelt         | Moderate | Tonto Basin Fire Department            |
| Top of the World <sub>1</sub> | High     | None                                   |
| Winkelman                     | Moderate | Winkelman Fire Department              |



The 2015 Review Team monitored changes in wildfire suppression policy on Federal lands where Federal policy allows the return of natural fire to areas where fuel conditions have returned to a more normal fuel condition. Human caused fires will continue to be suppressed at the lowest possible cost while natural occurring fires may be monitored and managed with the goal of returning public lands to historic conditions where possible. Factors such as fire weather conditions, topography, fuel conditions and other fire suppression activities will help determine the response and actions taken on wildland ignitions.



The 2015 Review Team set a goal for the private lands in the CWPP planning area to have landowners meet the standards listed in the Firewise Communities Program. “The Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program is a process that empowers neighbors to work together in reducing their wildfire risk... taking action and ownership in preparing and protecting their homes against the threat of wildfire.”<sup>2</sup> The Arizona State Forestry Department administers the Firewise certification program “The Firewise Communities approach emphasizes community responsibility for planning in the design of a safe community as well as effective emergency response, and individual responsibility for safer home construction and design, landscaping and maintenance.”<sup>3</sup> The Review Team was tasked with monitoring the approval process for obtaining Firewise status in the planning area.

### **C. Goals of the Southern Gila CWPP**

The 2010 CWPP Core Team developed nine goals to assist in community and organizational planning. These goals were approved by the 2015 Review Team.

- Improve fire prevention and suppression, emphasizing firefighter and public safety
- Reduce hazardous fuels, emphasizing public and private property protection;
- Restore forest, rangeland, and riparian health;
- Promote community involvement and provide for community protection;
- Recommend measures to reduce structural ignitability in the WUI;
- Encourage economic development in the communities from vegetative treatments;

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<sup>2</sup> <http://firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx?sso=0>

<sup>3</sup> Firewise Communities®- A Use Guide to the Firewise Community/USA Recognition Program



- Encourage communities, subdivisions, and developments that are not within a fire district to either be annexed by an existing fire district or create their own district for enhanced wildland fire protection;
- Use the CWPP in conjunction with surrounding community and agency fire management plans.<sup>4</sup>
- Maintain qualification for grant funding.

The 2015 Review Team consisted of members from federal and state agencies, local fire departments, utility providers and community groups so that all community interests were represented in the review of the 2010 CWPP. Review Team members include the following fire departments and governmental agencies: Globe FD, Tri-City FD, Hayden FD, Miami FD, San Carlos Apache Fire Department, Gila County Department of Emergency Management, Arizona Department of Transportation, Arizona State Forestry Department, Arizona Department of Public Safety, the US Forest Service, Tonto NF, Gila County Sheriff's Department and the Payson Police Department.

Acknowledging the geographic size of the county and diversity in land and fuels, Gila County also maintains a "Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan" to address the specific fuels, landscape, and stakeholders in the northern area. The Northern Gila County CWPP covers the area north of Hellsgate Wilderness to the Verde River, south of the Mogollon Rim and Coconino and Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests, and west of the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. The Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) covers the remainder of Gila County.

Within the Southern Gila County CWPP area, the Tonto National Forest, Globe and Tonto Basin Ranger Districts provide fire suppression on the federal lands inside the forest boundaries. Forest fire suppression resources will also respond to areas where there is a potential for a fire to spread onto the National Forest. The Tonto NF also has personnel available to complete mitigation work on forest lands.

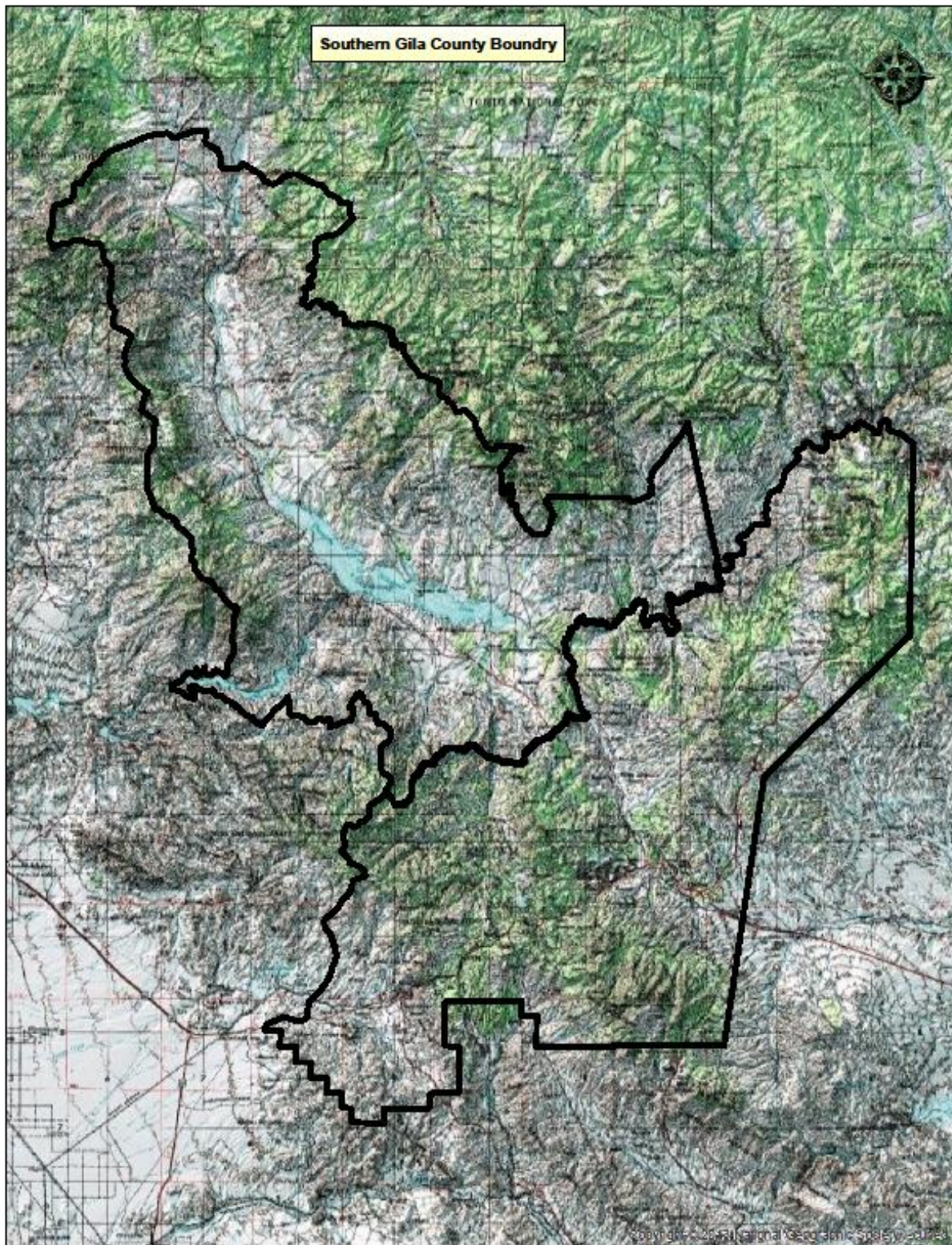
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<sup>4</sup> [http://agenda.gilacountyaz.gov/docs/2012/WORKSESS/20120424\\_102/101\\_AGENDApacket.pdf](http://agenda.gilacountyaz.gov/docs/2012/WORKSESS/20120424_102/101_AGENDApacket.pdf);  
<https://azsf.az.gov/grants/training-equipment/fepp>





**Map 3. Southern Gila County CWPP Boundary**







## **SECTION II: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**

The 2015 update to the Southern Gila County CWPP reviewed changes made in the preceding five years in community values, local fire department and community preparedness, agency infrastructure, population trends and structure density. Another item reviewed was changes in Fire Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings which is a countywide classification system used to reflect a community's local fire protection agency's ability to suppress fires.

Each Fire Department/District and Agency is represented below in its own section.



## **A. Canyon Fire Department**

The Canyon Fire Department as of July 2015 has completed a consolidation agreement with the Tri-City Fire Protection District. Information on Canyon FD will be included under the Tri-City FD resource heading, Section P.



## **B. City of Globe and Globe Fire Department**

Globe, a city of approximately 7500 people located along the Historic Old West Highway, US Highway 60, serves as seat of Government for Gila County. The City is served by the Globe Fire Department which provides fire, EMS, and rescue services to the community. The Department operates from one fire station and has (19) career Firefighters and (20) reserve Firefighters. The administrative staff consists of the Fire Chief, a Deputy Fire Chief and three Captains. The Reserve Firefighter, when hired, must have or obtain Firefighter II and EMT certifications from the State of Arizona. The Globe Fire Department recently underwent an ISO re-evaluation and the Department's rating was reduced from a 5 to a 4. City of Globe Dispatch is handled through the Gila County Sheriff's Office.

The Globe Fire Department has currently available for emergency response one Type I Engine, one Type III Engine, one Type VI Engine and one Truck. All Globe firefighters must be IQS Red Carded Wildland Firefighters. Classwork including S-130, S-190, and Incident Management System (IMS) 100 must be completed prior to obtaining certification. Annually, all firefighting personnel must complete Refresher Training (RT) 130 each year which includes a minimum of eight hours of study. The Department has (3) firefighters Red Carded for Engine Boss. By maintaining their wildland qualifications, Globe FD is able to bill the Arizona State Land Department for fees associated with their response to incidents such as wildland fires, hurricanes, and floods.



Globe Fire Department Type I Engine



Fuel treatment projects completed in the Globe treatment areas identified in the 2010 CWPP include the Six Shooter Canyon and Pinal Creek drainage. Fuels treatments had been identified as G1, G2, and G3 in the 2010 CWPP. Hazardous fuels were removed along approximately eight miles of the creek drainage. Along with debris removal, most of the work was located in area GP1, with some work in GP2 and GP3.

The Globe FD is active in Public Education in the community. Their focus is on educating the community on programs such as fire extinguisher training and Youth Fire Setter Intervention. Programs are delivered by the Fire Marshall when requested. The Fire Marshal has an accelerant detecting dog which has been successfully used on several fire investigations.



### **C. Hayden Community and the Hayden Fire Department**

The Hayden Community and the Hayden Fire Department fall within the boundaries of the Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, but the Hayden Fire Department did not provide information or participate in the 2015 CWPP Update.





## **D. San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation and the San Carlos Apache Fire Department**

The community of San Carlos, the largest community on the San Carlos Reservation with nearly 3700 people, serves as the seat of the Tribal Government. Located approximately 25 miles east of Globe, San Carlos is located on Arizona Highway 170. Fire and Emergency Medical Services are the responsibility of the San Carlos Apache Fire Department. Currently, the Department operates out of two fire stations each staffed with two firefighters who are also trained as Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics. Two new fire stations, one located in Bylas and the other near the Cutter Casino, are planned. Located in new Public Safety facilities, each will be staffed 24 hours a day. Personnel will cover an engine and ambulance. Tribal Police and the Dispatch Center will also be located in one of the facilities.

Apparatus includes (3) Type III Structural Engines, and (2) Type VI Engines. Current plans call for the addition of (1) Type II Urban Interface Engine with pump-and-roll capabilities for mobile attack of vegetation fires. Seven sets of new structural Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) were purchased and the Department will be addressing wildland PPE. The Insurance Services Office rating for the community is a 9. The Department is working with the four separate Tribal Water Districts on a hydrant location program to improve water delivery.

Personnel have a varied amount of wildland experience; three firefighters are IQS Red Carded for wildland firefighting. Funding is limited at this time for increased wildland training. The Department is seeking grant funding to improve fire department operations. Mapping for the SCFD has been upgraded through the use of a GIS server. Several members of the Department have been trained on the Firewise program and plans are being developed for use on the Reservation.

San Carlos Apache FD units are dispatched through a digital radio system. Current plans call for a 911 system to be integrated with the dispatch functions. San Carlos Apache FD is also working on Mutual Aid agreements with the neighboring fire departments including Globe, Tri-City and Canyon. The primary shelter locations for the community have been established at the Apache Gold Casino for displaced members of the community. Emergency notifications to the community are made through the San Carlos Apache Police Department, apparatus PA systems and a local radio station.





## **E. The Miami Fire Department**

The Miami FD currently has no qualified personnel and the Tri-City FD responds to calls in the community under a per-call fee basis.





## **F. American Red Cross, Northern Arizona Chapter**

The American Red Cross Northern Arizona Chapter formerly known as the Grand Canyon Chapter serves approximately 76,000 square miles and 725,000 people throughout the Apache, Coconino, Gila, Mohave, Navajo, La Paz and Yavapai counties. The American Red Cross (ARC or Red Cross) independently provides mass care to all disaster victims as part of the broad program of disaster relief, as outlined in the charter provisions enacted by the United States Congress Act of January 5th, 1905 and the Disaster Relief Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-288 as amended by the Stafford Act of 1988.)

In partnership with Gila County agencies, the Northern Arizona Chapter's initial response activities will focus on meeting the urgent needs of disaster victims i.e., providing emergency shelter. The provisions of the ARC disaster services will be considered based on the needs of disaster victims, the emergency/disaster situation, and available resources. Close coordination will be necessary between the ARC and local, state and federal government agencies.

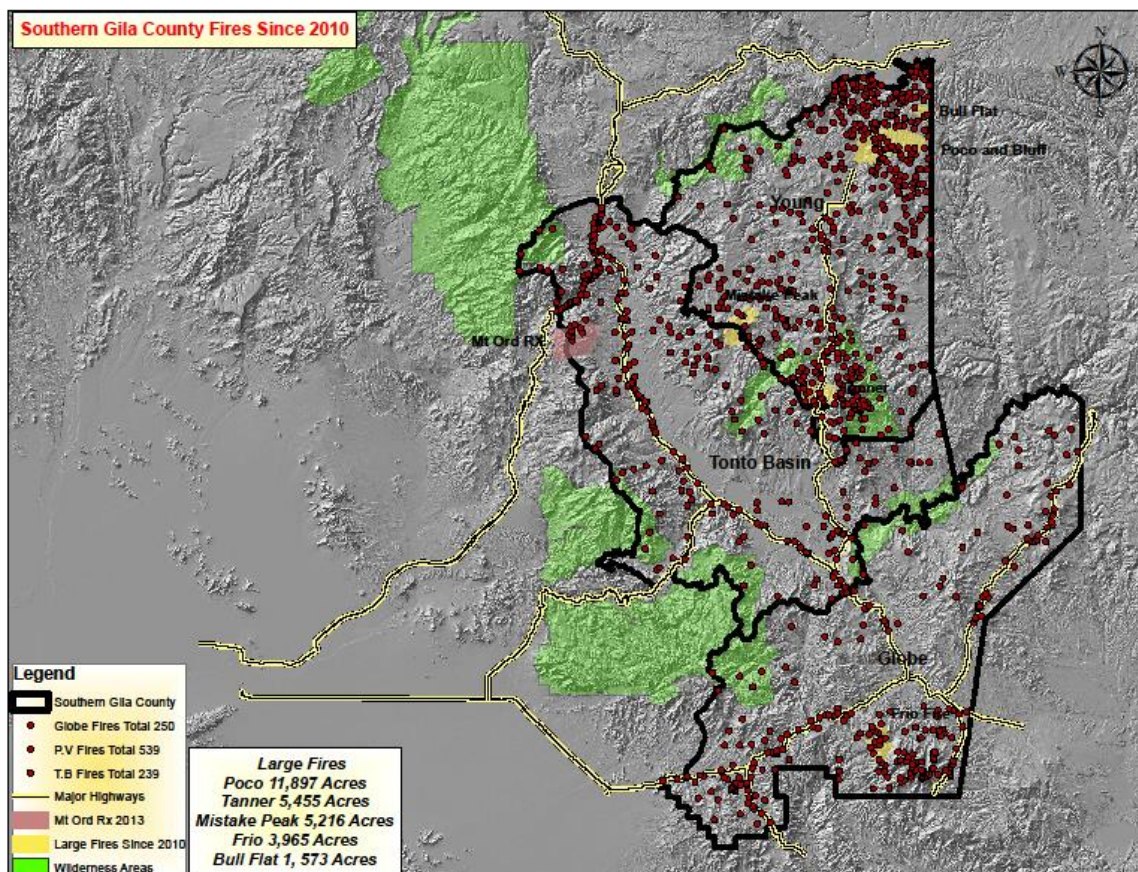
Another function of the Red Cross is to assist communities in preparation for natural and manmade disasters such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes. The Red Cross also provides educational programs including the Home Fire Preparedness Campaign and Pillowcase Project which help community members before, during and after an emergency.



## G. Arizona Department of Transportation

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) has an important role in fuel management activities along Highways 87 and 260. Current fire activity maps demonstrate the need for fuels work along these roadways. ADOT crews have been active mowing along the right-of-way on both highways. The map below clearly shows the fires starting along the two major highways bisecting Southern Gila County and the importance of roadway maintenance. On Highway 60, a 20 foot clearance is being maintained on both sides of the roadway. On Highway 188, the goal is to maintain annually the sections where the majority of fires are starting. The route was mowed in 2014, but funding is not available for 2015 for the project. Spraying of roadside vegetation is coordinated with the Arizona Natural Resources Department. Spraying of roadside vegetation in 2015 will be at a rate of 50% vegetation coverage rate along Highway 188 from Milepost 214 to Milepost 276. All project work is accomplished through the department's annual budget.

Map 4. Southern Gila County Fires since 2010





## **H. Arizona Public Service (APS)**

Arizona Public Service (APS) is Arizona's largest and longest-serving electric company, founded in 1886, 5 years after Tombstone's gunfight at the OK Corral and nearly a quarter-century before Arizona became a state. The goal of APS is to create affordable and reliable electricity for more than 1.1 million retail and residential customers in 11 of Arizona's 15 counties. The corporate vision is to create a sustainable energy future for Arizona.

APS has added the position of Fire Mitigation Specialist, who will be participating with departments and districts in creating a safe energy supply. The Fire Mitigation Specialist (FMS) will be the point of contact for incidents either weather related or fires, when APS infrastructure is involved or threatened. The role of the FMS will be one of working with Incident Management Teams (IMT) to ensure the safety of personnel and resources on the ground with both clear and timely information and oversight. Coordinating with the IMT will ensure that APS resources are considered in the planning and operations phases of incidents.

The FMS will also work on the pole clearing project which will require significant communication and coordination with State, Local, and Federal agencies. The FMS will be supporting the Integrated Vegetation Management (IVM) projects occurring throughout the State. A key function will be supporting ASF's vegetation management efforts. Further cooperation with ASF and the USFS will include fire prevention activities as well as the possible use of prescribed fire to reduce fuel loading around company assets.

APS is moving forward with an extensive pole clearing project in 2015 with the goal of clearing vegetation under approximately 75,000 poles on a three year cycle. On a yearly basis, APS will be clearing approximately 30,000 poles per year. APS is also researching the possibility of purchasing equipment that could be used to pre-treat poles in advance of a fire.



## **I. Arizona State Forestry Department**

The Arizona State Forestry Department (ASFD) provides resources for the prevention and suppression of wildland fires on over 22 million acres of State Trust Lands and private property located outside incorporated communities. ASFD provides services for fire prevention, urban and community forestry, forest stewardship, forest health and has a wide variety of grants available.<sup>5</sup> Fire prevention efforts include helping communities learn about Firewise activities and youth education. ASFD encourages and supports the development and adoption of Firewise community standards. ASFD also hosts a two-day class on home safety assessments. Other fire prevention activities include granting funds to communities to reduce the hazardous fuels within and around communities and private lands and on State Trust Lands.

- The State Forestry Department acquires used fire apparatus and equipment, refurbishes the equipment, and then transfers the title to rural fire departments.
- The Forest Stewardship program offers forest land owners guidance and assistance with management plans.

The ASFD also provides grant opportunities to help communities reduce hazardous fuels, and to acquire apparatus and supplies for firefighters including wildland personal protective equipment (PPE). The grant focus is on opportunities for cost share with urban communities. A high priority for grant funding includes the community adoption of Firewise standards and on projects that are “Community” focused rather than on individual projects that stand alone. Due to the continued drought, reduced snowfall, and warmer than usual spring conditions in 2015, an increase in ignitions is again predicted. For 2015, State Forestry crews will possibly be located within Gila County for fuel mitigation activities.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://Azsf.az.gov>





## **J. Community of Tonto Basin and the Tonto Basin Fire District**

Tonto Basin is a census-designated location in Central Gila County. According to the 2000 census, the population was 4000 residents. Within the Tonto Basin is the community of Punkin Center. The Tonto Basin covers the main drainage of Tonto Creek on the Southwest end of the Mogollon Rim. The creek and its tributaries flow through Hellsgate Wilderness area and eventually into the Salt River at the Reservoir Lake. Should Tonto Creek flood, the east side of the fire district will be isolated with no road access. In



good weather, helicopters may be used for emergency transport of medical emergencies. In poor weather, a boat must be taken across the lake. Arizona Highway 188 traverses the lower end of the Basin with State Route 87 and proceeds to Payson.

### **Tonto Basin Fire District**

The Tonto Basin Fire District (TBFD) covers nearly 85 square miles and includes the communities of Tonto Basin, Roosevelt and Jakes Corner. TBFD also provides fire protection by contract to the 11 megawatt generator at Roosevelt Dam owned by SRP. The department was established in 1989 and provides emergency services from four fire stations. Station 1 in Punkin Center and Station 6 in Roosevelt are staffed with full-time firefighters from 0700 until 1800. Station 2 on the east side of Tonto Creek and Station 5 in Jake's Creek are covered by volunteer personnel only. The department employs 8 Full-time personnel, four Firefighters are Paramedics and four Firefighters are EMTs. Department staffing also includes 18 Reserve Firefighters. Approximately 82% of emergency calls involved medical emergencies. Recent response history shows three drowning's in the District. Medical transport fees supplement the Fire Department's budget. Emergency dispatch is provided by the Gila County Sheriff's Office in Payson.

Fire Apparatus acquired by the District includes three Type I engines, one Pumper/Tender with 3,500 gallon tank and a 1,000 gallon per minute pump, two Type III engines located at Stations 2 and 5, three Support Water Tenders located at Stations 1, 5, and 6, and two Type VI engines located at Stations 1 and 6. A first alarm response in the District includes one Engine, one Water Tender and a staff officer. The Forest Service and State Forestry are notified of any fires in the District and respond when units are available.

Water supply in the District is limited to several fire hydrants in the community of Punkin Center. Other areas require water shuttle operations using water tenders. The County Road Department





has placed a 10,000 gallon water bladder next to Fire Station 6. Fire Station 1 is located on School District property.

Several firefighters are FF2 qualified, one firefighter is FF1 qualified and is working on an Engine Boss task book. District training includes Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation, First Aid, Emergency Driving and firefighting. The District just completed the purchase of new SCBA, a new air compressor and cascade air system with funds in excess of 220,000 from a FEMA grant. Previous grants have included grant funding through the Volunteer Fire Assistance program and the US Forest Service. Several of the grants have required 50/50 matching community funds with the federal dollars granted to the District.

Public education opportunities are very limited in the three communities. There is no daily local newspaper, no local radio station, and cell phone service is very limited. A weekly newspaper is available in the community. The only meeting location in the District is at the small elementary school. With such limited communication opportunities, the possibility of establishing a Firewise community is very unlikely. Several homeowners have maintained the property in a safe condition while others have not provided for a defensible space around their home.





## **K. Community Emergency Response Team**

The Southern Gila County area is developing a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). The organization currently has three certified members and is actively soliciting interest from community members. The mission of CERT is to put together a community outreach program to increase public awareness of wildfire preparedness for the local community. CERT will be able to assist local agencies in communicating important messages and during emergencies, help the agencies in support roles.



## **L. Gila County Office of Emergency Management**

The Gila County Office of Emergency Management (GCOEM) centralizes the direction and control of the planning, coordination and management of disaster preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery. According to SARA (Superfund Amendments Reauthorization Act) Title II, emergency management agencies must develop emergency response plans for hazardous materials incidents. These requirements led the EM agencies to create response plans that deal with any type of emergency that might occur within their planning area. The GCOEM has developed or is the process of developing emergency response plans for activities including wildfires, floods, and hazardous materials spills. The goal of all response plans is to minimize the risk to the public.



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines hazard mitigation as, “any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to life and property from natural hazards.” Another way to understand hazard mitigation is as the prevention component of the emergency management process.

- Preparedness activities are the emergency plans, training, drills, and exercises that individuals, communities and first responders participate in on almost daily basis. These are things done to get ready for an emergency or disaster before it happens.
- Response is the short-term, emergency actions taken to address the immediate impacts of a hazard.
- Recovery is the longer-term process of restoring the community back to normal or pre-disaster conditions.
- Mitigation activities are actions that will prevent or eliminate losses, even if an incident does occur. Mitigation can reduce or eliminate the need for an emergency response and greatly reduce the recovery period.

The role of the GCOEM is to:

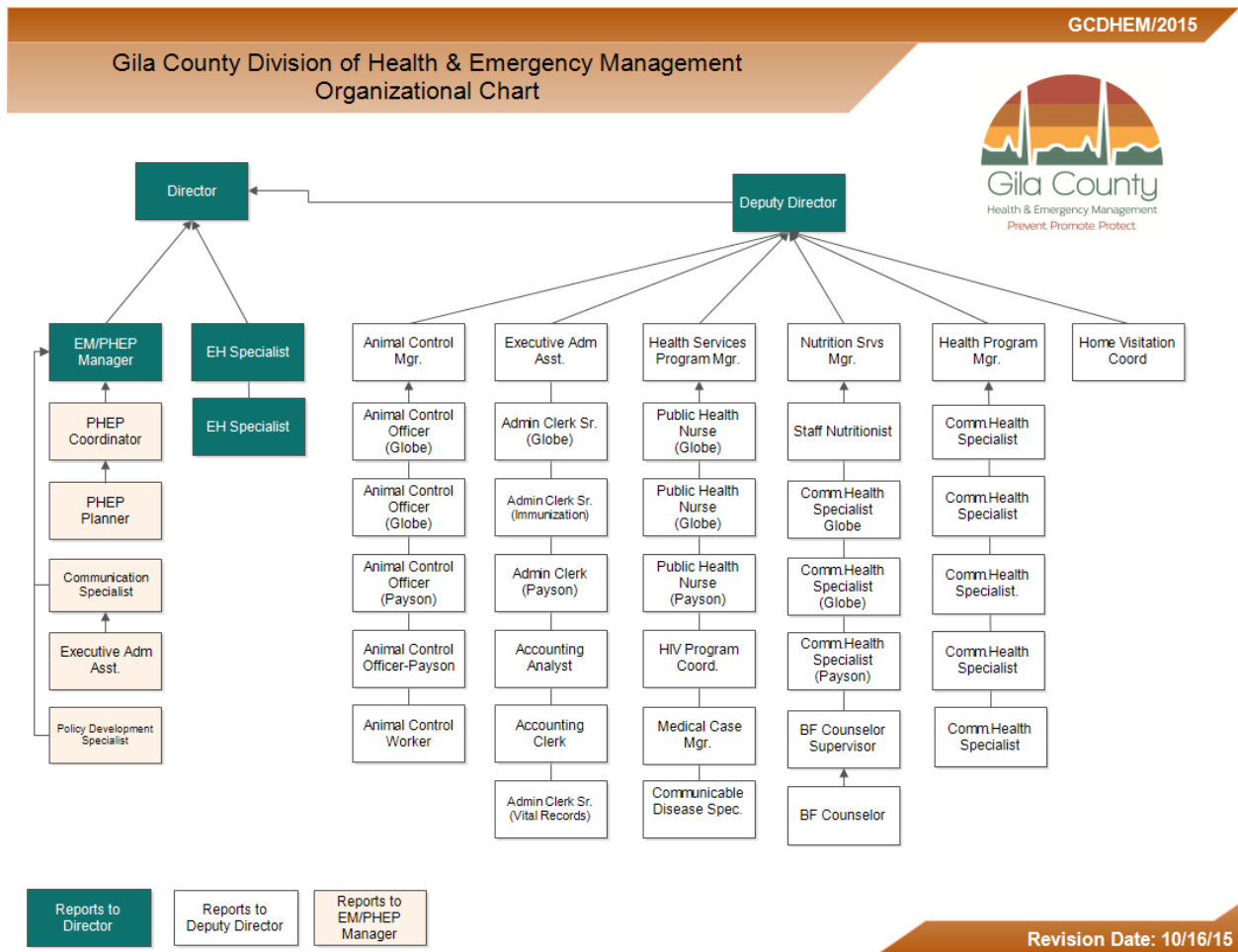
- Act as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordinator
- Develop, review and update Emergency Response Plans
- Serve as a Communications Specialist during EOC operations

### **EOC Activation**



The Gila County Emergency Operations Center is activated based on information supplied to the Department of Emergency Management by Incident Commanders in the field. At the same time, information will be collected by emergency dispatch centers and relayed to the Emergency Management Office. The Director of Emergency Management will then determine the need to open the EOC based on the complexity and needs of field personnel.

The role of the County EOC will be one of facilitating the orders from Incident Commanders. During an EOC activation, using the Web EOC platform, orders will be filled first from resources available from within the County. Neighboring Counties will be able to view the Web EOC event and the State will be notified. If the County is unable to fill a request from field personnel, neighboring Counties will be contacted. If orders are still unfilled from the neighboring Counties, the State will then attempt to fill orders from the field personnel.



Other roles filled by the Office of Emergency Management include:



- Serving as the Training Coordinator for First responders in the county.
- Developing and maintaining the Emergency Alert System (EAS), coordinating and monitoring countywide radio frequencies used for the EAS.





## **M. Gila County Public Works Division, Road Maintenance Department**

The Gila County Public Works Division Road Maintenance Department is responsible for the improvement and maintenance of the County Maintained Road System. The Department's primary goal is to provide a safe and accessible road system to move citizens and commodities around the county. The Department assists other agencies in responding to emergencies such as vegetation fires. The Road Maintenance Department maintains seven water tenders available for emergency water supplies during initial attack operations. The water tenders are also used to fill and maintain the water bladders placed throughout the county which are designated for emergency use only.





## **N. Gila County Sheriff's Office-Globe**

The Gila County Sheriff's Office supports programs and partnerships that assist the community and add to the security, as well as the enjoyment, of living in Gila County. The Sheriff's Office monitors road conditions and is responsible for community evacuations during wildfires. The Gila County Sheriff's Office of Volunteer Organizations may be utilized to assist in situations such as road closures during wildfires. The Sheriff's Office maintains an up-to-date list of evacuations routes throughout the County. Currently, no changes in evacuation routes are planned.

### **Volunteer Groups in the Gila County Sheriff's Office**

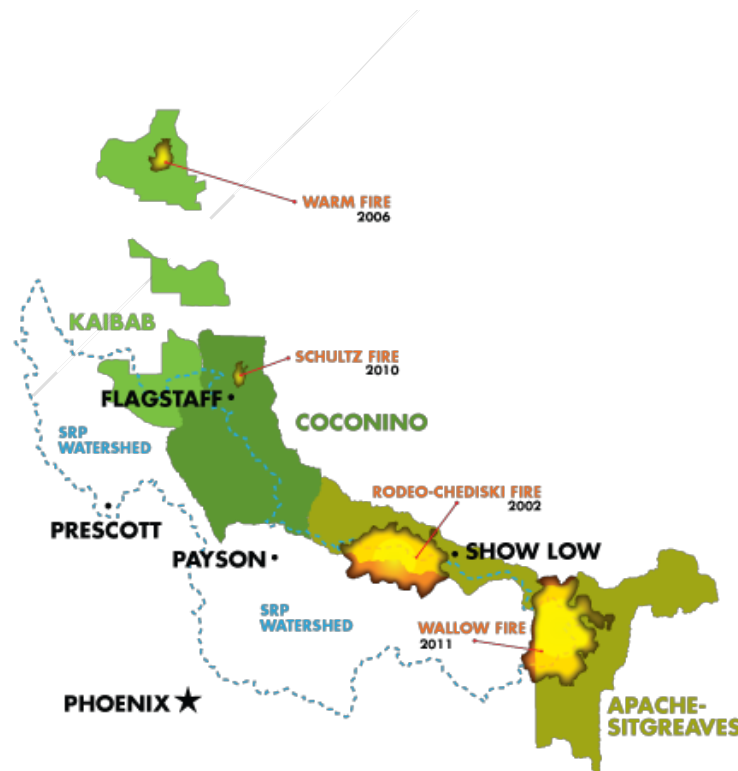
- Gila County Sheriff's Posse
- Gila County Sheriff's Search and Rescue
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)



## O. Salt River Project

The Salt River Project (SRP) is the oldest multipurpose federal reclamation project in the United States, serving central Arizona since 1903. SRP is one of the nation's largest public power utilities, providing electricity and water to more than 2 million people in Central Arizona. The goal of SRP is to: “Develop working relationships with local residents, organizations and community leaders which helps SRP provide the infrastructure needed to meet service area power and water needs.”<sup>6</sup> SRP infrastructure in Gila County consists mainly of high-voltage transmission lines including 500kV, 230kV and 115kV lines. Each power line siting corridor is maintained for fire safety with various fuel modification work as required.

The SRP has begun to recognize the need for a fuels modification program, especially around the C.C. Cragin Reservoir, to maintain a healthy forest which provides for clean water and a sustained source for electrical power generation. Since 2002, more than a quarter of SRP's watershed was burned by megafires such as the Rodeo-Chediski and Wallow fires.



<sup>6</sup> <http://www.srpnet.com/menu/About/environment.aspx>



## **P. Tri-City Fire District**

The Tri-City Fire District provides fire protection to the communities of Central Heights, Claypool, and Wheatfields. The District also provides administrative support for the former Canyon Fire Protection District as of July, 2015 through a consolidation agreement. Tri-City serves over 10,000 people living in an area of approximately 20 square miles and serves additional communities of Si-Shooter Canyon, Ice Horse Canyon and Keller. The District also provides Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to the communities and most of the Southern Gila County area covering over 800 square miles. Tri-City Fire District is comprised of four stations. Station 1 is staffed by seven full-time fire fighters. Station 2 is the administration facility and covered by volunteer personnel. Station 3 is a fully volunteer site, and currently under construction. Four personnel work during the day and are available for emergency call-back. Station 4 is staffed with five personnel.

The Tri-City Fire District was the recipient of a 2009 Department of Homeland Security Grant for the purchase of two mobile fire-training structures. The two units allow for live structural fire training, SCBA crawl through, confined space, and high angle rescue training. A 12,000 gallon water tank was purchased, along with (2) diesel fire pumps donated by the Town of Payson Fire Department. The training center will allow fire fighters from the local community fire departments many training opportunities. The District's goal is to be able to bring in fire departments from around the state for training.

In 2015, approximately 60-70 firefighters received their annual Wildland Firefighter Refresher Training which is required for personnel to respond to vegetation fires. Participating agencies included personnel from the Tri-City and Globe Fire Departments, the US Forest Service and the

Arizona State Forestry Department. The District management staff is also fully qualified through IQS, NWCG and the Arizona State SOG 804. Red Card certifications are monitored and approved by the State Red Card Committee. All members are at a minimum FF-2 qualified. One firefighter is Operations Section Chief qualified, one is ICT IV and one is ICT III qualified. The department also has one Strike Team Engine qualified firefighter, two Dozer Boss Trainees, two are Engine Boss qualified and five are Engine Boss Trainees.

The Tri-City Fire District purchased a new ambulance in 2013 with the goal of four new ambulances to modernize the fleet. A new Type III engine was delivered in the fall of 2010. The department has 3-Type I Engines, 2-Type III Engines, 3-Type IV Engines, 1-Tactical Water Tender and 1 Support Water Tender along with a total of four ambulances.

The Tri-City Fire District received a State Forestry Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant in 2014 to purchase sprinkler kits which may be placed in an interface trailer. Along with pumps, pump



kits, hose and Fold-A-Tanks, these kits will be made available to communities threatened by wildfire.





## **Q. United States Forest Service (USFS): Tonto National Forest**

The U.S. Forest Service was a founding member during the writing of the Southern Gila County CWPP in 2010 and continued participation throughout the development and review of the Southern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan in 2015. The mission of the Forest Service has been to provide strong leadership in the management of diverse ecosystems and heritage resources. With over 90% of all lands in Gila County administered by the Forest Service and other federal agencies and a directive to maintain and restore social, economic and ecological resources, Forest Service personnel coordinate their efforts with the local fire departments and agencies.

The Forest Service focuses on forming lasting partnerships with local agencies, communities and organizations. In order to be responsive to these community members, personnel have developed an integrated approach to restoring watersheds for economic and ecological health and improved water quality.

### **Forest Updates**

The Tonto National Forest (TNF), the 5th largest urban forest, encompasses nearly three million acres of land. Forest boundaries are Phoenix to the south, the Mogollon Rim to the north, and the San Carlos and Fort Apache Indian reservations to the east. Eight wilderness areas are managed within the forest. Portions of the Verde River have been designated by Congress as a Wild and Scenic River Area. The Tonto National Forest was initially established to protect the watershed around six reservoirs. Currently, a small amount of timber production along with cattle grazing and mining are the primary resource management activities.

The critical fire season on the TNF usually ranges from May through mid-July. Human-caused and lightning are the primary causes of over 330 wildfires a year. The Forest Service currently has (15) engines covering the Tonto NF, (7) are Type III and (8) are Type VI. Additional staffing includes a Type III helicopter during the fire season May 1 to the middle of August. Three Interagency Hotshot Crews are also hosted on the forest at Payson, Mesa, and Globe. Fire management staffing includes (4) Division Chiefs, (6) Suppression Battalion Chiefs, and (1) Fuels Battalion Chief.

All firefighting personnel must meet the 1995 Federal Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) Qualifications. These changes were required following the South Canyon Fire in Colorado in 1994 where 14 wildland firefighters were killed. Under the 1995 Federal Wildland Fire Policy and Program Review, all "Federal wildland fire agencies to establish fire management qualifications standards to improve firefighter safety and increase professionalism in fire



management programs.<sup>7</sup> Local agency personnel who respond to incidents on forest lands must also meet the requirements of IFPM.

Tonto NF has updated personnel and equipment within the past five years with the goal of improving firefighter safety. Examples of equipment Improvements include: the replacement of old fire shelters with the New Generation model, upgrading portable radios with new Bendix-King VHF radios which have been provided to all fire crew members since 2010, and the addition of two Global Positioning System (GPS) units that have been placed on all apparatus.

Regional improvements in fire suppression capabilities include the opening of the Phoenix Interagency Dispatch Center, located at the Mesa Gateway Airport. The new dispatch center has assumed the dispatching responsibilities for the Tonto NF along with the Bureau of Land Management, Pima Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and San Carlos BIA. A training and mobilization facility has been built at the Mesa facility to improve regional training of firefighters. The airport also hosts an air tanker reloading facility capable of loading the DC-10, a Very Large Air Tanker (VLAT) which was designed to deliver up to 11,600 gallons of fire retardant. The Mesa facility is also capable of loading an additional 5 air tankers at the same time.

#### **Forest Service Grant Requirements**

All local government projects that receive grant funding must have met National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Proper documents must be in place prior to funding with clear boundary markers in place. Projects must also have an archeological survey completed and cleared for work to begin. Local communities must have a CWPP in place if treatments are proposed next to private lands in conjunction with private lands treatments. Grant funding has been reduced at the federal level 10% within the past several years due to federal budget cuts.

#### **Tonto Basin Ranger District**

The Tonto Basin Ranger District (RD) covers approximately 530,000 acres of National Forest lands. These lands surround several communities listed in the 2010 CWPP as either at a high or moderate risk of catastrophic wildland fire (ASFD, 2009). Other High Value Community resources include communications towers on Mt. Ord and a 345 kV power line owned by Arizona Public Service (APS) that runs through the highway 188/87 corridor. The Salt River Project (SRP) also owns a powerline that runs from Roosevelt Dam heading southeast along Highway 188 into Globe. Twin 500 kV lines owned by APS and SRP power companies cross into Pleasant Valley, through Globe and the Tonto Basin District into the Valley. Roosevelt Lake and Apache Lake are popular recreational destinations.

The District staffs (1) Type III engine and (2) Type VI engines. Management staffing includes a combination of full time and seasonal firefighters. One Division Chief and two Battalion Chiefs

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ifpm.nifc.gov/fire/firemanagement.htm>





serve the Central Zone of the Tonto NF which includes both the Tonto RD and the Globe RD. There are three International Hotshot Crews on the TNF, the nearest is stationed on the Globe RD. All personnel are equipped with full wildland PPE and radios. Future equipment purchases will include iPads for all company officers. Current radio frequencies are changing as the Federal Communication Commission reconfigures radio frequencies throughout the country. This change will affect the availability of Command and Tactical frequencies used on emergencies. The Tonto Basin District also requests “Severity Funding” from the Regional Office when high fire danger occurs to increase staffing hours and resources. Once the fuels, weather conditions, and fire activity increases, firefighters from other National Forests within the Region are assigned to the Tonto NF. An important element in the increased staffing levels is the addition of Fire Prevention Officers, who patrol campsites and check for compliance with fire restrictions. The Patrol unit also covers the Globe RD.

The Tonto Basin RD is providing training opportunities with the Tonto Basin Fire Department. They have successfully completed Wildland Firefighter Refresher Training (RT-130) and (RT-212) in 2015 together. They have also offered the pack test to the Tonto Basin FD. District personnel also inform fire department personnel of future training classes being held locally. A major project under development is the co-location of the Tonto Basin FD station to Forest Service Facilities. A change in community infrastructure will require the fire department to move from their current location and the co-location will provide benefits to both organizations and the community.

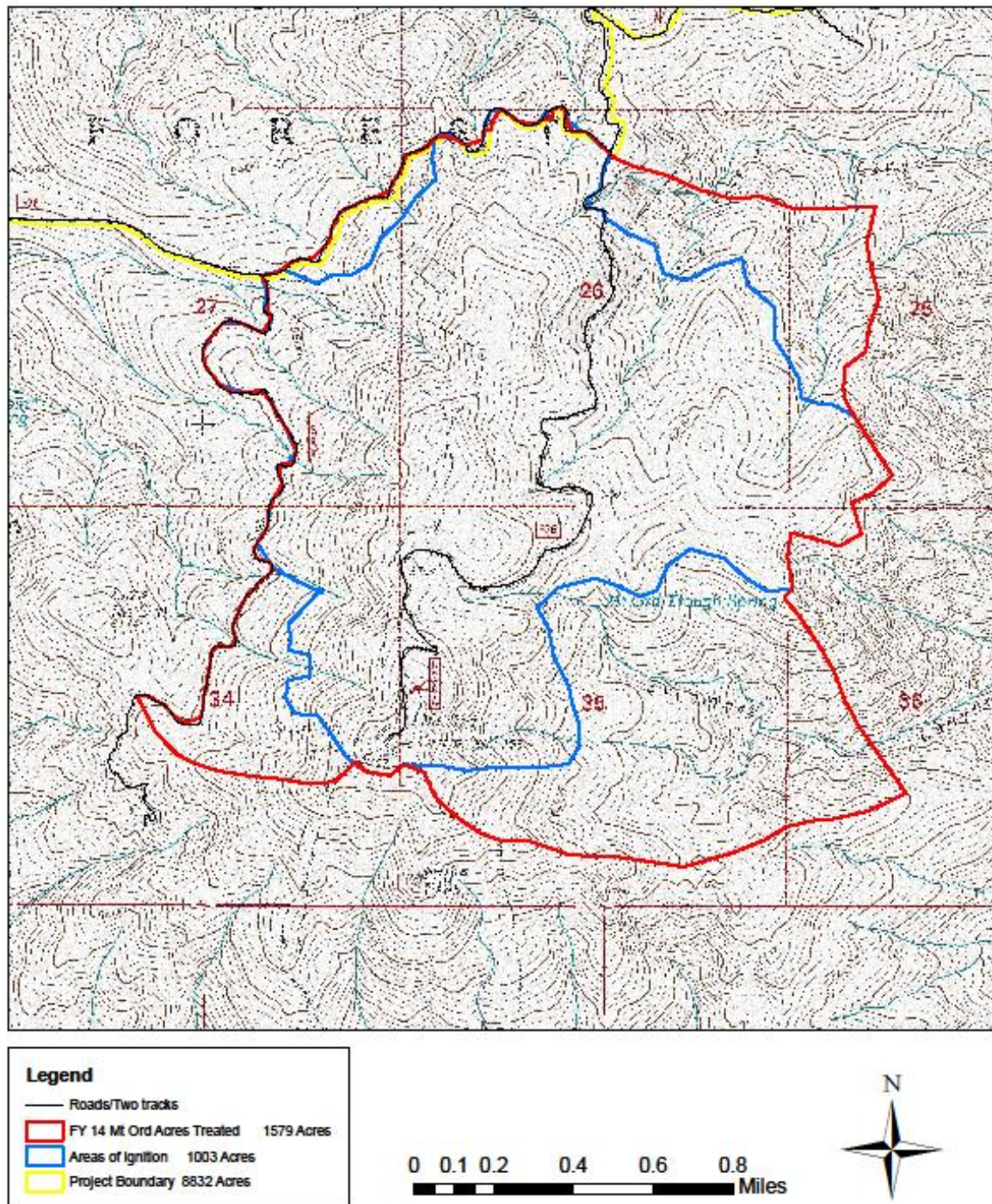
The District maintains two green waste disposal sites for wildfire prevention and community clearance. One site is located at the junction of Highway 188 and the 83 Road. The second site is across from the Transfer Station in Punkin Center. Forest personnel plan on improving the Punkin Center site so it will be able to handle more material.

The District is very active in the community presenting Firewise programs and information to the public. Three demonstration fuel reduction projects involving pruning and fuel reduction techniques described in Firewise brochures were completed adjacent to private properties. Personnel are working on communicating the changing message concerning controlled burns. The concept of allowing naturally occurring fires to progress without direct suppression when conditions allow is new to community members who have grown up with the traditional message of total fire suppression.

#### **Map 5. Mt. Ord Treatment Area**



## FY 14 Mt Ord Acres Treated



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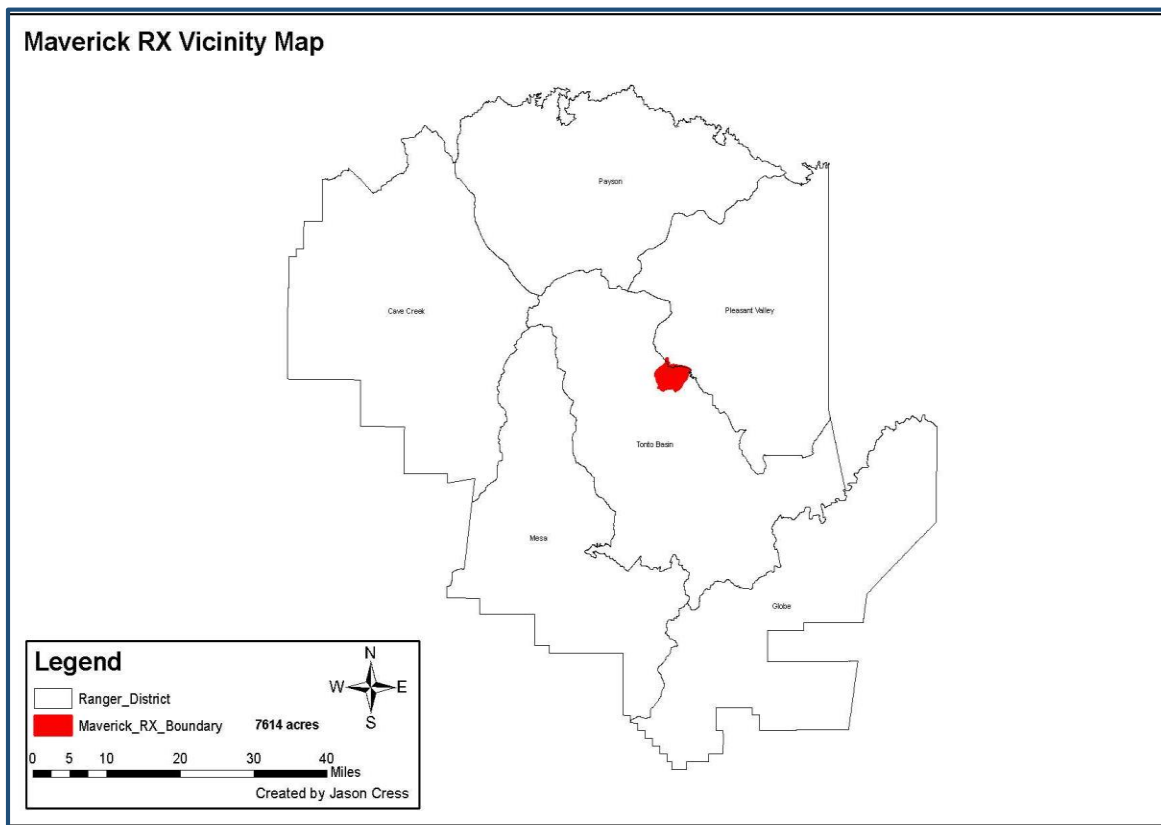




An important program for the Tonto Basin District is fuels management. During the winter of 2013, a major fuels treatment project on Mount Ord was completed. The goal was to reduce the fuel loading and lesson the potential of a catastrophic wildfire by burning brush. As part of a forest health maintenace program, prescribed burning will restore the forest to a more natural fire regime. A total of 1100 acres was burned to provide a buffer around a major communication facility on the mountain. A multi-layered approach was taken with the goal of removing 50-70 percent of the chaparral in concentric rings on top of the mountain. The fuels consisted of ponderosa pine and brush. District personnel have planned on a fuels treatment in the Picture Mountain Area, eight miles northeast of Punkin Center. The project consists of 2000 acres for fuels treatment.

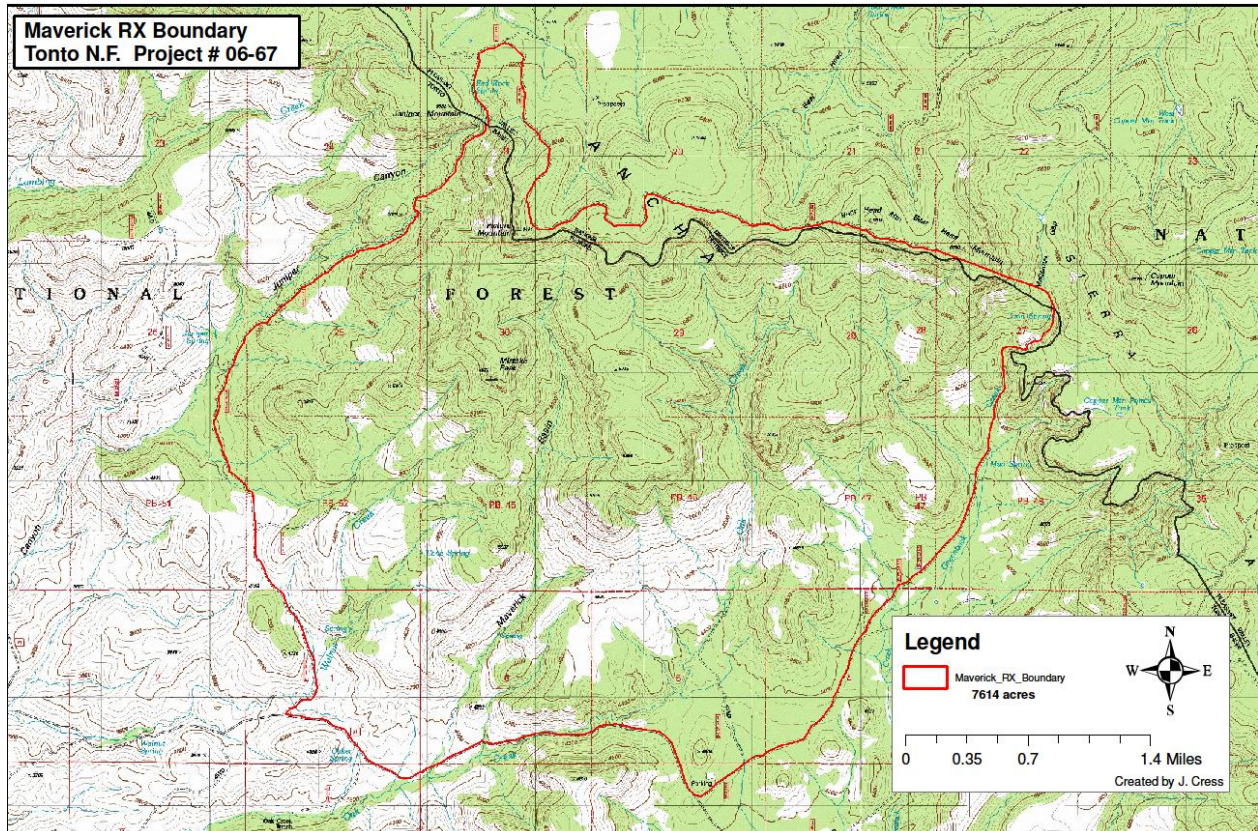
The next major fuels modification project, The Maverick Project, will consist of over 7,600 acres. Located north of the Tonto Basin and south of Pleasant Valley, the project will consist of mostly grass, juniper, and chaparral. In the higher elevations of the project, there are Ponderosa Pine stands that will also be treated. The goal of the project is to reduce the fuel loading and lesson the chance of a catastrophic wildfire. The project will improve animal habitat and forage for wildlife. The Maverick Project will also help to maintain and improve watershed conditions in the area.

#### **Map 6. Maverick Project Vicinity Map**





Map 7. Maverick Project Boundary



### Globe Ranger District

The Globe Ranger District (RD) covers nearly 450,000 acres of National Forest lands in Southern Gila County. The cities, towns, and communities of Southern Gila County are nearly surrounded by federal lands including the National Forest and the San Carlos Reservation to the east. Several of the communities are rated as having a high risk of catastrophic wildfire, either from fires moving into the interface, or structure fires spreading into the forest lands.

The Globe RD supports (1) Hotshot Crew, the Globe Interagency Hotshot Crew, (1) Type III Engine, and (1) Type VI Engine. The District has a working mutual aid agreement with the Globe, Canyon, Tri-City, and Superior Fire Departments. Two Suppression Battalion Chief positions are shared with the Tonto RD as part of the Central Zone.

Recreation and mining are the principle activities on the District. There is a heavy use of camping facilities in





the summer causing a major population increase. Fire Prevention Officers routinely provide One-Less-Spark and other fire prevention messages to visitors and residents during contact opportunities. The District is also involved with State Forestry at the District level with the Firewise Program in the Top Of The World Community. Other assets located on the District include major power transmission lines belonging to APS and SRP power companies.



## SECTION III: COMMUNITY MITIGATION PLAN

The 2010 South Gila County CWPP outlined treatment management units in the communities covered by the SGCCWPP. The Core Team proposed priorities for wildland fire mitigation projects including residential treatments, firebreaks and fuel mitigation treatments on undeveloped lands based on wildland fuels, fire history and community values. One of the primary goals of the 2010 CWPP was to complete continuous treatments as a means of providing greater protection from wildfires for entire communities.

The definition of mitigation used by the 2015 Review Team was adopted from a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publication. “The purpose of mitigation planning is to identify policies and actions that can be implemented over the long term to reduce risk and future losses. A Mitigation Plan forms the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The planning process is as important as the plan itself. It creates a framework for risk-based decision making to reduce damages to lives, property, and the economy from future disasters.”<sup>8</sup>

A current definition used defines wildfire mitigation as Actions taken to reduce the likelihood of loss due to wildfire. The Core Team, understanding the importance of mitigation, developed approaches that included methods such as: reducing hazardous fuels, creating defensible space around individual homes and subdivisions, enhancing emergency preparedness and response capabilities, upgrading current infrastructure, and applying programs that foster community awareness and neighborhood activism. Implementing these actions will significantly reduce the risk of loss due to wildfire to an individual home, and on a larger implementation scale, to an entire community. The task of the Review Team was to review fuels treatment programs, prevention and loss mitigation efforts, community preparedness activities and programs developed to utilize woody material produced by the fuels treatment programs. The Review Team also reviewed fire activity in the planning area to ensure that the majority of wildfires were within identified planning areas.

### A. Fuel Reduction Activities and Priorities

A primary goal of the Review Team was to document completed fuels treatment programs and determine areas needing further work to complete continuous boundaries around communities. Members of the Review Team reported on fuels mitigation projects completed in their jurisdiction since the CWPP was adopted in 2010.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.fema.gov/multi-hazard-mitigation-planning>





### Completed Forest Service, Agency and Community Mitigation Projects

| Agency                 | Location         | Activity                   | Work Type                            | Scope                                 |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Tonto NF               | Mt. Ord          | Burning                    | Reduce Fuel Loading                  | 1,579 acres                           |
| Tonto NF               | Maverick Project | Treatment                  | Fuels Reduction                      | 7,600 acres                           |
| Tonto NF               | 4FRI             | Thinning                   |                                      |                                       |
| APS                    | Area wide        | Pole Replacement           | Wood to Steel Pole Replacement       |                                       |
| APS                    | Area wide        | Fuels Maintenance          | Vegetation Clearing underneath poles | 5,000 poles for 2015, 30,000 annually |
| T.N.F., Tri-City, ASFD | CP1, Canyons     | Riparian Habitat Treatment |                                      | 3,000 acres                           |
| Tonto NF               | Hobbs 1          | Fuels Reduction            | Treatment Burning                    | 2,500 acres                           |
| Tonto NF               | Pinal Mountain   | Fuel Break Const/Maint     | Burning, Fuels Reduction             | 600 acres                             |
| Globe                  | G1               | Fuels Maintenance          | Creek Basin Fuel & Debris Removal    | 8 Miles of Creek Drainage             |

### Fuels Reduction Projects in the Planning Stage

The Tonto National Forest has completed the environmental analysis work on several treatment areas. The majority of the projects are in the Northern Gila County CWPP area, but the Maverick project will have a major impact on reducing the threat of a major wildfire on the southern planning area. APS is beginning the planning stages of an area-wide pole clearing project designed to reduce the fuels under power pole right-of-way. In addition, APS will be removing wood poles and replacing them with steel poles as replacement is required.

One of the key elements in fuels treatment programs is maintaining the work that has been accomplished. The Review Team will determine a maintenance schedule for treated areas and possible treatment methods. Based on Code 550 of the National Conservancy Practice Standards, mitigation maintenance on fuelbreaks should be on a 2-to-3 year basis or as deemed necessary to ensure the fuelbreaks will provide the safety anticipated when originally constructed. The cost per acre to maintain a recently treated fuelbreak is considerable less than the original treatment cost per acre. If no maintenance work is completed, fuels will eventually return to their previous condition, increasing the risk of catastrophic wildfires.





### Future Mitigation Projects

| Agency  | Location                 | Activity                     | Scope        |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Tonto NF, Private Land Owners, Mining Companies | Wheatfields              | Fuels Burning, Brush Removal | 1,000 acres  |
| Tonto NF, Tri-City FD                           | Canyons                  | Brush Removal, Burning       | 1,000 acres  |
| Tonto Basin Fire District                       | Tonto Basin Private Land | Defensible space Activities  | Districtwide |

## B. Prevention and Loss Mitigation

The Southern Gila County CWPP will continue to be used as a model for preventing future catastrophic wildfires. Interagency coordination is essential and the SGCCWPP will provide guidance in improving the safety of the at-risk communities in the planning area. The Core Team developed several goals for wildland fire prevention and fire-loss mitigation. The review team made the following recommendations based on the initial goals set in 2010:

- Continue to improve fire suppression capabilities, including training, apparatus and equipment, and emergency response plans
- Improve area-wide communications including dispatching of units, radio communications, cell-phone coverage, and the use of mobile repeaters
- Continue to promote community collaboration, involvement in individual and community fuels reduction projects
- Preserve the aesthetics of the interface areas while improving wildlife habitat
- Identifying funding needs and opportunities, attempt regional approaches to grant funding requests where feasible
- Continue to inform the community on the safest means of protecting property from the effects of wildfire

Many of the fire departments and fire districts have been able to increase staffing levels, improve training and PPE wh, and decreasing response times through department mergers and the development of automatic and mutual aid agreements. Continued monitoring fire department capabilities will enhance community safety. Regional training opportunities will provide an increased level of training at a significant cost savings. Regional training also provides the benefit of personnel becoming acquainted with different agency equipment and procedures. Other fire



department activities include the use of GIS for mapping, water source siting and safety zone locations. An important function will be maintaining an strong community education program.

The Southern CWPP planning area has limited means of communication in several areas. The development and improvement of regional communication methods will increase community and firefighter safety. Regional communication agreements will reduce cost of dispatching emergency units, reduce response times, and improve scene communications. Using a regional approach may improve the potential for grant funding success.

The 2010 Core Team adopted the standards listed in the Firewise Communities Program to help inform the public on measures to improve home construction safety, the importance of creating a defensible space around their homes, and coordinate with neighbors creating a natural boundary around communities. The adoption of the Firewise program with the direction of the ASFD increased the safety of many communities. “The Firewise Communities/USA Recognition Program is a process that empowers neighbors to work together in reducing their wildfire risk... taking action and ownership in preparing and protecting their homes against the threat of wildfire.”<sup>9</sup> The Arizona State Forestry Department administers the community Firewise certification program. “The program encourages local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others.

Community evacuation plans and escape routes is an important element in community safety planning. The Review Team identified several measures for mitigating the risks to community during a community emergency. These measures included:

- Improving hazardous conditions along primary and secondary access routes
- Creating and improving secondary means of access/egress
- Treatment of fuels along primary and secondary evacuation routes
- The establishment of Temporary Shelter Areas (TSA) for community members and visitors, including fuels treatments in TSA locations
- Adopt standard evacuation route signs

## **C. Regional Agreements**

### **Gila County Fire Agencies “Mutual Aid Agreement”**

The purpose of the Gila County Fire Agencies Mutual Aid agreement is to provide a mechanism for the dispatch of personnel and equipment from the area serviced by one agency to the area serviced by any other agency ... “to provide additional fire, EMS, or other emergency services in

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<sup>9</sup> <http://firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx?sso=0>



the event of emergency situations in each part of the areas served by the Agencies.<sup>10</sup> Agencies who signed the agreement did so with the understanding that agencies would not charge for their services, except for expendable supplies, and would be coordinated with the Arizona Department of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service. Agencies would not be at fault for not being able to respond outside of the jurisdiction due to substantial reason including reduced response capabilities, staffing shortages and high call volume in their own area.

#### **Arizona “Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan”**

Signed by the Arizona Governor in 2010, the “Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan (FSMAP) is the initial activation and mobilization plan prior to a declaration of emergency. This plan is also intended to complement the State of Arizona Emergency Response and Recovery Plan (SERRP).”

The Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan “supports the concepts of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and multi-hazard response planning. Arizona’s fire service conducts emergency operations planning at four (4) levels: Local, Tribal, County and State.<sup>11</sup>”

Phoenix Fire Department Regional Dispatch Center (PFDRDC) will act as the Intermediary and facilitator for resource requests and deployment documentation until the Incident City’s and/or County’s EOC is activated and operational. Once the local EOC is operational, all requests for resources will be processed through the applicable EOC.

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<sup>10</sup> <http://paysonaz.gov/Council/agendas/2010/04-15-10-A/G3-Res2546-GilaCoFireMutualAidAgmnt.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.iafc.org/files/mtlAid\\_StatePlanAZ.pdf](https://www.iafc.org/files/mtlAid_StatePlanAZ.pdf)



## SECTION IV: SOUTHERN GILA COUNTY CWPP PRIORITIES: ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

The 2015 CWPP Review Team was tasked with reviewing the action recommendations developed by the “Core Team” during the Southern Gila County CWPP writing process. The 2010 Core Team created a series of action recommendations with three main priorities: identify priority treatment areas, reduce structural ignitability and finally, promote community involvement. During the review process, the Review Team analyzed treatment areas, utility projects designed to reduce the potential of ignition, community programs and community response changes made by fire departments, activities of both governmental agencies and community groups.

2015 CWPP Review Team reviewed fuel management activities that had taken place in the units. The review team also determined if the priorities established in 2010 remained the same for each management unit. Team members also looked at the recent 5-year fire history to determine the effectiveness of fuels treatment areas where fires had occurred.

Fire Districts, Fire Departments and Government agencies have been addressing the WUI issues in the Northern Gila County CWPP planning area for approximately 11 years. During this time, grants have been used to purchase equipment, fund local fuels mitigation projects and meet matching fund requirements of federal grants. Federal funds have been used to complete environmental assessments and completion of fuels mitigation projects. State funds have been used to improve the safety of communities throughout the Rim Country. Continued federal, state and local partnerships will be critical in improving the safety of the Wildland Urban Interface communities.

### ***Recommendations:***

- Create an accounting method of grant funds received.
- Create a method of tracking fuels mitigation projects.
- Seek opportunities for regional grant funding requests.
- Provide digitized maps to the community illustrating fuels mitigation projects.

### **Public Education and Communications**

The fire departments and fire protection districts, government agencies and community groups are involved with the community in presenting fire safe programs. Many communities have adopted Firewise suggestions and have been certified as Firewise communities. One of the common factors seen with public awareness is fatigue, when memory of recent local fires



diminishes, public awareness and focus on preventing wildfires and structural ignitions becomes less important in members daily lives. Providing a standard message to all communities involved would be invaluable. A message that combines the values of community life, property value, the importance of the ecosystem they live in and the need for fire safety will greatly increase the acceptance of the message.

***Recommendations:***

Communicate the CWPP report to all members of the community through the:

- Continued use of home surveys with recommended mitigation measures.
- Define levels of risk and hazards for community members and visitors.
- Emphasize the value of fuel reduction programs.
- Creation of fire suppression capabilities in all communities.
- Value to the environment and wildlife in the use of prescribed fires and fuels management programs.
- Use of Firewise and related educational materials to increase homeowner acceptance of homeowner preparedness.
- Complete activation of community alert system.
- Utilize community resources to communicate messages in day-to-day and emergency activities.
- Create links to Arizona State Lands Department, Arizona Fish and Game Department, USDA Forest Service, Firewise, Gila County Department of Emergency Services, APS and SRV, Red Cross and other department's homepages.

## **Fire Department Response Functions**

The Fire Departments and Fire Districts within the Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan coverage area are involved with wildfire suppression and provide automatic and mutual aid to neighboring departments and the US Forest Service. The departments provide structural firefighting, EMS, rescue in addition to wildland firefighting. Personnel should be trained to meet the qualification as required by the Federal Interagency Fire Program Management (IFPM) and NWCG.

***Recommendations:***

**Basic Level Training:**

- S-130/190
- S-215 Fire in the Interface





- I-200 Basic ICS

**Supervisory Training:**

- S-290 Intermediate Wildland Fire behavior
- I-300 Intermediate ICS

**Burn Boss:**

- Rx 319
- Rx 341
- Rx 410
- RxB2

*Having a qualified Burn Boss will address the need for local communities who are required to have a qualified Burn Boss for community projects that require burning.*

**Specialized Training:**

- Firewise
- Fire Prevention and Education
- US Forest Service should continue to facilitate the training of local fire department members. Joint preplanning and pre-season training should be held on weekends to facilitate attendance by volunteer firefighters
- Possible weekend prescribed fire events:
  - Increased opportunities for Fire Department participation in training
  - Require adherence to NWCG standards
  - Encourage the use of task books to facilitate position certification, provide Training Tech/Specialist to increase opportunities
  - Expand firefighting opportunities to local firefighters beyond structural defense and protection activities

**Arizona State Fire Training:**

- Conduct statewide and regional NWCG certified training courses to assist local fire agencies develop qualified wildland firefighters and obtain required certifications.

**Equipment**



Firefighters are equipped with specialized structural firefighting personal protective equipment (PPE) which is not functional in the wildland firefighting environment. Personnel must carry both structural and wildland PPE on their assigned apparatus so that they are wearing the safest and most appropriate PPE.

***Recommendations:***

All PPE must meet the specifications listed in NFPA® 1977, Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting, 2011 Edition. The standard establishes requirements for protective clothing and equipment to protect against the adverse environmental effects encountered by personnel performing wildland firefighting operations.

- Equipment covered in the standard includes garments, helmets, gloves, footwear, goggles, chainsaw protection and load carrying equipment

Adoption of standardizes hose and water supply fittings will enable the usage of equipment from all apparatus improving the safety of firefighters on the fireline. Hose and fittings that do not meet the adopted standards will need to purchase adapters which can be permanently placed on needed hose and appliances to meet national standards. Once standards are adopted and all departments meet the standards, a Zone or Regional fire cache of standardized hose, appliances and equipment could be established at a central location.

- Increases the opportunity to catch fires in the initial attack phase of operations
- Improves firefighter safety by decreasing time on the firelines where water is not available

## **Community Evacuation Management**

Many of the communities in the study area are at a risk due to the limited ingress and egress routes. Numerous communities have only one means of egress which requires first responders to quickly determine the need for community evacuation. Other areas have roads with limited width and bridges with limited carrying capacity. With limited access, a critical delay in emergency vehicles making access to the community while members attempt to evacuate will delay resources entering and increasing the risk to community members and their homes. The Gila County Sherriff's Office is responsible for developing and maintaining community evacuation plans.

Fuels management projects along community roads may not be feasible due to limited easement right-of-way. Mowing of fuels along these critical roadways may be possible and provide an increased measure of safety.

## **Community Staging Areas**



With limited means of access and egress to several communities, the location and use of Temporary Shelter Areas (TSA) should be considered. TSA are designed for the use of the public only and do not meet the requirements of Safety Zones which are required for firefighting personnel. These TSA are pre-designated community locations large enough to accommodate a number of citizens. Livestock should be moved to other pre-designated location such as rodeo arenas. Signs should be placed in the community directing community members and visitors to the TSA. Evacuation routes should be marked with standardized signs. Local fire departments and land owners should meet and determine the most suitable location in their communities for TSA.

***Recommendations:***

1. Signs and placards should be posted throughout the community making evacuation corridors and TSA locations. This will provide a constant message to community members and during an evacuation or sheltering emergency, reduce confusion. For visitors to Rim Country communities, signage and radio messages will provide a means of communicating lifesaving messages.
2. Signs should be mounted on non-flammable posts.
3. Fuels in sheltering locations should be maintained be mowing, plowing or other methods.



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## **SECTION V: MONITORING PLAN**

The Core Team in 2010 recommended that the CWPP Working Group create a method of monitoring the successful implementation of the recommendations outlined in Section IV of the 2010 CWPP. The Working Group would also monitor the success in securing grants for implementation of the action items. The Working Group would also be responsible for collecting information on successful grant applications and documenting project activities and completion of

Following the meeting in 2015 of the CWPP Review Team, members recognized that there had not been a common location for collecting information on successful grants applications, project activities and work progress. Information gathered by the review team required individual agencies to review their 5-year work plans and grant history to obtain data.

The HFRA requires adoption of a CWPP, as does the FEMA Disaster – Mitigation Act of 2000. With formal adoption of this plan by the Core Team, the Town of Payson and the communities of Northern Gila County were eligible for hazardous fuels and non-fuels mitigation funding that could assist with plan implementation. Furthermore, adoption of this plan highlighted the partnerships among fire stations, local government, community-based organizations, and public agencies.

The success of any CWPP hinges on effective and long-term implementation of identified mitigation practices. It was recommend in the 2004 CWPP that the Core Team identify a Team to coordinate the recommendations of the CWPP. In 2006, a Review Team met and discussed the two-year implementation process of the CWPP. When the Review Team met in 2015, it was clear that an Implementation Team would be needed to maintain accurate records of grant funding, projects, community changes and emergency resources. The magnitude of the wildfire risks and hazards facing Northern Gila County is significant and any effective reduction requires on-going commitment and collaboration to implement the treatments recommended in this CWPP.

“Monitoring is an extremely difficult component of the CWPP process to maintain. It is crucial to determining which methods and initiatives are successful. For monitoring, a simple series of annual photographs from designated photo points may prove helpful. If larger treatments are undertaken, a more formal protocol of pretreatment and post-treatment measurements should be adopted. All projects should be recorded and records kept in a single designated location.<sup>12</sup>” In addition to coordinating the recommended actions in the CWPP, the involved stakeholders should coordinate the monitoring efforts to evaluate the efficacy of treatments. Specific monitoring duties can be delegated by the Review Team. The CWPP should be reexamined on an

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<sup>12</sup> [http://www.cityofgolden.net/media/pdf\\_719.pdf](http://www.cityofgolden.net/media/pdf_719.pdf)





annual or regular basis to ensure its relevance. This may be accomplished through meetings which include the local fire departments, governmental agencies, homeowner groups, and other stakeholders.

## **Plan Maintenance**

For the 2015 Southern Gila County CWPP, the Review Team agrees:

1. The following group(s) should maintain the document and record of projects and initiatives: Gila County Office of Emergency Management, in coordination with the Southern Gila County Fire Chiefs
2. The CWPP will be reviewed on an annual basis during the annual wildfire pre-season meeting held each year during the spring.
3. Each Department/Agency is responsible for recording department updates. A blank spreadsheet will be provided as an appendix to each printed document (see Appendix C). Each department or agency will record changes in items such as:
  - Staffing
  - Stations
  - Apparatus
  - Training
  - grant funds applied for and obtained
  - mitigation projects completed and treatment type/activities
4. Each Department will enter and maintain specific data on their own spreadsheet and at the announced meeting, discuss department changes.
5. The Gila County Office of Emergency Management will collate the data and add as an appendix to the CWPP each year during the document review and update.



## APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

| Acronym | Term                                     |
|---------|--|
| 4FRI    | 4 Forest Restoration Initiative          |
| AAR     | After Action Report                      |
| ADOT    | Arizona Department of Transportation     |
| APS     | Arizona Public Services                  |
| ARC     | American Red Cross                       |
| ASFD    | Arizona State Forestry Division          |
| BIA     | Bureau of Indian Affairs                 |
| BLM     | PG 6                                     |
| CERT    | Community Emergency Response Team        |
| CKFD    | Christopher-Kohls Fire Department        |
| CPR     | Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation            |
| CWPP    | Community Wildfire Protection Plan       |
| DPS     | (Arizona) Department of Safety           |
| EA      | Environmental Assessment                 |
| EAS     | Emergency Alert System                   |
| EIS     | Environmental Impact Statement           |
| EM      | Emergency Management                     |
| EMS     | Emergency Medical Service                |
| EMT     | Emergency Management Training            |
| EOC     | Emergency Operations Center              |
| ESRI    | Environmental Systems Research Institute |
| FD      | Fire Department                          |
| FEMA    | Federal Emergency Management Agency      |
| FF      | Fire Fighter                             |
| FMS     | Fire Mitigation Specialist               |



| Acronym | Term  |
|---------|---|
| FSMAP   | Fire Service Mutual Aid Plan                            |
| GCOEM   | Gila County Office of Emergency Management              |
| GIO     | PG 18   |
| GIS     | Geographic Information System                           |
| GPS     | Global Positioning System                               |
| HFRA    | Healthy Forests Restoration Act                         |
| ICS     | Incident Command System                                 |
| IFPM    | (Federal) Interagency Fire Program Management           |
| IGA     | Intergovernmental Agreement                             |
| IMS     | Incident Management System                              |
| IMT     | Incident Management Team                                |
| IQS     | Incident Qualification System                           |
| IRPG    | Incident Response Pocket Guide                          |
| ISO     | Insurance Services Office                               |
| IVM     | Integrated Vegetation Management                        |
| LDS     | PG 28   |
| MDC     | Mobile Data Computers                                   |
| NEPA    | National Environmental Policy Act                       |
| NF      | National Forest   |
| NFCA    | Northern Fire Chiefs Association                        |
| NEPA    | National Environmental Policy Act                       |
| NFCA    | Northern Fire Chiefs Association                        |
| NFPA    | National Fire Protection Association                    |
| NGCC    | Northern Gila County Community Response Team            |
| NGCCWPP | Northern Gila County Community Wildfire Protection Plan |
| NIMS    | National Incident Management System                     |
| NPS     | PG 6  |



| Acronym | Term  |
|---------|---|
| NWCG    | PG 49   |
| PFD     | Payson Fire Department                                |
| PFDRDC  | Phoenix Fire Department Regional Dispatch Center      |
| PPD     | Payson Police Department                              |
| PPE     | Personal Protective Equipment                         |
| PSFR    | Pine Strawberry Fuels Reduction                       |
| PVFD    | Pleasant Valley Fire Department                       |
| RD      | (Payson) Ranger District                              |
| RSG     | Ready! Set! Go!                                       |
| SAFER   | Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response     |
| SARA    | Superfund Amendments Reauthorization Act              |
| SERRP   | State of Arizona Emergency Response and Recovery Plan |
| SIP     | Shelter In Place                                      |
| SRP     | Salt River Project                                    |
| TNF     | Tonto National Forest                                 |
| TSA     | Temporary Shelter Area                                |
| USDA    | United States Department of Agriculture               |
| USFS    | United States Forest Service                          |
| VFA     | Volunteer Fire Assistance                             |
| VHF     | Very High Frequency                                   |
| VLAT    | Very Large Air Tanker                                 |
| WFHF    | PG 38   |
| WPFD    | Whispering Pines Fire District                        |
| WUI     | Wildland Urban Interface                              |



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## APPENDIX B: WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE “WATCH-OUTS!”

Structure defense adds a whole new dimension to wildland firefighting. The Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG) provides an additional list of “Watch-outs!” designed specifically for the tactical challenges confronting firefighting personnel in the wildland urban interface (WUI). The WUI “Watch-outs!” include:

- Poor roads
- Bridge load limits
- Wooden construction and wood shake roofs
- Power lines
- Propane tanks and HazMat threat
- Inadequate water supply
- Natural fuels within 30 ft. (9 m) or closer to structures
- Structures in chimneys, box canyons, narrow canyons, or on steep slopes
- Extreme fire behavior
- Strong winds
- Panic during an evacuation<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> [http://training.nwcg.gov/classes/s130/508%20Files/071231\\_s130\\_m11\\_508.pdf](http://training.nwcg.gov/classes/s130/508%20Files/071231_s130_m11_508.pdf)





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## APPENDIX C: AGENCY UPDATES

As decided by the 2015 Southern Gila County CWPP Review Team, each participating Department or Agency should maintain the following spreadsheet on a regular basis (recommended monthly). At the annual CWPP review, each participating Department or Agency should provide the current spreadsheet to be included in the CWPP updates.

| Department/Agency | Month/Year | Contact Information | Training/Activity/<br>Qualifications | Grants | Staffing |
|-------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|----------|
|                   |            |                     |                                      |        |          |
|                   |            |                     |                                      |        |          |
|                   |            |                     |                                      |        |          |
|                   |            |                     |                                      |        |          |
|                   |            |                     |                                      |        |          |
|                   |            |                     |                                      |        |          |

(Continued)

| Department/Agency | Month/Year | Apparatus | Fuel Maintenance<br>Projects | Communications/<br>Dispatch | Aid Agreements |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
|                   |            |           |                              |                             |                |
|                   |            |           |                              |                             |                |
|                   |            |           |                              |                             |                |
|                   |            |           |                              |                             |                |
|                   |            |           |                              |                             |                |
|                   |            |           |                              |                             |                |



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