



Agenda

Firewise USA Recognition for Santa Rosa Valley

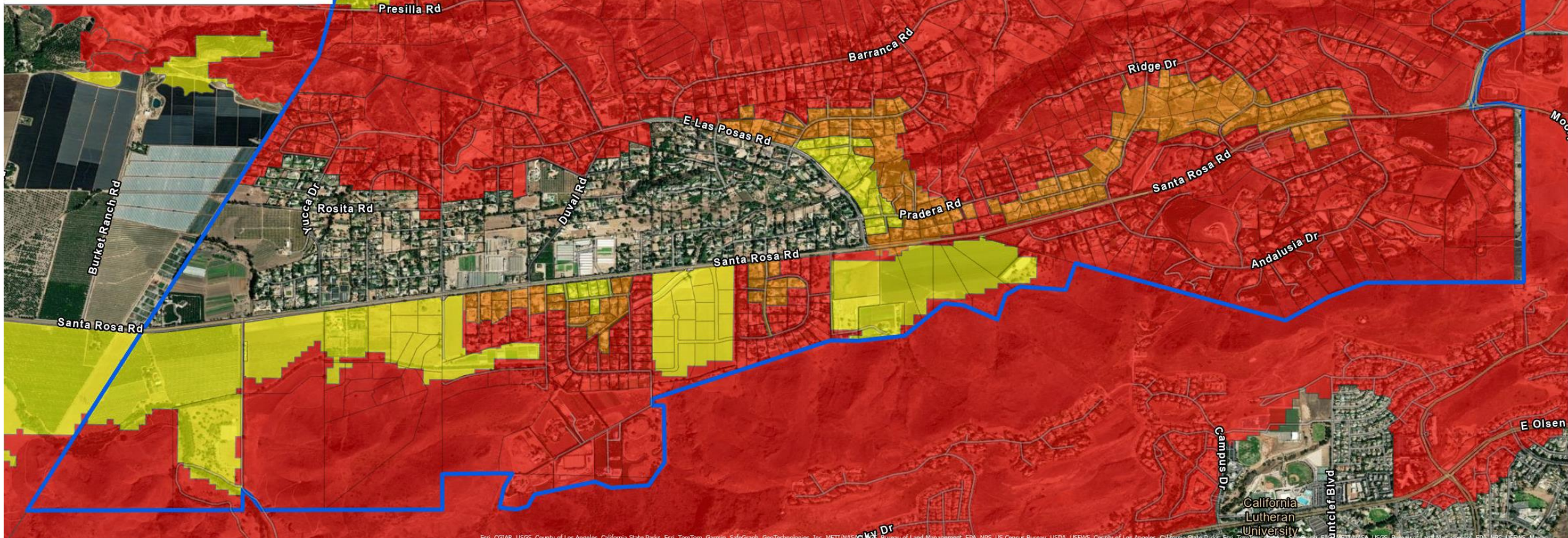
- Why become a Firewise USA Community?
- What is the Firewise USA Program?
- Six Steps Required for Firewise Recognition
- Strategy for SRV Firewise Recognition
 - Considerations
 - Committee and Resident Leader Responsibilities
 - Communication Strategies
- Example Community & Resident Firewise Activities
- Final Thoughts

Why become a Firewise Community?

- National Fire Protection Association's Firewise USA® program teaches communities how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together.
- Provides project framework for community action and education. An ongoing effort that builds community connectedness over time.
- A Firewise USA community "In Good Standing" is an official wildfire mitigation factor in determining insurance rates (CCR § 2644.9)
- **DISCLAIMER:** Becoming Firewise recognized does not guarantee a discount on insurance
- Motivates individuals and entire neighborhoods to harden their homes year after year thereby reducing the risk of catastrophic destruction of neighborhoods.
- Granting agencies want to support entire communities rather than helping individuals.

Legend

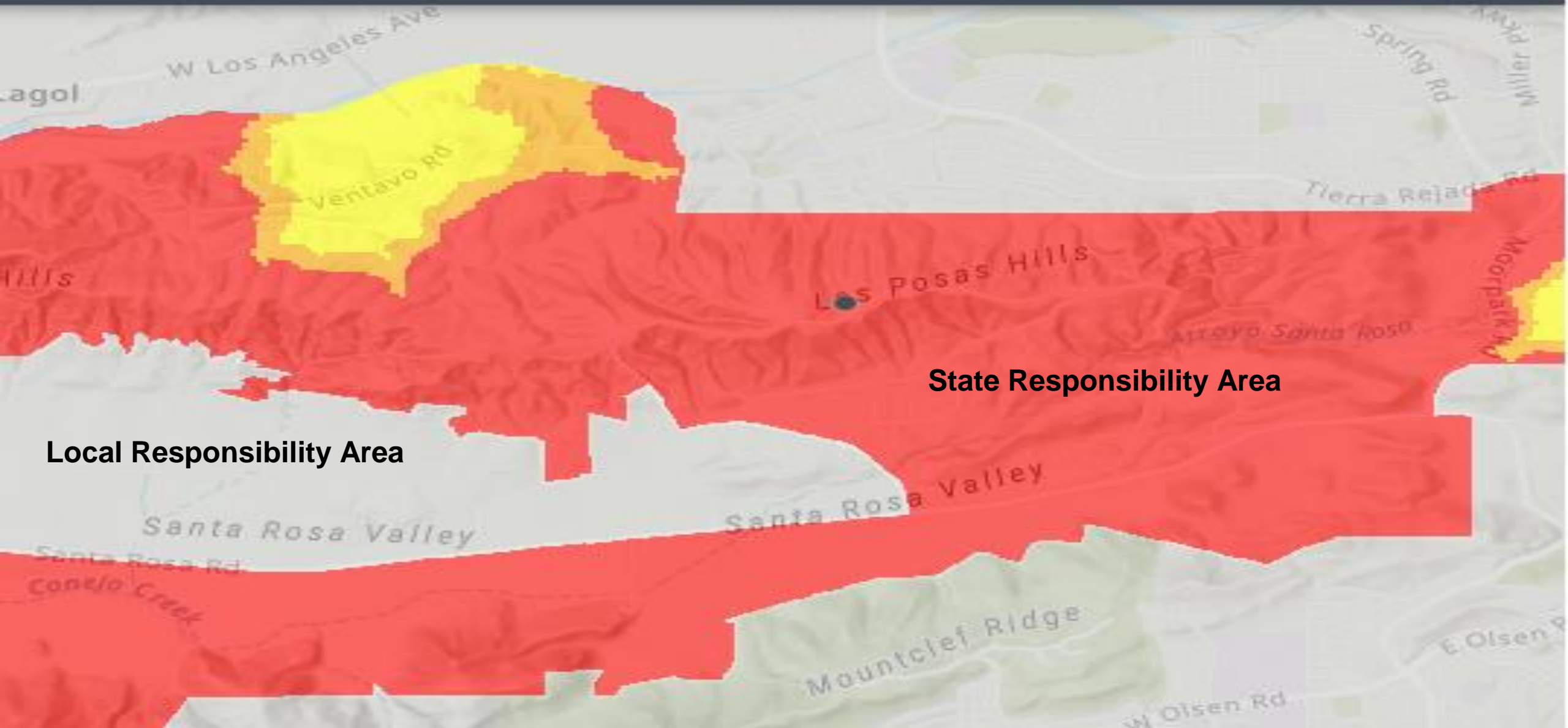
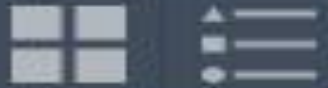
- (Pre-3/14/23) MAC Boundary
- Parcels
- Fire Hazard Severity Zones
- Hazard Rating
 - Moderate
 - High
 - Very High



Old MAC boundary – 1322 parcels

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Areas adopted in 2007

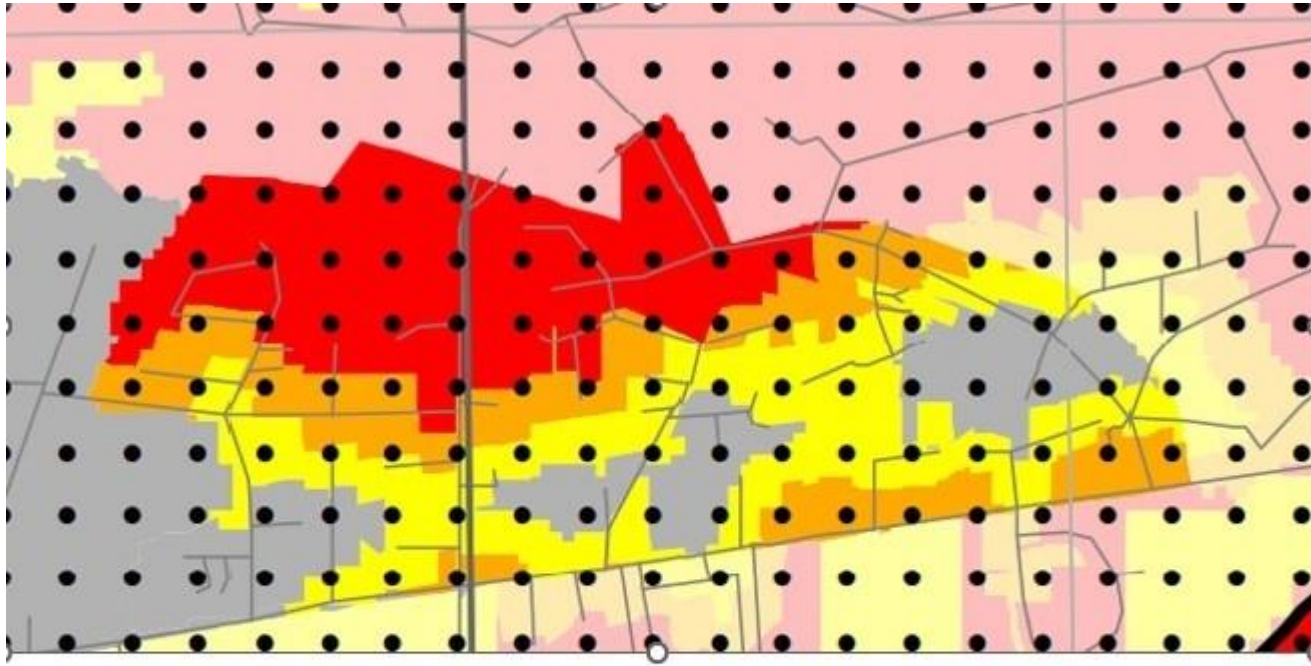
September 29 2023 - Effective April 1 2024



Local Responsibility Area

State Responsibility Area

Both Moderate and High Severity SRA parcels are now becoming Very High Severity as of April 1, 2024



Draft Map of CAL FIRE's Fire Hazard Severity Zones in SRV Local Responsibility Area



**My attempt to depict the
Local Responsibility Area
ratings within central portion
of Santa Rosa Valley**

According to the Wildfire Risk to
Communities website
(WildFireRisk.org)

Ventura County has a **very high** risk
of wildfire—higher than 90%
of counties in the US.

AND

Santa Rosa Valley has a **very high** risk
of wildfire—higher than 93%
of communities in the US.

**Call your Insurance Agent and ask for
your own dwelling's Fire Line Score**

What is the Firewise USA program?

Resident-driven, grassroots, voluntary multi-year program

- Community sizes between 8 to 2500 homes
- Neighbors helping educate neighbors model
- Free and voluntary participation
- No regulation or enforcement, honor system
- 8 communities in VC recognized “In Good Standing”
- 15 or more are now proposed and in development
- Local support provided by VC Fire Department and the non-profit VC Regional Fire Safe Council



SRV Firewise Program Participants

NFPA

The National Fire Protection Association “owns” the Firewise USA program and provides a portal for submitting applications and grants the recognition.

CalFire

Reviews and audits community applications before submittal to NFPA.

Residents

Lead Firewise efforts, gain community participation, works on the 6 steps, & asks for assistance when needed.

Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council (VRFSC)

Local non-profit organization providing Firewise workshops and assistance, free home hardening inspections, no-cost chipping days and grant \$.

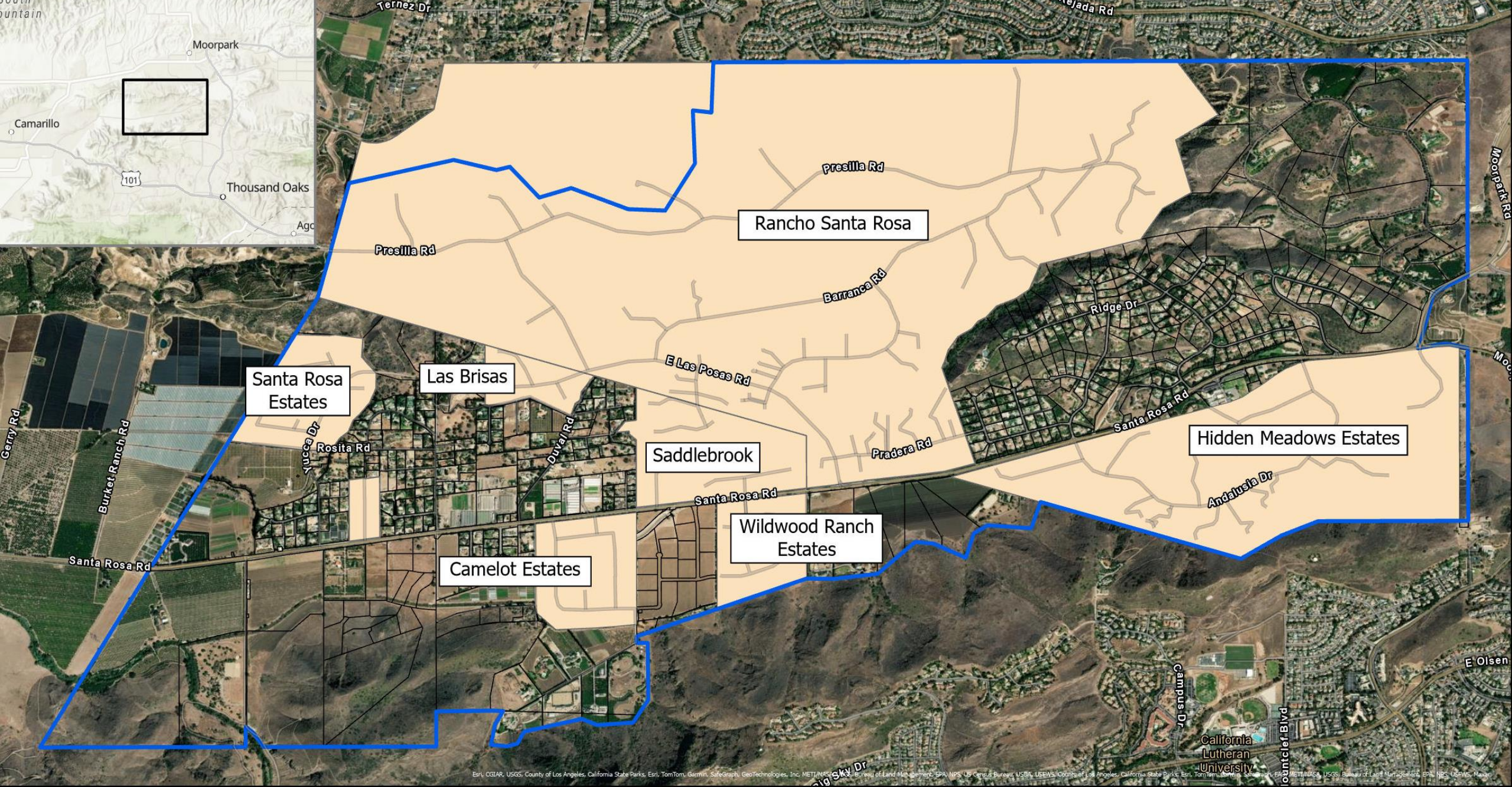
Ventura County Fire Department

Works in conjunction with VRFSC to supports Firewise communities, assists in developing Risk Assessments and Action Plan priorities.



Six Steps Required for Firewise USA Recognition





DRAFT NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY MAP - THIS IS A WORK IN PROGRESS

Santa Rosa Valley Neighborhoods

This map shows the entire boundary of the Santa Rosa Valley MAC, and then the individual neighborhoods within the MAC.

19 views

Last edit was seconds ago

Add layer + Share Preview

☒ SRV Neighborhoods

Individual styles

Holiday Pines/Honey Hill/Je...

Camelot

Wildwood Estates

rsr

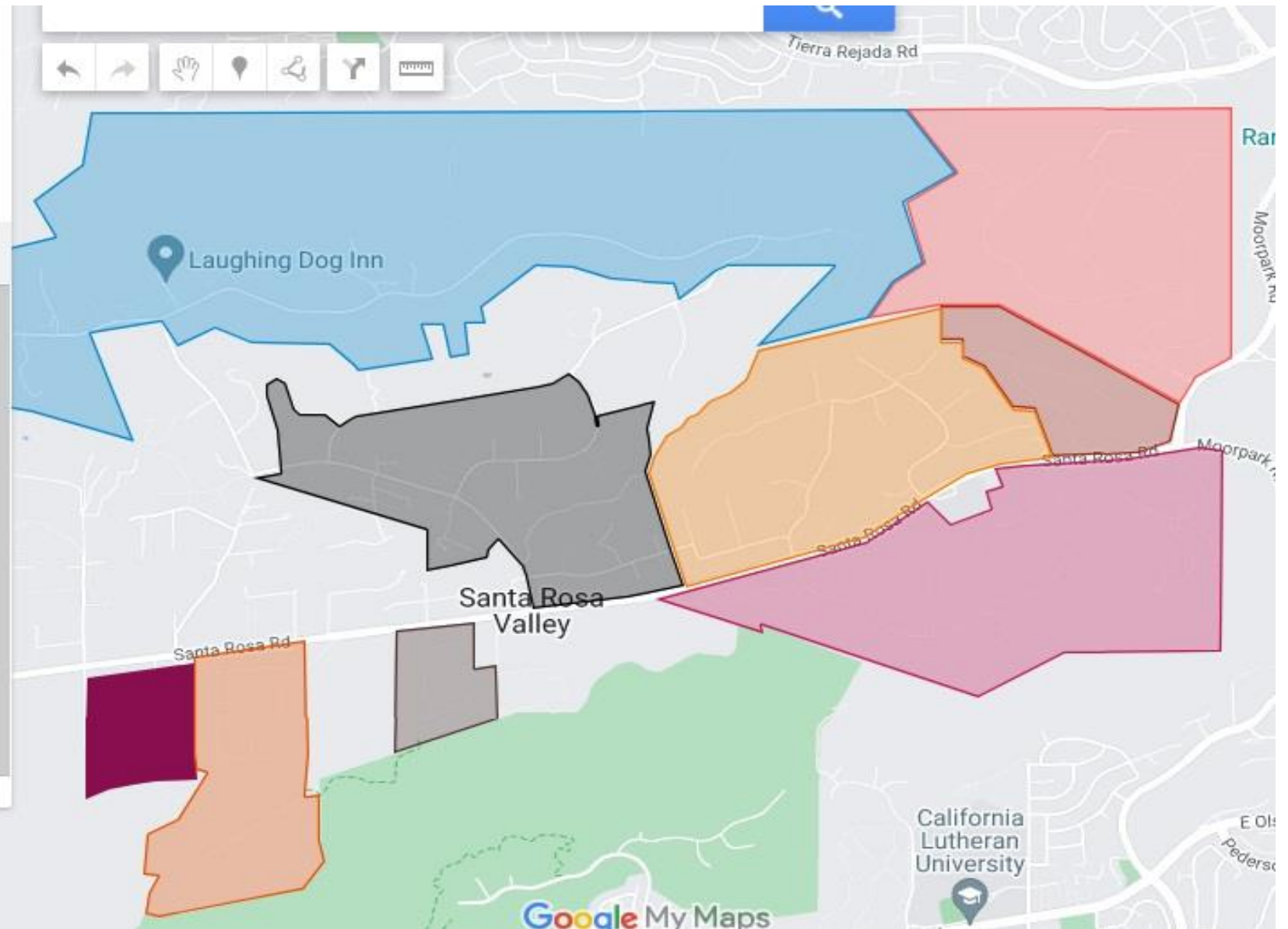
Hidden Meadows

Santa Rosa Highlands

Lexington Hills

Bridlewood

Presilla



Google My Maps version - THIS IS ALSO STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS

Risk Assessment Data Gathering

SRV Neighborhoods (partial list)									
Name	# of Homes	Property Mgmt	Lot Sizes	Roofing Materials	Siding Materials	Windows	Zone 0 Vegetation	5-30 feet Zone	30-100 feet Zone
Barbara Drive		none							
Blanchard / Chippenham									
Bridlewood	175	CPM							
Camelot Estates	59	ADAM							
Duval Rd									
Glenside Lane									
Hidden Meadows	82	ADAM							
Holiday Pines									
Las Brisas	16								
Lexington Hills	25								
Presilla Rd		none							
Rancho Rosita Estates / Summerview	10								
Rancho Santa Rosa	162	ADAM							
Rose Lane									
Saddlebrook	80								
Santa Rosa Highlands	21								
Santa Rosa Valley Estates		ADAM							
Wildwood Ranch Estates	37	ADAM							
Yucca Drive Road Improvement		none							
approximate total =	1150								

Neighborhood Observations Tallied by Percent Categories

EXAMPLE

Roofing materials: composite shingles, metal, cement tile and clay

Greater than 75% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles

50–75% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles

25–50% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles

Less than 25% of homes have metal, tile, or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles

SRV Firewise Committee Strategy Considerations

- Our goal has always been to gain Firewise USA recognition for the entire valley
- Firewise USA program is tailored and easier for cohesive small neighborhoods
- Block grant dollars (\$1000) are available for recognized VC Firewise Communities
- Our committee needs assistance from designated neighborhood Resident Leaders
- Each neighborhood should not have to invent their own program infrastructure
- There is an urgency to increase fire safety in our higher risk neighborhoods
- Neighborhoods with a higher interest in Firewise will be given higher priority
- We need active participation to increase year over year to retain recognition
- By using a phased approach we could expedite reaching our end goal

SRV Firewise Responsibilities

The SRV Firewise Committee will provide:

- Firewise USA process execution expertise
- Centralized website/database for disseminating and collecting required participation data
- Coordination of neighborhood polygon boundary definitions
- Support during VCFD's on-site Risk Assessments
- Support during the application's VCFD and CalFire review process
- Oversee the completion of the annual renewal requirements
- Coordination of community wide focused projects requiring large grant dollars

SRV Firewise Committee in collaboration with a Resident Leader will:

- Collect data details for the Risk Assessment document
- Define objectives and priorities for the 3-Year Action Plan document
- Coordinate at least 1 community education activity required per year
- Help coordinate any neighborhood focused projects (e.g., Chipping Days)

SRV Firewise Committee Communication Strategies

- ❖ Emails - addresses of “interested individuals” collected from SRV Firewise website
- ❖ HOAs – utilize methods used to communicate with members (emails, newsletters, etc.)
- ❖ Social media - various SRV Facebook pages, Nextdoor, Instagram, etc.
- ❖ Supervisor Gorrell’s SRV MAC website, digital newsletters and mailers
- ❖ Updates provided at every SRV MAC meeting and within digital communications
- ❖ Thru various SRV community groups such as SRV Riders, 4-H, SRTMS, etc.
- ❖ Camrosa billing notice blurbs
- ❖ VC Fire Department targeted communication channels
- ❖ Paper flyers distributed at community events and throughout neighborhoods
- ❖ At any and all future SRV community events
- ❖ Residents word of mouth – Neighbors helping neighbors!
- ❖ Most certainly at required annual Firewise outreach events

- ❖ **Subscribe NOW at our future website SRVisFireWise.org**

For those in attendance tonight don't forget to leave your contact info on the signup sheet

Defensible Space and Home Ignition Zones

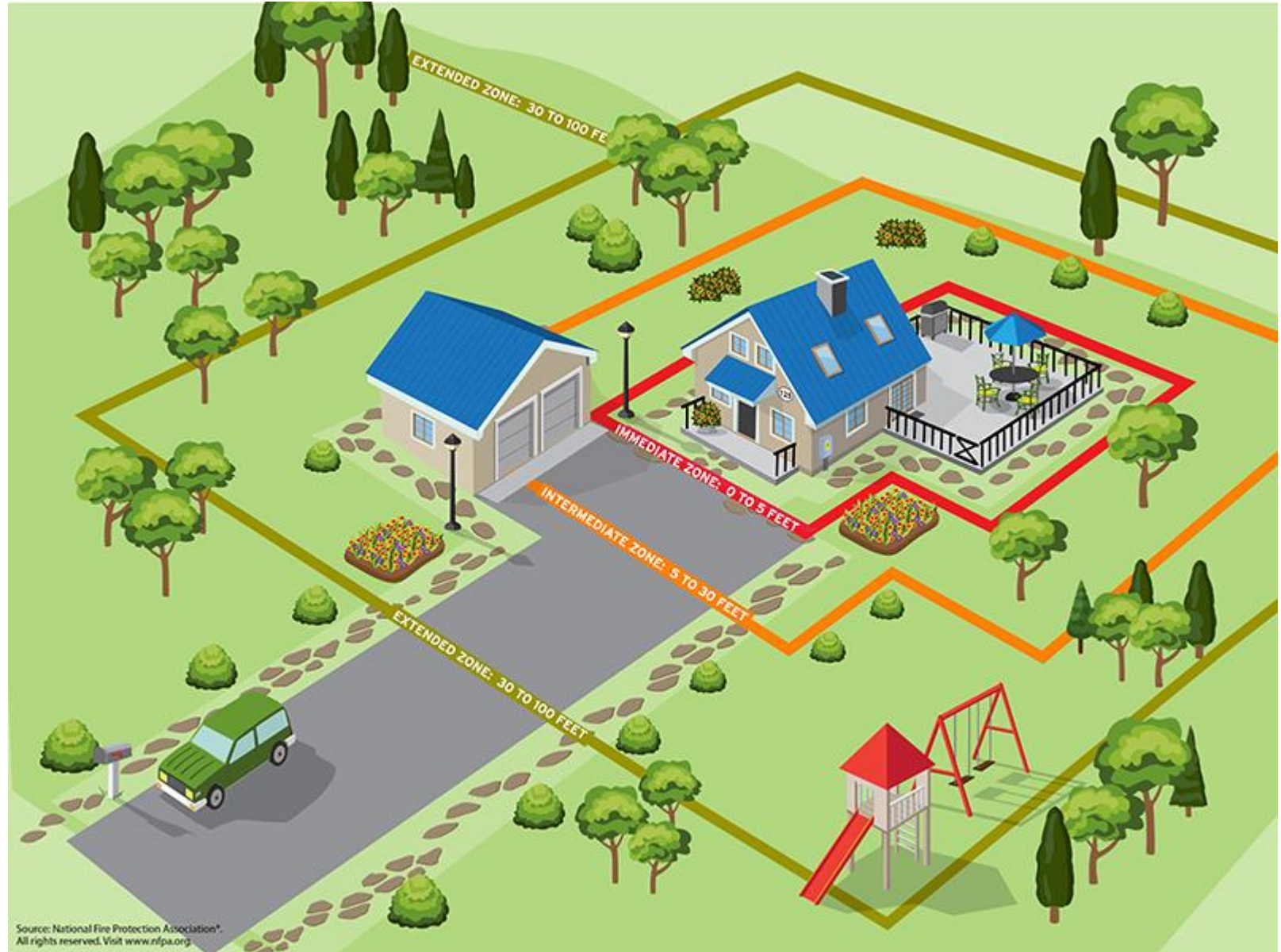
The largest factor determining a building's ability to withstand a wildfire is how well a home's 5 foot of perimeter resists embers

Immediate Zone aka **Zone 0**
0' – 5' from furthest exterior point
make it a non-combustible area

Intermediate Zone 5' – 30'
space out vegetation, eliminate
dry and ladder fuels, prune trees

Extended Zone 30' – 100' or more
remove dead litter/debris and
vegetation near out buildings

All this is from NFPA research



Home Hardening

NFPA Home Ignition Zone Checklist - Simple Steps to make a home safer from embers and radiant heat

- ✓ Clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris and pine needles that could catch embers
- ✓ Replace or repair any loose or missing shingles or roof tiles to prevent ember penetration
- ✓ Reduce embers that could pass through vents in the eaves by installing 1/8" metal mesh screening
- ✓ Clean debris from exterior attic vents and install 1/8" metal mesh screening
- ✓ Repair or replace damaged or loose window screens and any broken windows
- ✓ Screen or box-in areas below patios and decks with wire mesh to prevent debris and combustible materials from accumulating
- ✓ Move any flammable material away from wall exteriors - mulch, flammable plants, leaves and needles, firewood piles – anything that can burn
- ✓ Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches

Schedule a free no-cost Home Wildfire Assessment inspection with the VC Regional Fire Safe Council

A personalized private report with specific recommendations will be provided.

The report is an educational tool to help provide a starting point for residents on how to lower their risk.

Go to venturafiresafe.org/home-wildfire-assessments to sign up!

Time and Expense Investment Examples (\$25.43 spent = 1 hour)

- **Thinning or removal of trees**
- Repairs to retrofit open-eaves style construction to soffited-eaves
- Inspection/repairs of eaves and to ensure construction materials are in good condition
- Modifications of deck to increase the gap between boards from 1/8 inch to 1/4 inch
- Inspection of roof; replacement of shingles as needed
- **Removal all flammable materials from under decks and porches**
- Removal of debris between deck board gaps/joints
- **Removal of debris on the roof and in the gutters as needed**
- Replacement of missing deck boards to reduce ember entry to area under decks
- Replacement of vinyl gutters with metal gutters
- Chimney spark arrestor installation
- **Replacement of wood fencing sections attached to the house with a noncombustible product**
- Contractor labor costs to perform ignition resistant exterior improvements (e.g., new Class A roofs, mesh screening added to attic and crawl space vents, etc.)

Time and Expense Investment Examples (continued)

- **Mowing lawns and trimming native grasses and weeds as needed (e.g., annual weed clearances)**
- Creation of small fuel breaks by adding hardscaping (e.g., walkways/paths, patios, walls, etc.)
- **Delimbing and removal of lower tree branches**
- Creation of a non-flammable footprint under decks with gravel, stone or concrete
- **Relocation of firewood piles to at least 30 feet from the home and other structures**
- Installation of weatherstripping along the perimeter of garage doors to help keep embers out
- **Clearing of debris at the base of combustible fences**
- Clearing of vegetation beneath and around large stationary propane tanks
- Creation of a permanent non-flammable footprint under large stationary propane tanks
- **Raking and removal of pine needles, leaves, and ground debris**
- Use of a sealant (such as caulking) to cover gaps in open-eave areas
- **Replacement of combustible mulch material with stone/gravel**
- Replacement of highly-flammable vegetation with fire-resistant species
- **Reduction of ladder fuels**
- Stacking/piling of slash and other debris for chipping or curbside pickup

Neighborhood / Community Investment Examples

- Debris removal and maintenance of commonly owned areas
- **Door-to-door canvassing to get new neighbors involved in reducing wildfire risks**
- Mentoring adjacent neighborhoods on the importance of reducing wildfire risks
- **Organizing, coordinating, planning, and implementation of the annual education/outreach events**
- **Attendance at all Firewise meetings**
- Participation in group risk reduction activities for residents physically unable to do the work themselves
- Participation in national **Wildfire Community Preparedness Day – next one is May 4, 2024**
- Reduction of vegetation/fuels from adjacent ingress and egress routes
- **Collaboration hours spent with VC Regional Fire Safe Council and VC Fire Department**
- Coordination and preparations for community projects and meetings
- Personal expenses in support or related to the execution of community projects

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Many of us are getting non-renewals or at a minimum our premiums are going way up due to our High Severity Risk and higher Fire Line scores
- We can help ourselves and fellow Valley residents fight that by participating in SRV Firewise
- Achieving the required equivalent hours will be easy peasy for us
- The SRV Firewise Committee can provide central administration of the Firewise program and along with a Resident Leader much of the work necessary for submitting applications
- All residents need to do is enter your hours, \$ spent, and vegetation removed into our website
- Remember it is an ongoing program so in order to remain “In Good Standing” status our participation percentage will need to increase year over year
- Updates to Action Plan every 3 years, new Risk Assessment every 5 years
- All interested neighborhoods need to designate a Resident Leader very soon to be included in the initial SRV Firewise effort
- **So start spreading the word about Firewise to your neighbors!!!**

Questions?