



Santa Barbara Foothill Communities Community Wildfire Protection Plan Board of Supervisors Hearing

Speakers

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Acknowledgements

Acknowledgements

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CWPP Overview

What is a CWPP?

- A plan for wildfire risk reduction that is developed collaboratively
- Evaluates wildfire hazard and wildfire risk in the plan area
- Engages the community to identify main issues/concerns
- Identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommends *Best Management Practices*
- Identifies and prioritizes measures to reduce wildfire risk and increase wildfire preparedness
- 2003 Healthy Forest Restoration Act



A CWPP is not...

- A Decision Document
- A Vegetation Management Plan
- An Environmental Analysis Document
- A Project requiring environmental analysis under CEQA/NEPA

CWPP's are educational documents that make recommendations but do not commit agencies or the public to a course of action.



CWPP Requirements

Minimum Requirements

- Regional collaboration
- Develop prioritized hazardous fuel treatment units
- Develop strategies to reduce structural ignitability

Plan Approval

- Local Government (Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors)
- Local & State Fire Agencies (Santa Barbara County and CAL FIRE)

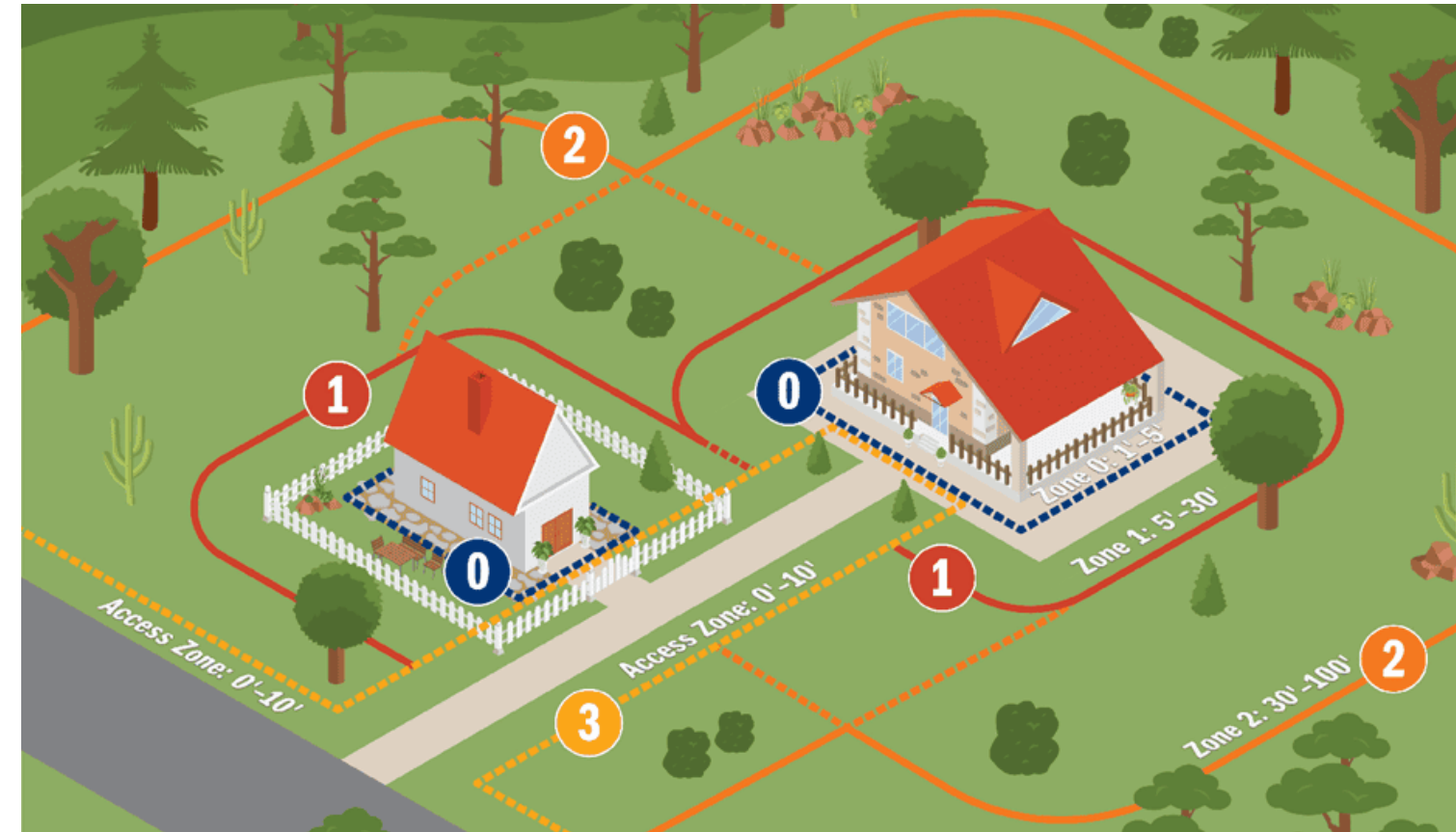
Benefits of an Approved Plan

- Identify and clarify priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical resources
- Access to federal and state grant funds to accomplish wildfire hazard mitigation work



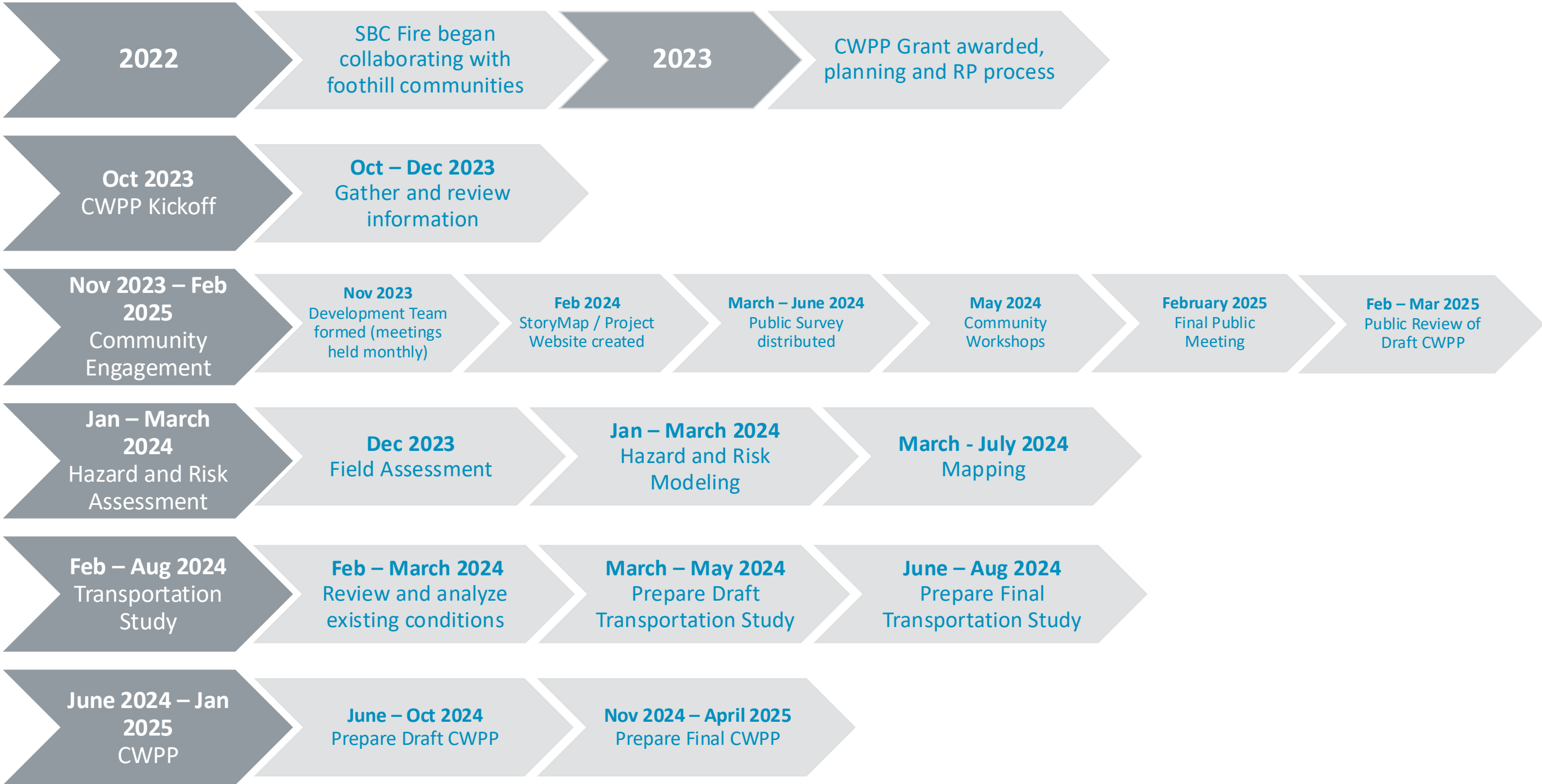
How the CWPP can help the community?

- Better identify and evaluate wildfire risk
- Expand wildfire risk reduction options:
 - Vegetation/Fuels
 - Structures
- Access to grants
- Stakeholder coordination
- Integration of fuel treatments with cooperators
- Best Management Practices developed for the community
- Community outreach/education



SB Foothills CWPP Timeline

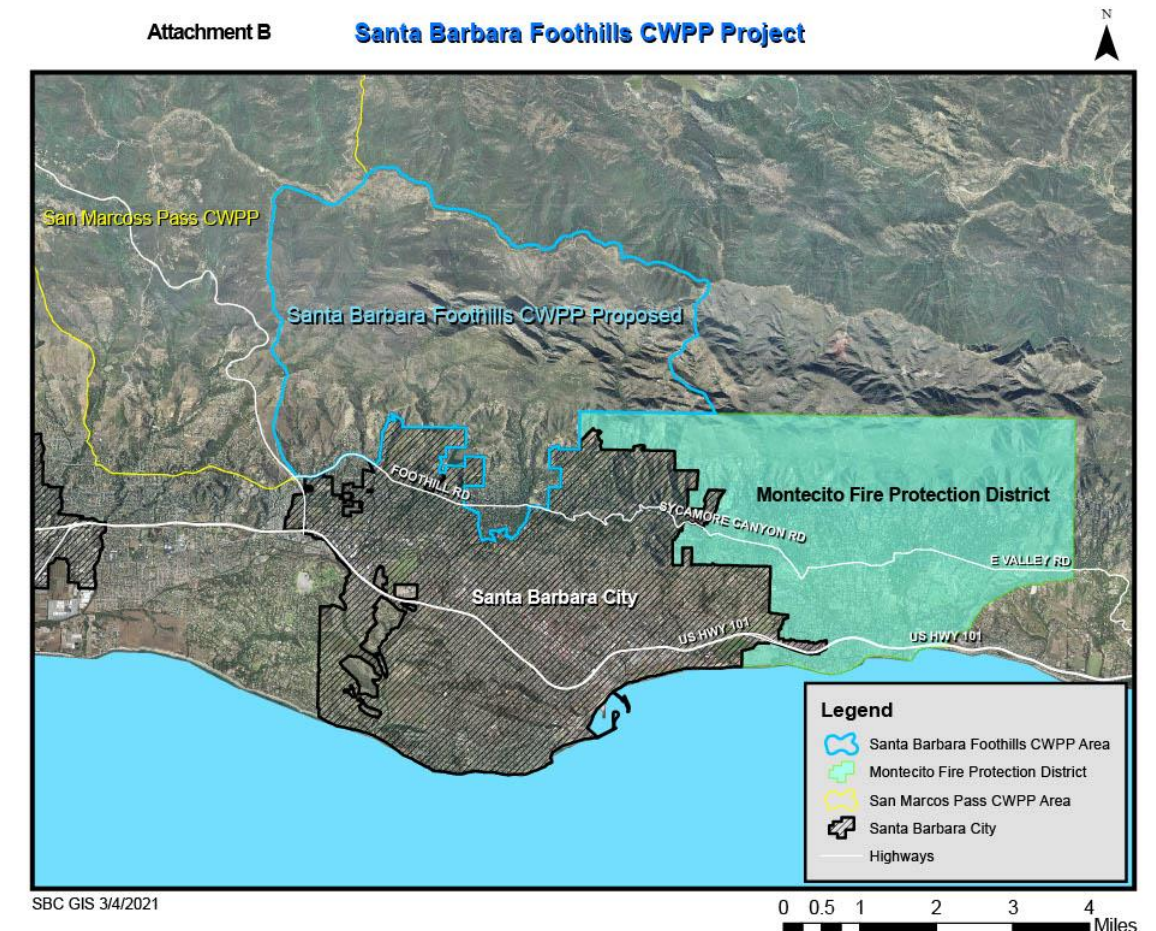
Project Timeline



SB Foothills CWPP Overview

Santa Barbara Foothills CWPP

- The County of Santa Barbara was awarded a grant from the California Department of Housing and Community Development to prepare a CWPP for the Plan Area.
- The Plan Area is defined by the unincorporated foothill area within County Fire jurisdictional boundaries.
- The Plan Area is adjacent existing CWPPs (San Marcos Pass CWPP, City of Santa Barbara CWPP, Montecito CWPP, Eastern Goleta Valley CWPP).



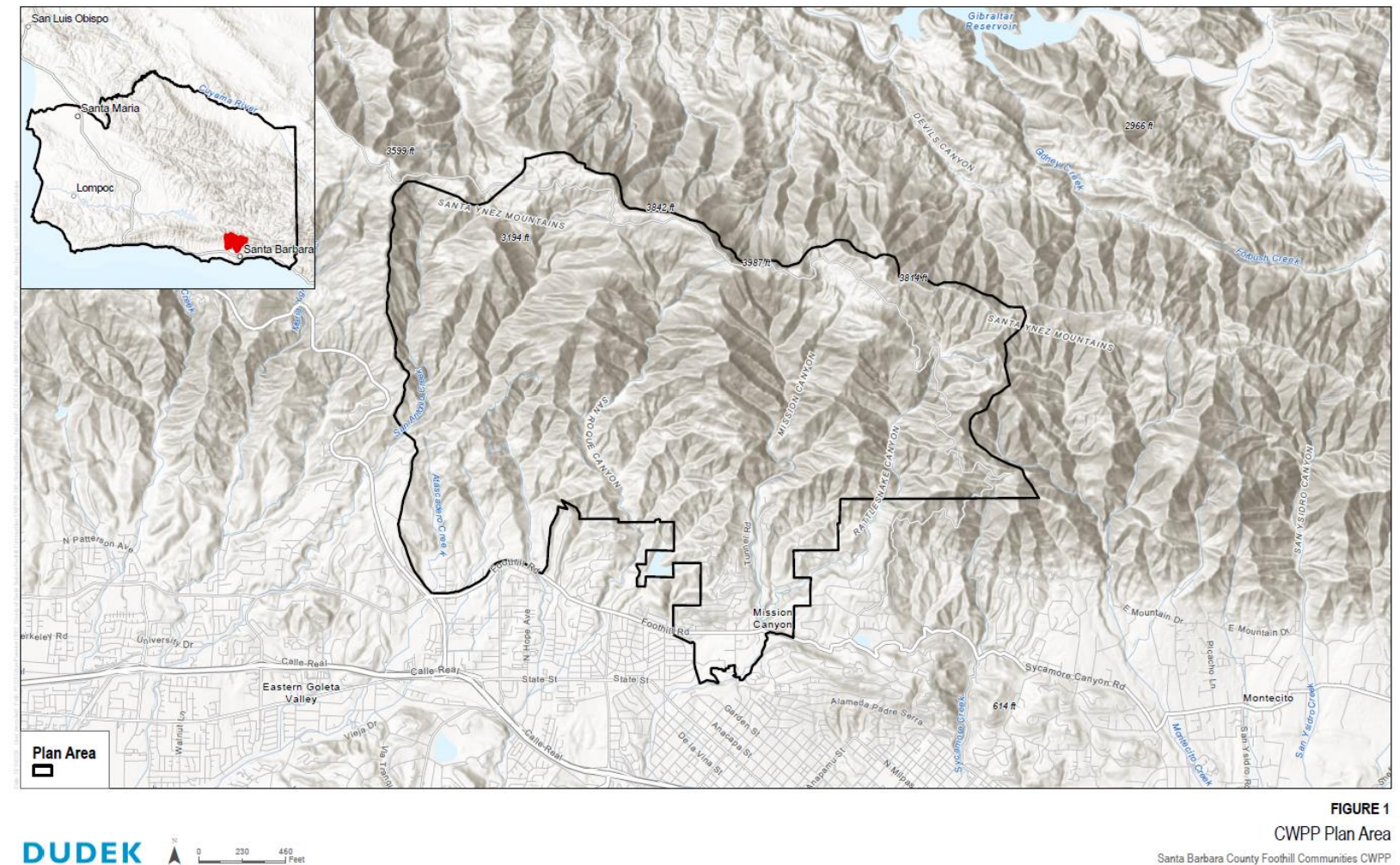
Plan Area

10,696 Total Acres

- SRA = 7,219 acres
- LRA = 164 acres
- FRA = 3,313 acres

Population

- ~3,400 people



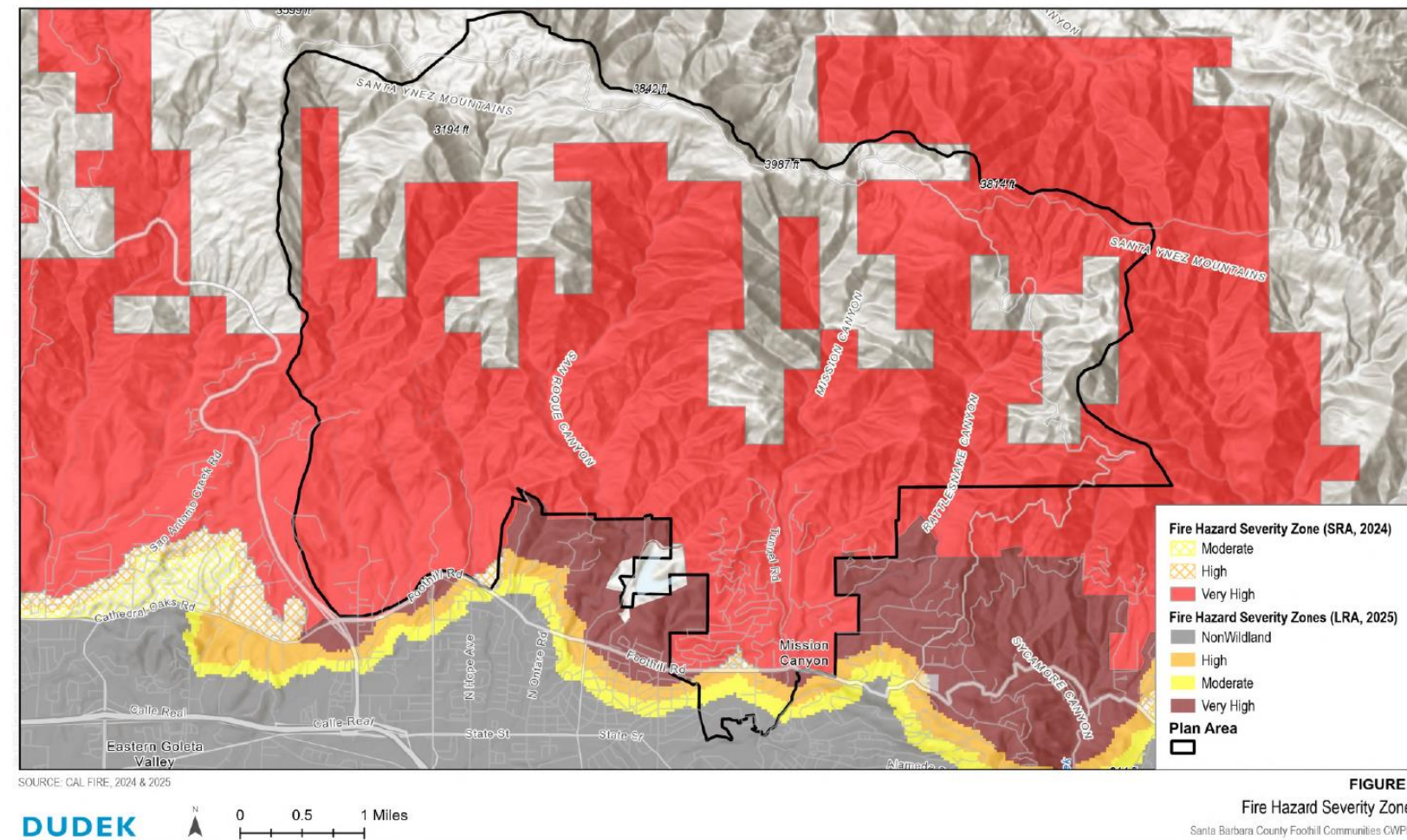
Fire Hazard Severity Zones (2024 and 2025 data)

SRA

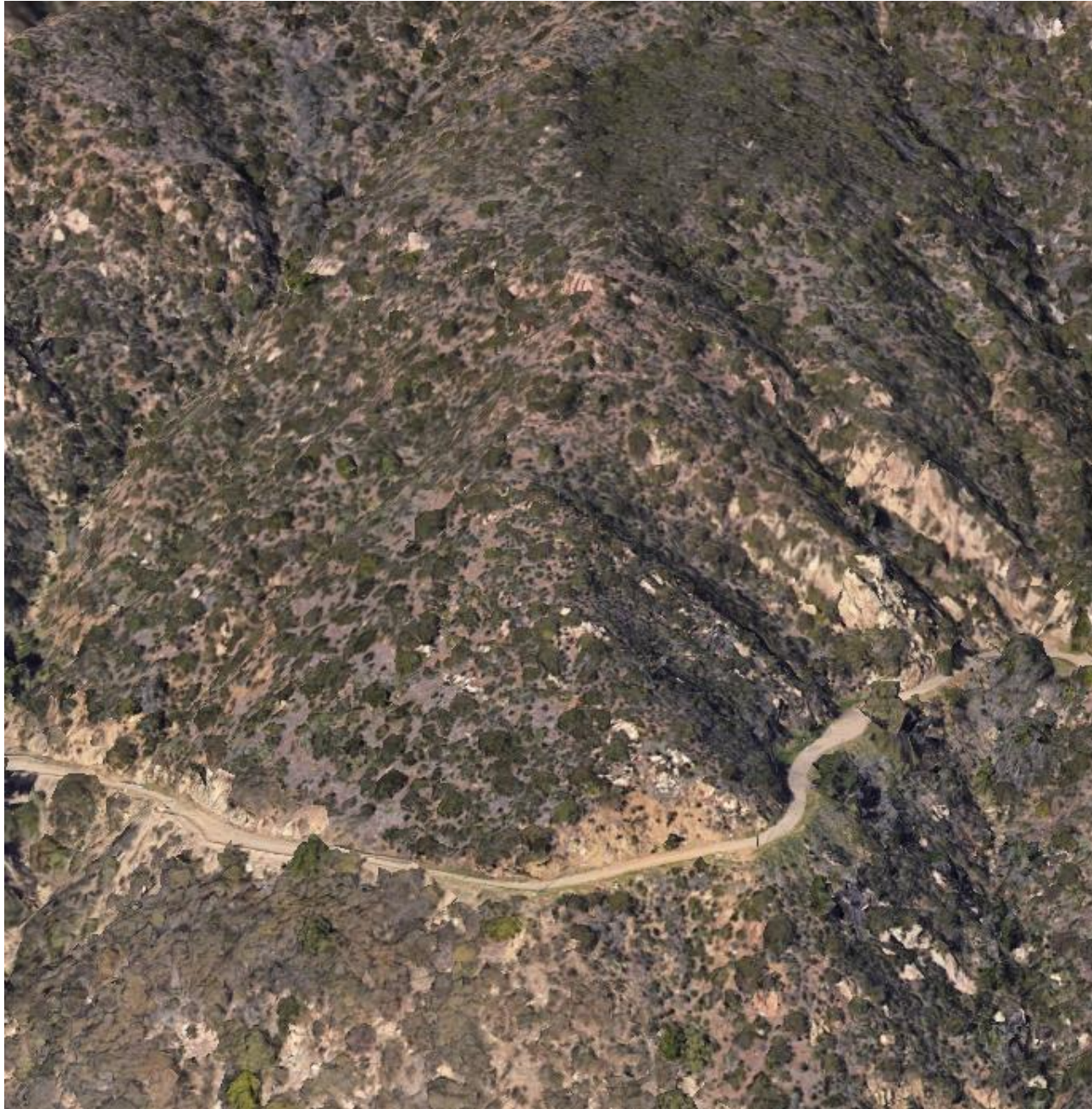
- High = 23 acres
- Very High = 7,195 acres

LRA

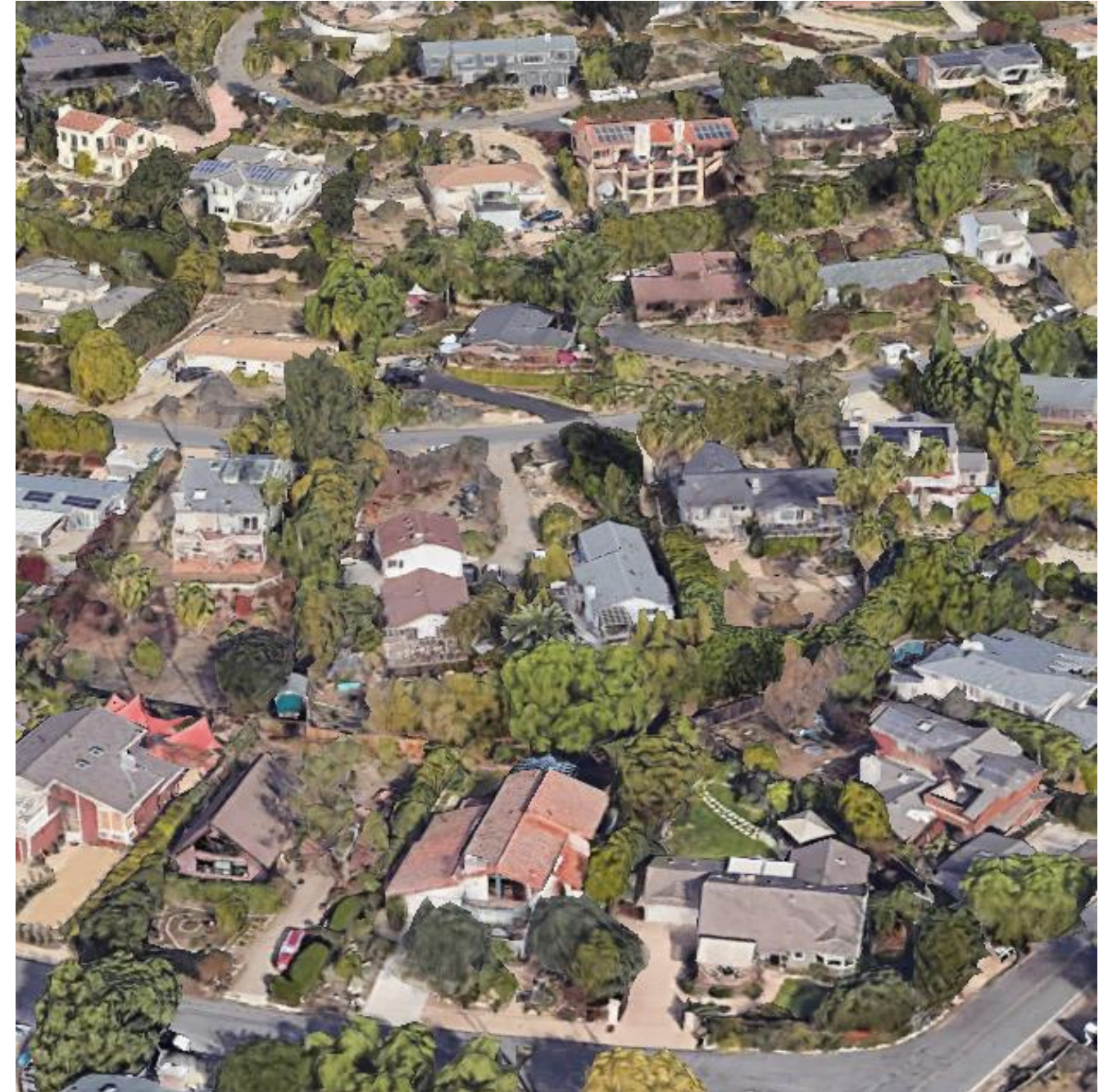
- Moderate = 43 acres
- High = 40 acres
- Very High = 26 acres



Vegetation and Fuels



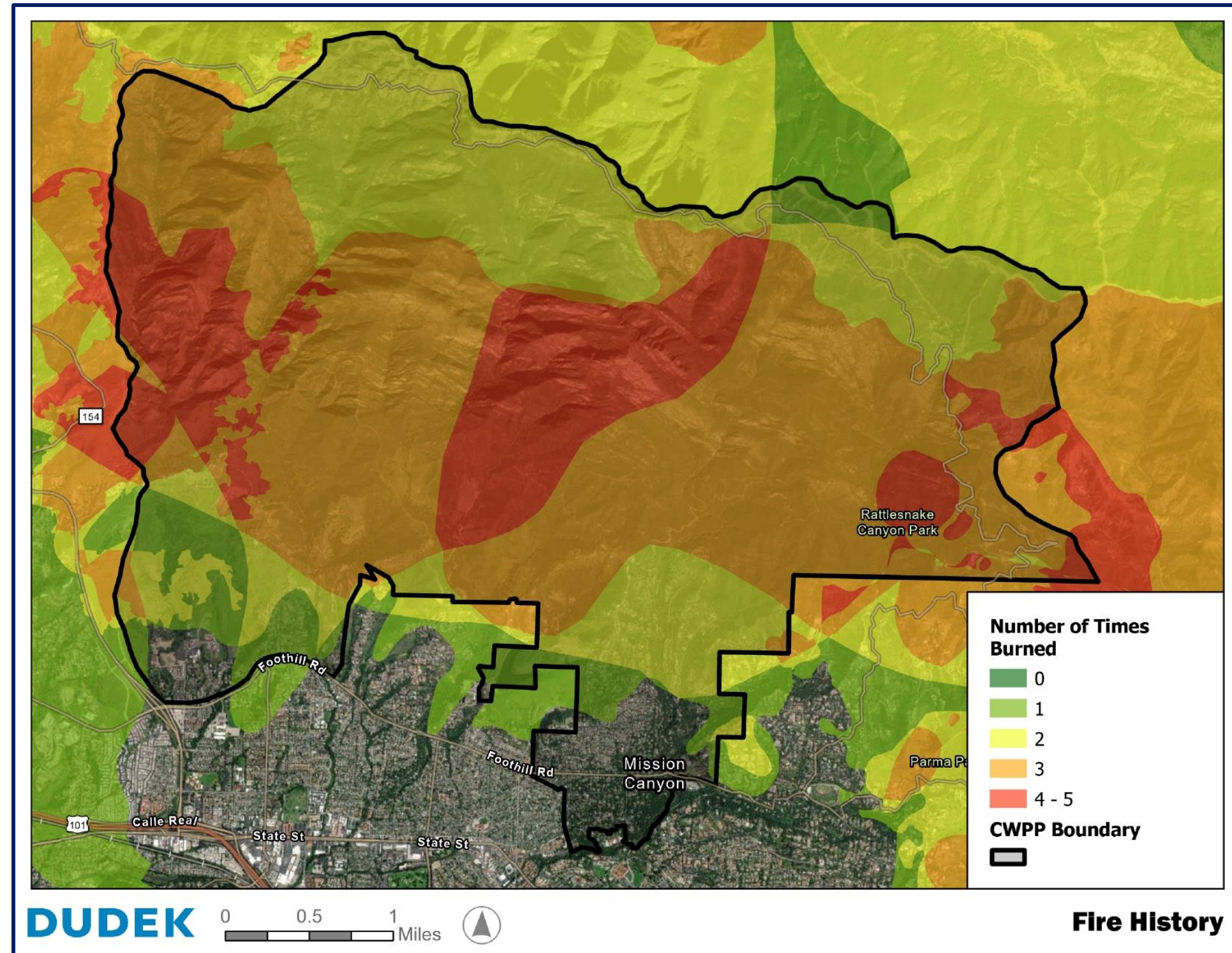
Shrub and Chaparral Vegetation



Hazardous Urban Vegetation

Fire History

- 13 past wildfires within Plan Area
- 21 fires have occurred inside or within 1 mile of the Plan Area
- Notable fires in the Plan Area
 - 2019 Cave Fire
 - 2017 Thomas Fire
 - 2009 Jesusita Fire
 - 2008 Tea Fire

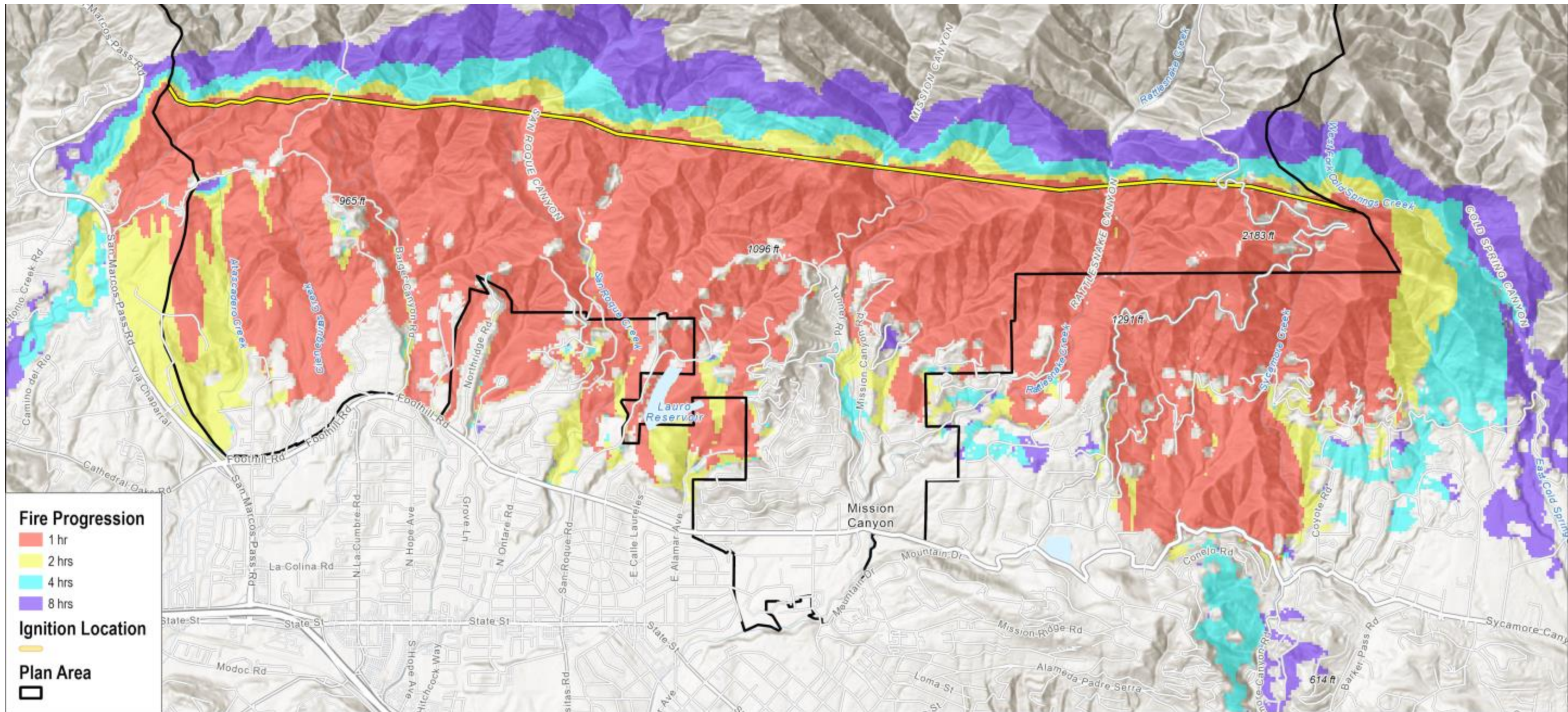


Hazard/Risk Assessment

- Goal: Identify priority areas for wildfire risk mitigation projects
 - Vegetation management/fuels reduction
 - Defensible Space
 - Structural Hardening
 - Evacuation and Access
 - Education and Outreach

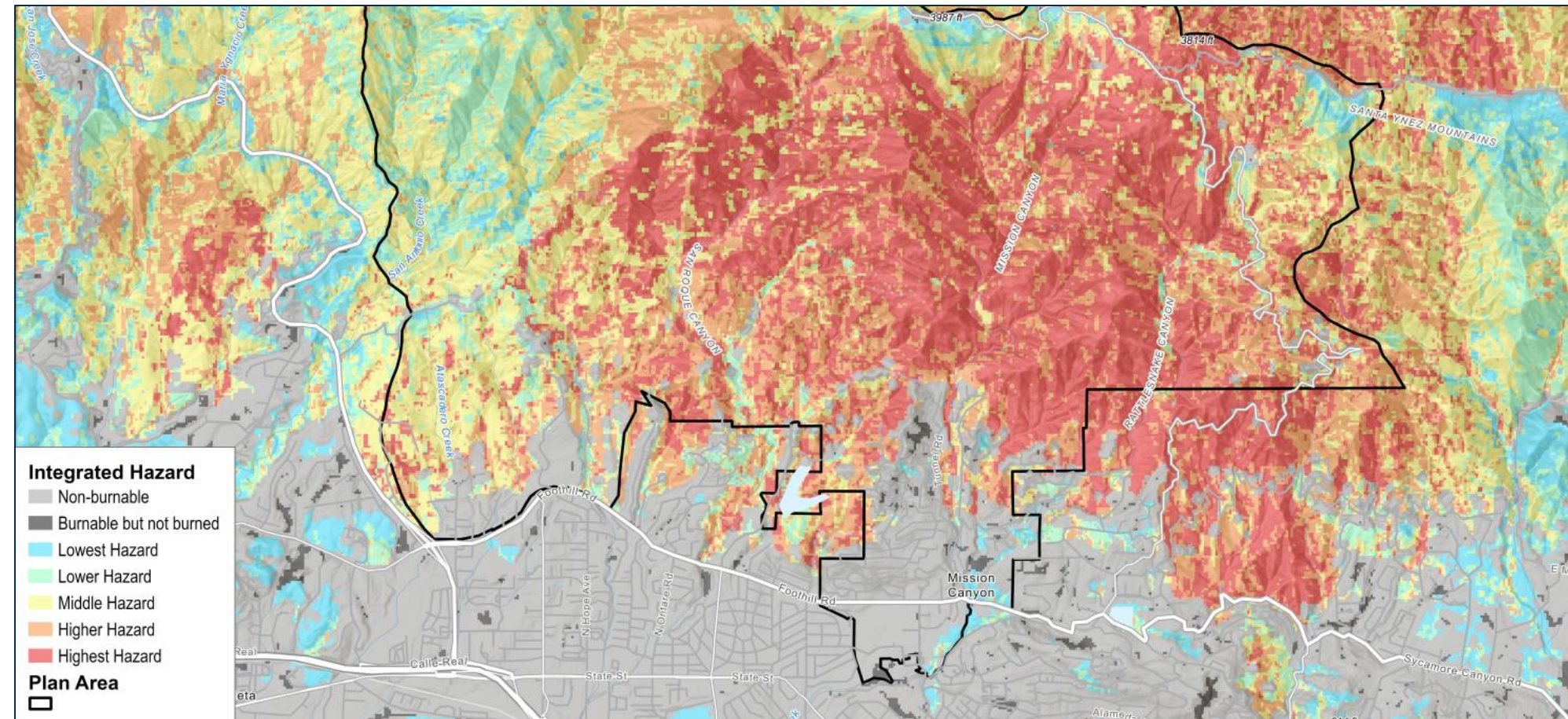


Hazard Assessment – Fire Progression

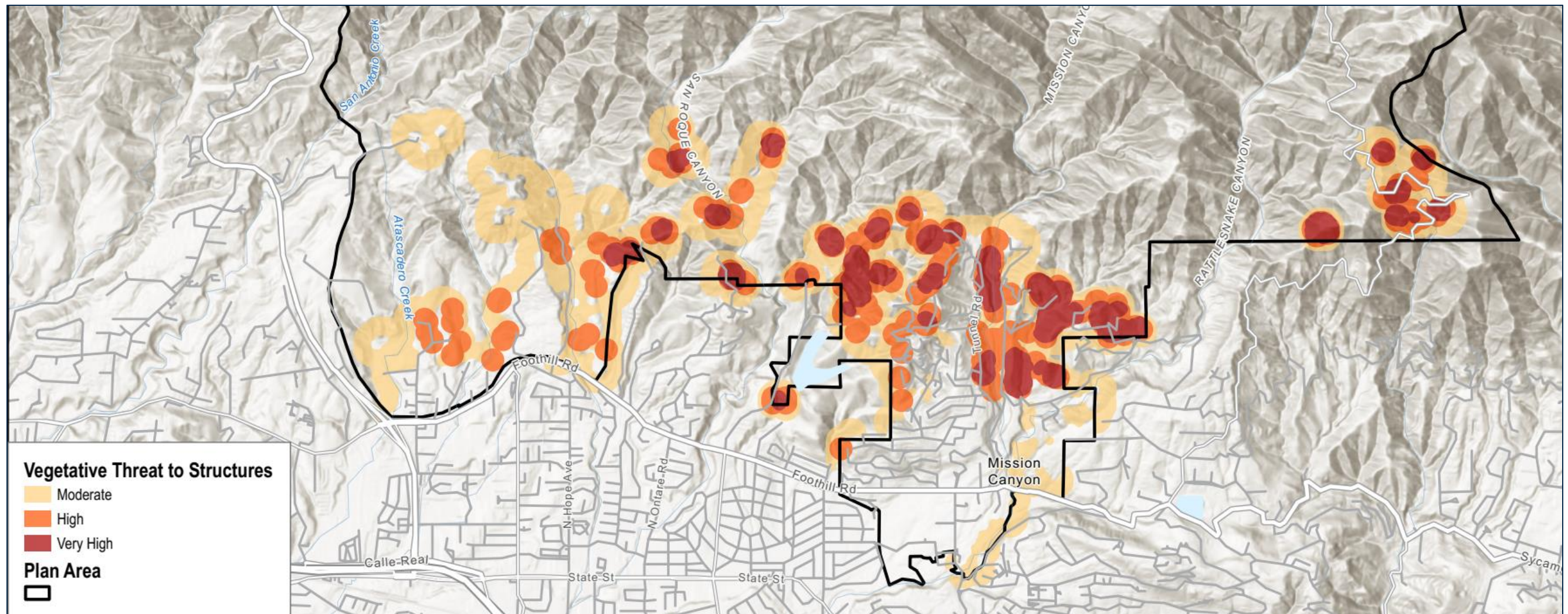


Hazard Assessment – Integrated Wildfire Hazard

- Integrated Hazard is a measure of:
 - The probability and intensity of wildfire at a specific point
- Application?
 - Identify vegetation likely to produce high intensity wildfire

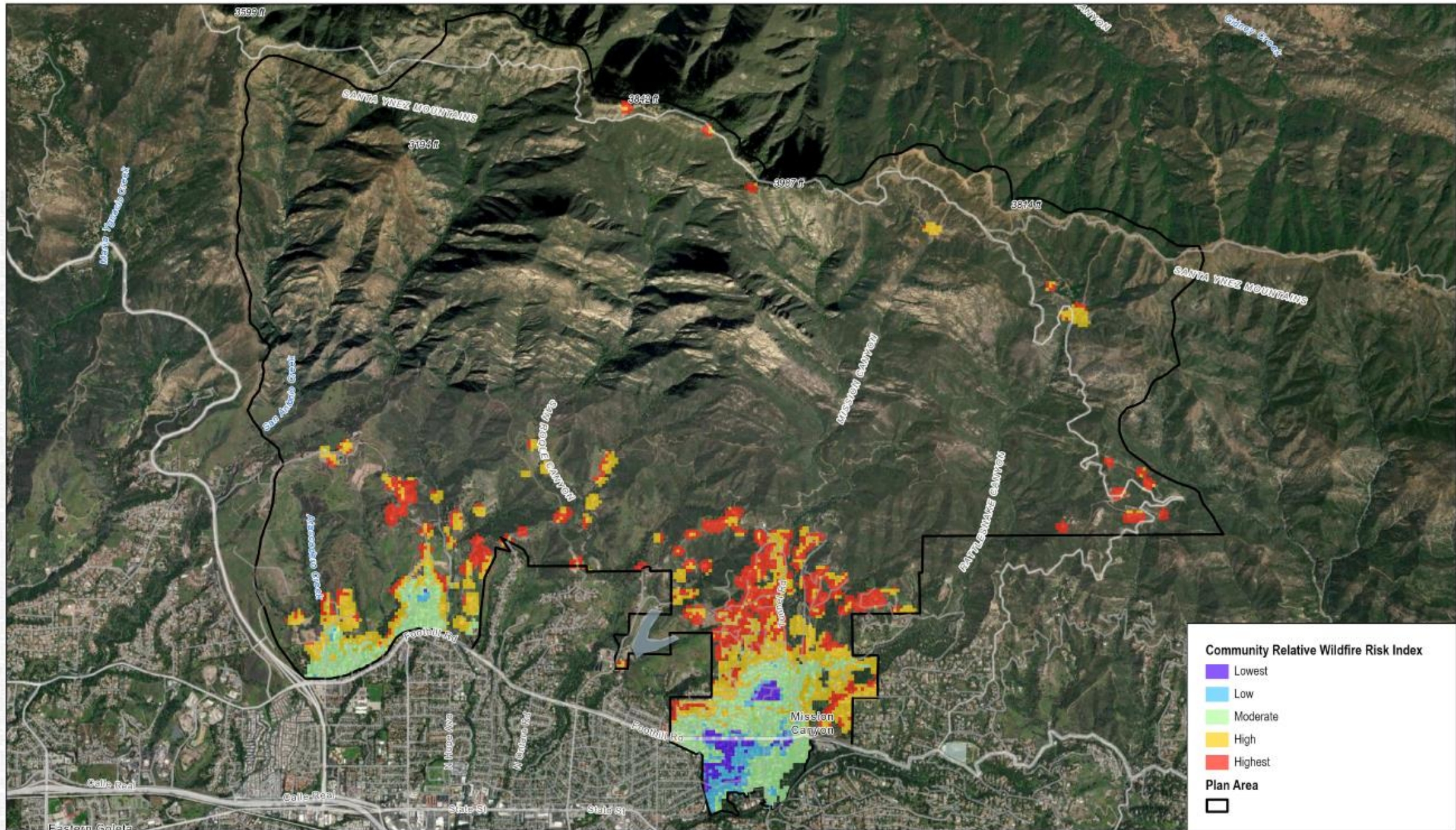


Wildfire Exposure to Structures



- Measures structure proximity to hazardous vegetation
- Useful for prioritizing fuels treatments and defensible space priority areas

Community Relative Risk Assessment



SOURCE: Dudek, 2024

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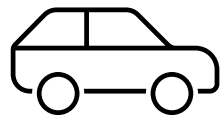
FIGURE 17
Community Relative Wildfire Risk Index
Santa Barbara County Foothill Communities CWPP

Key Findings

- Climate, terrain, and vegetation facilitate high intensity wildfire, often in proximity to communities
- Sundowner winds result in extreme weather conditions and funnel wildfire towards community areas
- Both natural and urban vegetation contribute to community wildfire risk
- Many opportunities exist to mitigate wildfire hazard and risk

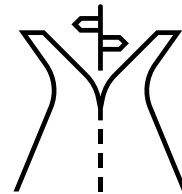
Transportation Study

- Identify areas with limited access and egress
- Develop recommendations to improve emergency access and resident evacuations
- Incorporate feedback from stakeholder outreach into community-specific recommendations



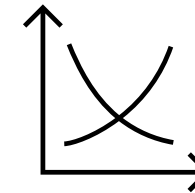
1

Estimate vehicles
per building



2

Assign vehicles to
evacuation routes

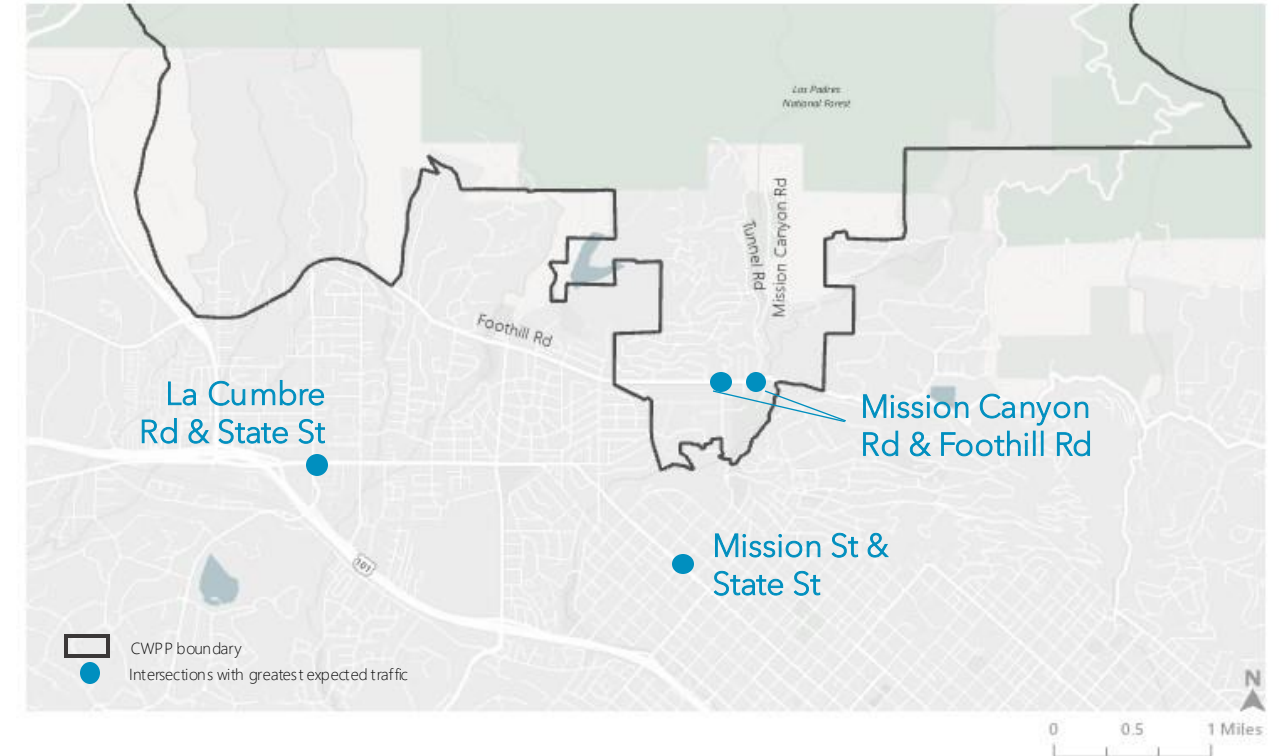


3

Compare demand
to roadway capacity

Transportation study results

- Within the CWPP area, evacuation traffic will be greatest at Mission Canyon Rd & Foothill Road intersections
- Weekend evacuation travel demand may be greater than weekday demand
- The location of the ignition point may impact evacuation times



Development Team

- Santa Barbara County Fire Department
- Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council
- City of Santa Barbara Fire Department
- Montecito Fire Protection District
- Los Padres National Forest
- Santa Barbara Botanic Garden
- CAL FIRE
- Community Members
 - Mission Canyon Community
 - San Roque Community
 - Northridge Community
 - La Colina Firewise Community
- Consultant Team
 - Dudek
 - Fehr & Peers



Agency Involvement

- Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management
- Santa Barbara County Planning and Development
- United States Forest Service (USFS), Los Padres National Forest
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



Community Input

- Field Meeting
- Monthly Development Team Meetings
- Public Survey
- StoryMap
- Tabling at public events
- Public Workshops
 - May 14th, 2024
 - May 22nd, 2024
 - February 27th, 2025
- Public Review of Draft CWPP

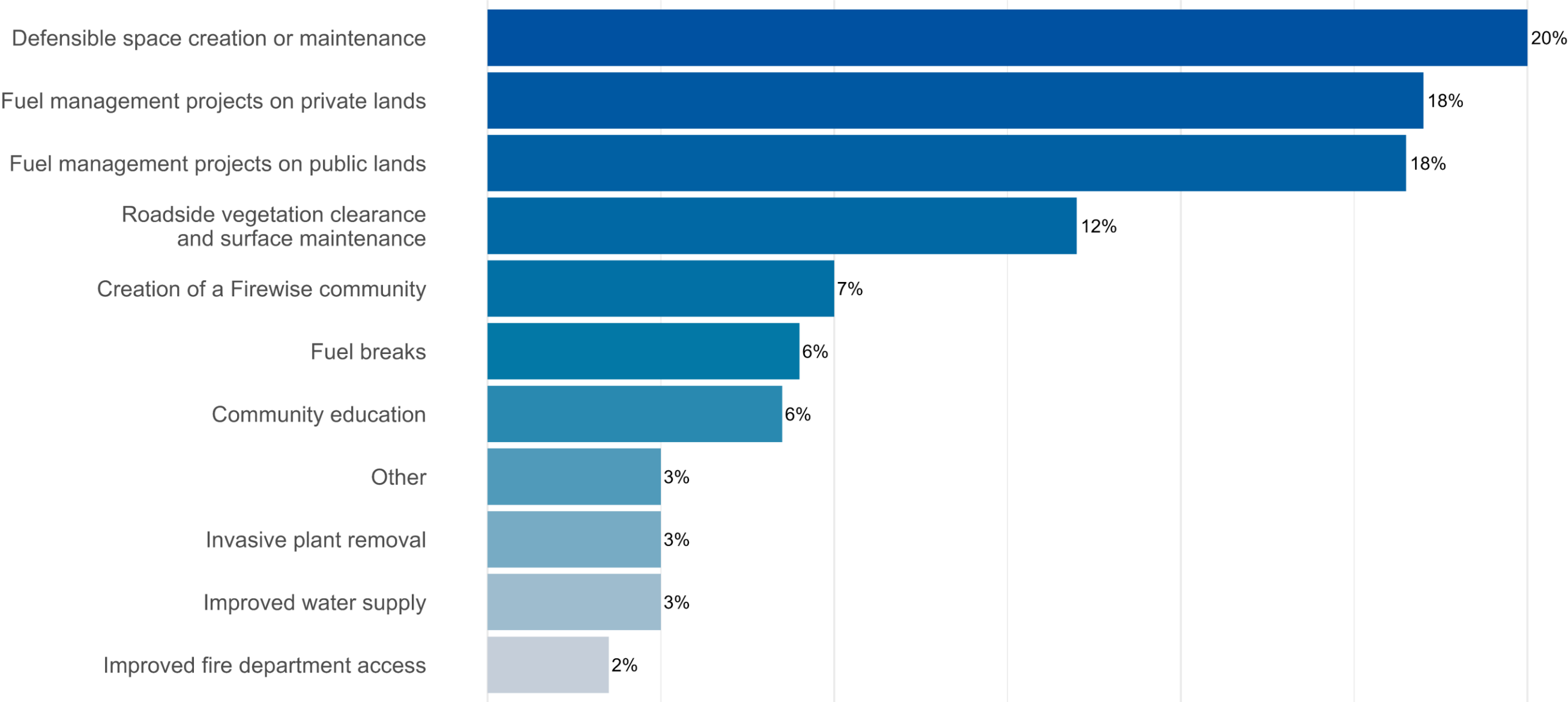


Key Issues Identified By the Community

- Ignition Potential
 - Roads and gathering/parking areas
 - Fuels on their own and neighboring properties
- Post-Fire Erosion/Debris Flow Risk
 - Access/egress implications
- Evacuation
 - Lack of adequate evacuation routes
 - Difficulty for emergency response to reach residents
- Fuel Breaks
 - Importance for protection of communities
- Defensible Space / Home Hardening
 - Educational information, contractors, funding
- Critical Infrastructure
 - Communications systems, signage, roads
- Population
 - Seniors/ people with disabilities
 - Recreation/tourist community

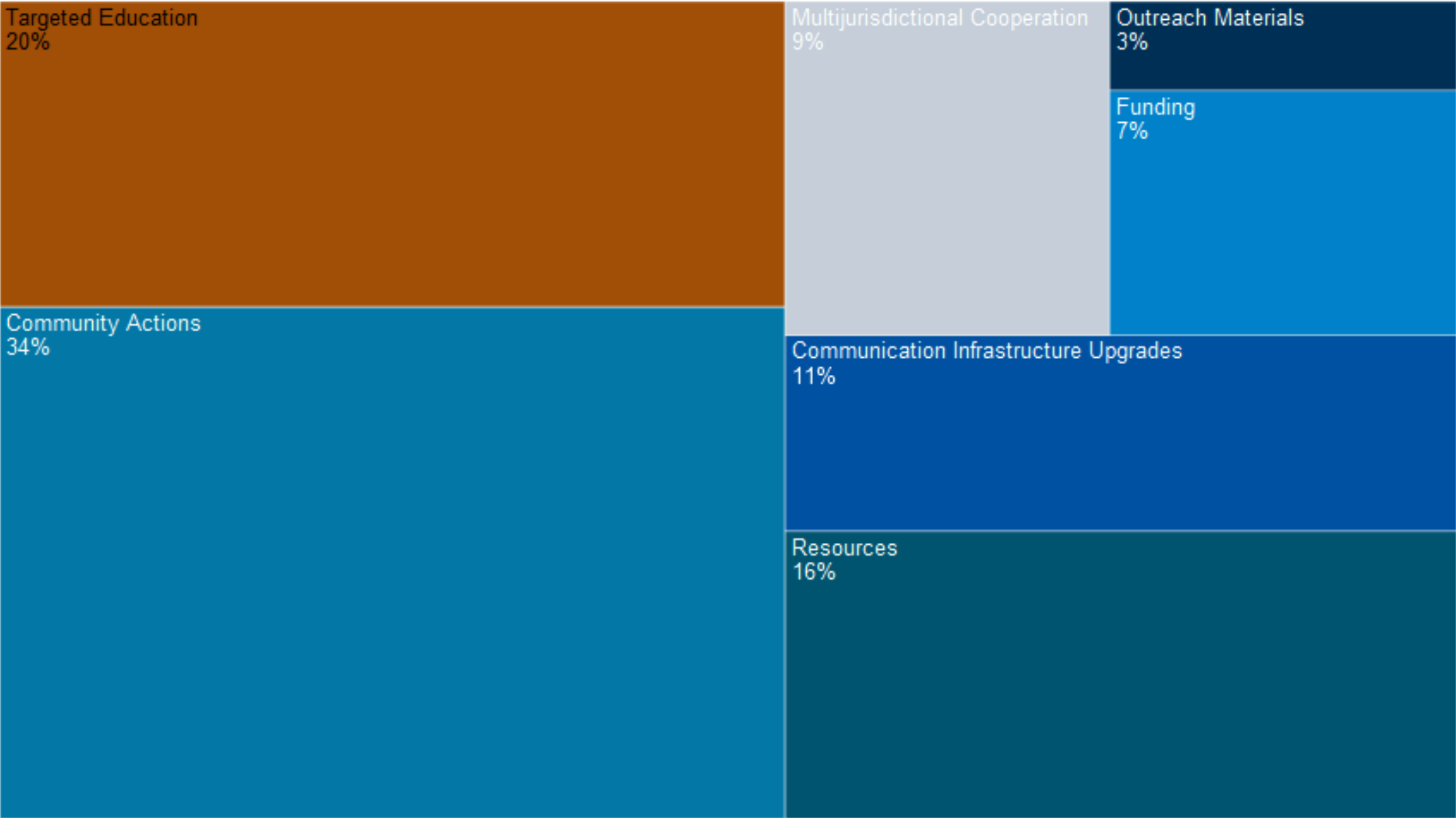
Key Actions Identified By the Community

Santa Barbara Foothills CWPP Greatest Desired Community Actions











Key Actions Identified By the Community

Santa Barbara Foothills - Community Workshop
Distribution of Group Discussion Opportunities



Plan Recommendations

Action Plan Categories

			
Wildfire Hazard The vegetation and fuels conditions that can be hazardous.	Evacuation and Access The natural and built conditions that could hinder or prevent evacuation or emergency access.	Community Participation and Education The need for community collaboration and/or education.	Wildfire Ignition The potential for a wildfire to start due to the interaction of natural and human environments.
			
Jurisdiction and Land Ownership The interactions between various landowners, agencies, community organizations, and other entities.	Structure Exposure The potential for buildings to ignite or spread a fire due to the materials used to build the structure.	Financial Barriers The costs preventing certain actions or activities from taking place.	Environment The impact of wildfire and wildfire hazard reduction projects on the environment.

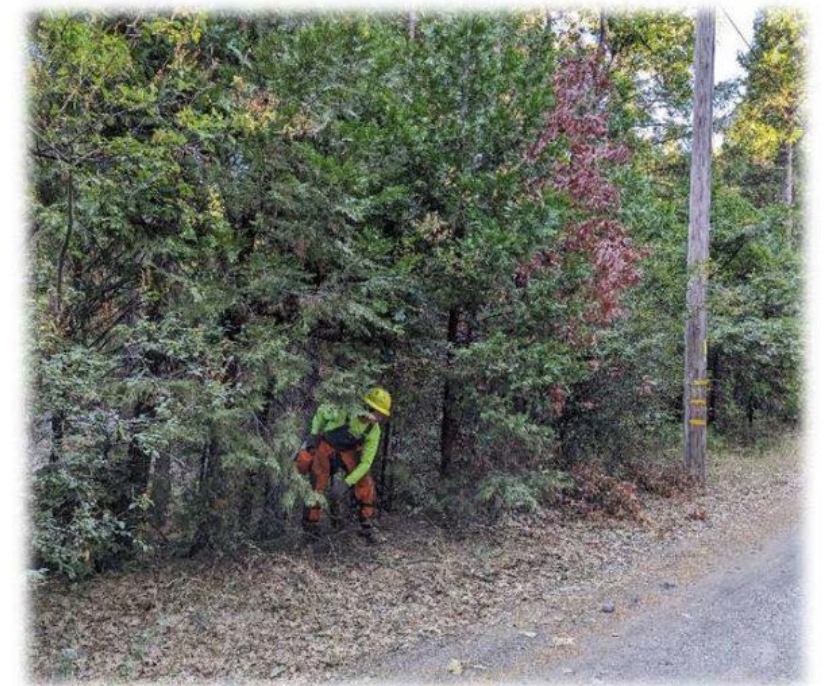
Action Plan (Recommendations)

- Categories:
- Vegetation Management
- Structural Ignitability
- Community Outreach and Education
- Access and Evacuation
- Funding
- Post-Fire Recovery

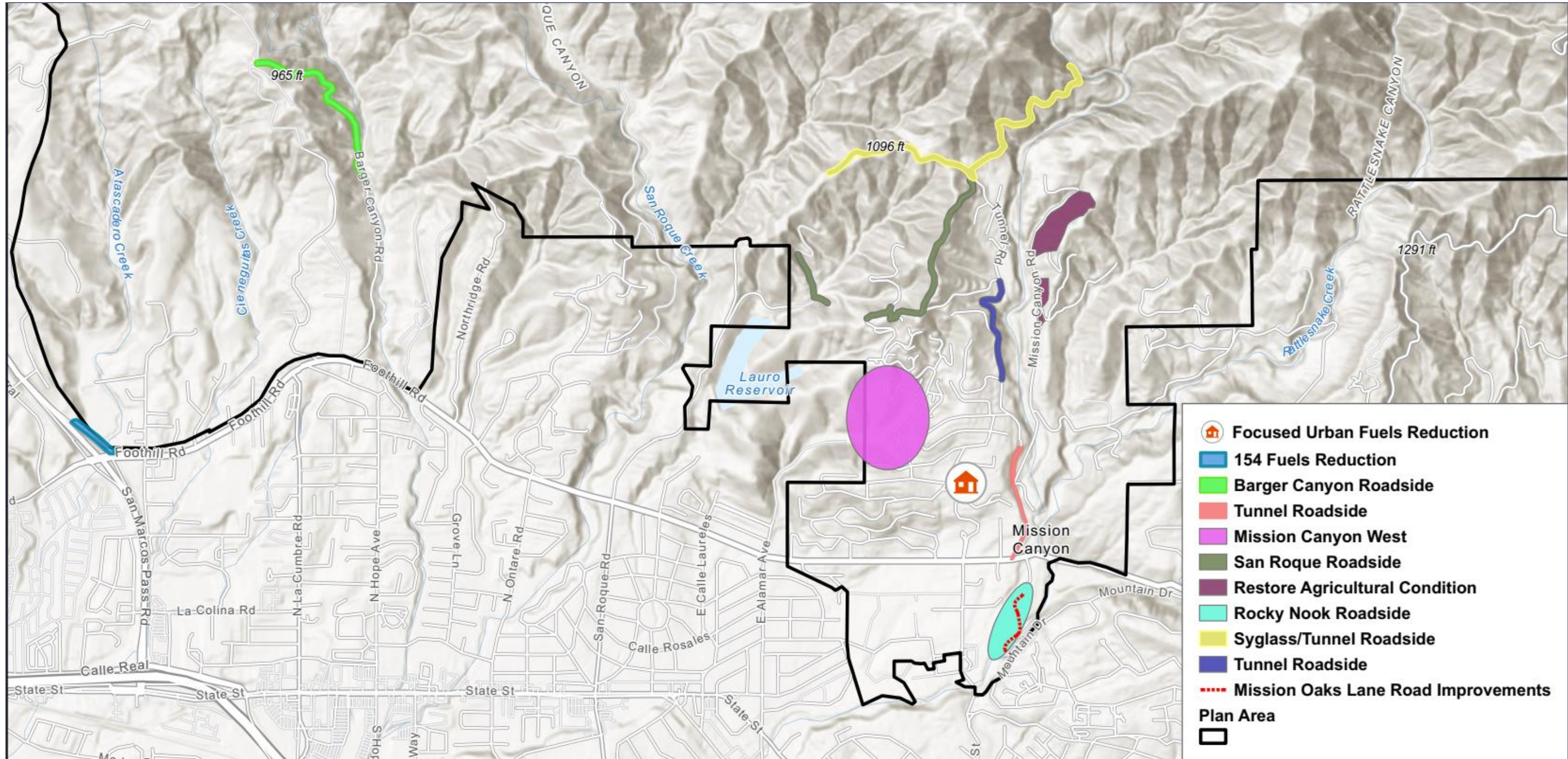


Action Plan

- Vegetation Management
 - Identify priority projects on public and private property
 - Collaboration with relevant jurisdictions
 - Regulatory streamlining through environmental review processes
 - Private and public collaboration to ensure code compliance
 - Roadside fuels reduction enforcement on private roads and driveways



Action Plan- Fuels Reduction Priority Projects



Action Plan

- Community Outreach and Education
 - Create and promote a single hub with wildfire preparedness information
 - Promote NFPA Firewise program
 - Conduct educational webinars
 - Signage/awareness materials
 - Continue defensible space inspections
 - Update a quick reference guide with cost efficient and effective home hardening and defensible space options
 - Conduct public outreach prior to vegetation management projects
 - Emphasize importance of Zone 0 through education



Action Plan

- Structural Ignitability
 - Structural retrofit programs
 - Evaluations, community education, and grant funding opportunities
- Funding
 - Grant opportunities (vegetation management, structural hardening, defensible space)
 - Maintain position on CAL FIRE Fire Risk Reduction Communities List
 - Partner with universities and research institutions
 - Seek opportunities to bolster prevention staff
- Post-Fire Recovery
 - Develop post-fire rehabilitation guidelines
 - Evaluate alternative access opportunities
 - Coordinate with agencies to ensure recovery efforts follow best practices



Action Plan - Access and Evacuation

- Manage the number of vehicles evacuating
 - Through community education, developing evacuation plans, and incident monitoring
- Expand roadway capacity
 - Intersection traffic management, identify alternative evacuation routes, intersection roundabouts
- Provide relevant and timely information
 - Evacuation education and outreach, information sharing, wayfinding signage



SBC Fire Department Recommendations

Fire Department Recommendations

- The Board of Supervisors Adopt the Santa Barbara Foothills Community Wildfire Protection Plan and receive and file the Transportation Study, inserted as Appendix C of the CWPP.
- Determine that adopting the **Santa Barbara Foothills Community Wildfire Protection Plan and Transportation Study** is not the approval of a project that is subject to environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Questions/Comments?