

Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Protection Plan



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Disclaimer

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view(s) of any governmental agency, organization, corporation, or individual with which the authors may be affiliated.

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. This Community Wildfire Protection Plan (the Plan) is a “living document.” The plan should be updated by the community every year to reflect changes in site conditions, progress achieved and new projects planned. No less than every five years, the updated plan must be approved by the authorizing entities (listed on page 8) for the plan to be valid.

Readers are urged to consult with their own agencies having jurisdiction regarding the use or implementation of this Plan, as well as their own legal counsel on matters of concern.

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This Plan is not to be construed as indicative of project “activity” as defined under the “Community Guide to the California Environmental Quality Act, Chapter Three; Projects Subject to CEQA.” Because the Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Protection Plan does not legally commit any public agency to a specific course of action or conduct, it is thus not a project subject to CEQA or NEPA.

However, if and once grant funding is received from state or federal agencies and prior to work performed pursuant to the CWPP, or prior to issuance of discretionary permits or other entitlements by any public agencies to which CEQA or NEPA may apply, the lead agency must consider whether the proposed activity is a project under CEQA or NEPA. If the lead agency makes a determination that the proposed activity is a project subject to CEQA or NEPA, the lead agency must perform environmental review pursuant to CEQA or NEPA.

Executive Summary

The CWPP, created by the federal Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, has three requirements: 1) it is to be developed collaboratively with input from fire agencies and the community; 2) it is to identify and prioritize treatment areas and mitigation strategies and treatments; and 3) it is to recommend measures to reduce the ignitability of structures.

This CWPP provides a general overview and assessment of wildfire risks to the Camp Meeker community, using the federal CWPP requirements and the Sonoma County CWPP. Working with this information with fire agencies, landowners and other interested community stakeholders, a set of priority project actions were developed to increase fire resiliency. These actions are intended to reduce the potential loss of human life, property, and natural and cultural resources due to wildfire. This CWPP will also help groups or agencies collaborate and seek funding for these wildfire risk reduction projects.

The boundary for this CWPP is northern Bohemian Highway between Occidental and Monte Rio. It includes the Camp Meeker residential community as well as camps, retreat centers, preserves and ranches along north Bohemian Highway corridor. Risk for large, uncontrolled wildfire is significant here, and comes with risk of loss of life, homes, property, and environmental and community values. The community meetings and dialog that were integral to developing this CWPP were an excellent opportunity to raise awareness about wildfire issues and preparedness in the community, and foster focused discussion about what we can do to reduce risks.

Land and Parcels: This is a 5.99 square miles (3839.5 acres) Wildland/Urban Intermix (WUI) community. There are 411 improved parcels, and 342 unimproved parcels. The size of parcels varies widely, from 1/8th acre to 441 acres. The Camp Meeker residential community contains the majority of residential parcels, and the average size of an improved parcel (a parcel with a structure) there is 1/6th acre. The average size of an unimproved parcel (no structure on the parcel) there is 5.5 acres. The landownership of greater Camp Meeker area is mostly held in large parcels by private camps and ranches. Virtually all of the land in the planning area is privately held. The area is characterized by steep slopes and narrow valleys. Highest elevation is 1,000 feet; the lowest is 300 feet. The average elevation in the residential area is 500 feet.

Fire Services: The area is served by the Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Department (all volunteer), with CAL FIRE having primary responsibility for firefighting operations for wildland fires. In addition to CAL FIRE, mutual aid for the area comes from three additional fire departments, Occidental Community Services District (combination), North Bay Fire Protection District (combination), and Monte Rio Fire Protection District (combination).

Homes: There are approximately 390 homes and 636 structures in the planning area (based on County LiDAR data, though some structures may not be detected). The majority

of the residential parcels are within the Camp Meeker residential area. A smaller number of residential parcels are located along the Bohemian Highway and secondary roads such as Coleman Valley Road and Morelli Lane. Large acreage parcels in the planning area are operated as camp and retreat centers, nature preserves, ranches and residences. Homes in the area were largely built before WUI building codes, and many need to retrofit vulnerable elements to better resist wildfire ignition. Likewise, many property owners need to reduce vegetation near homes to comply with defensible space standards.

Residents: The estimated population is 936 (based on 2.4 individuals per home). It is estimated that about 15% of residents are part-time. Like most of rural Sonoma County, the local population is aging; older people are at higher risk during any emergency, and many find it challenging to do the physical labor necessary to maintain vegetation near homes. While residents are generally aware of wildfire risks, there is concern about how well individuals are truly prepared for a wildfire, making continued outreach and education a priority.

Wildland fuels: Wildland fuels are characterized by redwood-dominant conifer forest, a mixture of hardwood forests and oak-grasslands, and riparian forest. Tanoak is a common tree in the area, and is heavily impacted by Sudden Oak Death, causing mortality in the species population. Surface and aerial fuel build up a significant concern. There has been little large-scale fuels reduction in the area since it was last logged in the 1960s.

Weather: The area is characterized by moderate winter rainfall, with totals of 40-60 inches common. Proximity to the coast keeps summer temperatures moderate and most with fog. Typically, there is little or no rainfall from late spring until late fall. The area appears to be experiencing a climatic drift, trending towards warmer, drier conditions: the amount and frequency of fog the area experiences is lowering slightly, the total annual precipitation is lowering, and the average temperatures year-round are increasing.

Fire History: It's probably that cultural burning was taking place for millennia in the planning area with a fire return interval of 6-20 years in the redwood and redwood-Douglas-fir forest types and potentially more frequently in grasslands and oak-woodlands. The era of fire suppression began around the mid-20th century, and there has not been a reported wildfire in the planning area since records began in the 1940s. No controlled or cultural fires are known to have occurred in this time, either. Fire suppression, coupled with intermediate logging of larger trees, has increased the amount of available fuel on the landscape.

Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ): CAL FIRE designates the greater Camp Meeker planning area as in a High (80%) Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and rates the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood as in a Moderate (20%) Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The downgrading of the residential area's risk may be owed to the water hydrant system or

northerly aspect. However, at the time of writing, we feel this Moderate rating is not true to the risks posed by the densely populated built environment in this forest community.

Access/Egress: There are just two evacuation option in the planning area, Bohemian Highway and Coleman Valley Road. Just outside of the planning area (less than a quarter mile), there are two more evacuation routes that connect to Bohemian Highway: Graton Road and Occidental Road. While the community desires developing additional evacuation routes connecting the existing roads, it appears that any new route will require significant investment to become safe.

Emergency Notifications and Communications: Emergency notifications and communications systems have improved in recent years in response to the 2017 North Bay Complex Fires. However, notification remains a concern. Many residents lack adequate internet connection and cellular service. It's key that all residents know the alerts available to them and use them. Redundancy is also key, and the community will be working with agency partners to incorporate additional and enhanced alerts.

Assets at Risk: In priority order, Lives, Property and the Environment are at risk in the event of any large wildfire:

- **Lives:** Approximately 936 residents and potentially hundreds of visitors, as well as those traversing Bohemian Highway
- **Property:** Approximately 390 homes and 636 structures, including places of worship, non-profit organizations, recreation and learning centers, and their associated utilities.
- **Environment:** A rich environment including a tributary to the Russian River, coast redwood forest and agricultural land

Risk Reduction Priorities: Our project priorities were inspired by the results of the Risk Assessment (Appendix A) and by suggestions from community members. Projects are organized into seven primary hazard categories, listed below. Projects can be seen in the Community Priority Projects List (Appendix B), which will be periodically updated in the future to reflect progress and changing priorities.

- Prepare for Emergency
- Improve Road Access
- Reduce Community Ignition Sources
- Improve Structural Hardening
- Improve Defensible Space
- Forest Fuels Reduction
- Enhance Community Water Supply

Conclusion: The intensity and devastation of the October 2017 fires was a wake-up call for our community. In years since, we've received reminders of how much our relationship with fire matters. The CWPP sets the foundation for actionable projects which will help the community plan and prepare for wildfires and other emergencies, and make our homes and landscapes more resilient. The goal of these projects is to protect life, property and the cultural and natural resources of the watershed.

Camp Meeker CWPP Planning Group Members

The following individuals were core committee collaborators on the Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Contact information for key collaborators and others has been provided in Appendix H, “*CWPP Contributor Directory*.”

- **Fire Safe Camp Meeker:** Special thanks to Richard Seaman, Fawn Nekton, Amy Lemmer, Sheila Denton, Dewey Watson, and others who have dedicated time in their personal lives for this important work
- **North Bay Fire Protection District:** Chief Shepley Schroth-Cary
- **CAL FIRE:** Captain Joe Petersen, Battalion Chief Sam Lazarich
- **Fire Safe Sonoma:** Roberta MacIntyre, President & CEO
- **Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District:** Adriana Stagnaro, Outreach & Project Manager. John Green, Lead Scientist. Jason Wells, Professional Forester. William Hart, GIS Specialist.
- **Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management:** Richard Diaz, Deputy Emergency Services Coordinator
- **Sonoma County Sheriff's Office:** Misti Wood, Community Engagement Liaison
- **Supervisor Hopkins Office:** Elise Van Dyne, Field Representative.
- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife:** Robynn Swan, Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) Timberland Conservation Program, Vegetation Management
- **The many community members** who participated in planning meetings

Any questions regarding this plan may be made to the primary author:

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Mutual Agreement Page

Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Protection Plan

The Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) was developed in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Healthy Forests Restoration Act.

This Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

1. Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties in the region of this CWPP have been consulted.
2. Identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuels reduction treatments and recommends the types and methods of treatment to reduce the wildfire threat to values at risk in the area.
3. Recommends measures to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

The following representatives of the entities required for CWPP approval mutually agree with and approve the contents of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan:

Lynda Hopkins
Supervisor, Sonoma County District 4

Date

Shepley Schroth-Cary
Chief, North Bay Fire Protection District

Date

Steve Mosiurchak
Fire Marshal, Sonoma County Fire Prevention

Date

Shana Jones
Unit Chief, CAL FIRE Sonoma-Lake-Napa

Date

Roberta MacIntyre
President, Fire Safe Sonoma

Date

Fawn Nekton
Member, Fire Safe Camp Meeker

Date

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Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Location and Planning Area Boundaries

Sonoma County encompasses over 1.1 million acres and is comprised of natural landscapes representing mixed conifer and hardwood forests, redwood groves, oak woodlands, riparian systems, chaparral, coastal scrub, serpentine-endemic vegetation, wetlands, freshwater and brackish marshes, and others. As with other areas bounded by the ocean to the west and low mountains along other borders, Sonoma County has a great degree of climatic variation, representing microclimates that range from marine at the coast, to coastal cool, then coastal warm moving inland. This climatic variation combines with diverse topographic and geologic environments to create multiple ecological zones.

The combination of highly flammable fuel, long dry summers and steep slopes creates a significant natural hazard of large wildland fires in many areas of Sonoma County. Wildland fire season in Sonoma County spans the months after the last spring rains until the first fall or winter rains occur. The months of August, September and October have the greatest potential for wildland fires as vegetation dries out, humidity levels fall, and offshore winds blow. However, an impact of climate change is that fire season is longer; and fires can occur at any time of year in this county.

The Community of Camp Meeker is located in the northern California Bay Area, in western Sonoma County, approximately 10 miles east of the Pacific Ocean and approximately 15 miles west of the city of Santa Rosa. The community is situated on the northeastern face of a forested hillside in the Dutch Bill Creek watershed, a tributary to the Russian River. Bohemian Highway is the main arterial road that runs through the community.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan area encompasses 4799.7 acres of dense forest, scrubland and grassland, including the community of Camp Meeker and parcels to the north, northwest and east along the Bohemian Highway North Corridor. To the south is the town of Occidental. The entire planning area is in the State Responsibility Area (SRA).

Camp Meeker is located in steep, forested terrain, with dense stands of redwood and Douglas-fir interspersed with mixed deciduous woodland. The Dutch Bill Creek and Bohemian Highway run in parallel through the center of the planning area, from the southeast to the northwest corners.

There are approximately 339 homes (based on number of improved parcels) and 688 structures in the planning area (based on County LiDAR data, though some structures may not be detected). The majority of the residential parcels are within the Camp Meeker residential area. A smaller number of residential parcels are located along the Bohemian Highway and secondary roads such as Coleman Valley Road and Morelli Lane. Large acreage parcels in the planning area are operated as camp and retreat centers, nature preserves, ranches and residences. The estimated population is 814 (based on 2.4 individuals per improved parcel).

The southern boundary is Coleman Valley Road to the town of Occidental; the western boundary follows the western edges of the St. Dorothy's Rest, Alliance Redwoods, and Westminster Woods camp and retreat centers properties; the northern boundary follows the northern edge of the LandPaths and Bohemian Grove properties; the eastern boundary follows the eastern edge of Bohemia Preserve LLC and Alder Creek Ranch properties.



Figure 1: Camp Meeker CWPP Planning Area

The Camp Meeker CWPP Planning Area is situated within the greater Occidental CWPP Planning Area, as shown in Figure 2. Occidental and Camp Meeker, though geographically very close communities, have organized separate but coordinated fire safety planning efforts out of respect of the differences in their demographics and fire risks. The Occidental CWPP Planning Area follows the boundaries of the Occidental Community Services District. Close collaboration with Fire Safe Occidental is necessary in order to ensure that what is done in one area successfully supports the work done in the surrounding area.

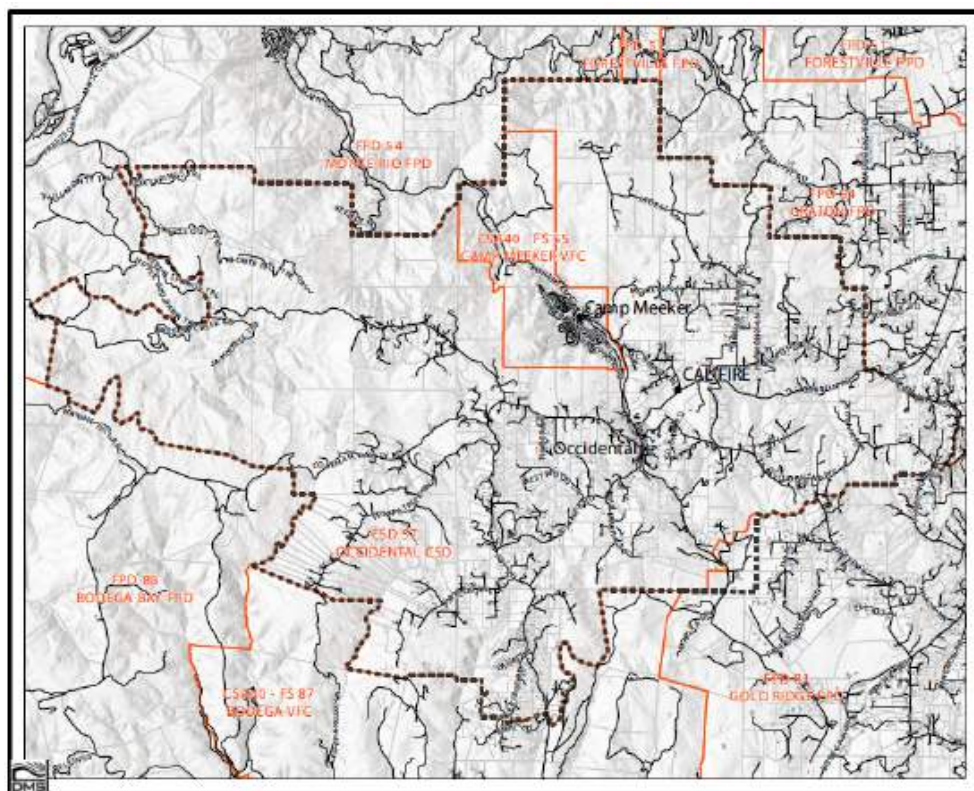


Figure 2: The greater Occidental CWPP Planning Area outlined in black dotted line.

The greater Camp Meeker community enjoys rural, close-to-nature living as well as close proximity to surrounding towns and cities. The redwood forest is a draw for residents and visitors, as these towering giants provide a moderate-cool climate, home for songbirds and other wildlife, awesome recreation opportunities and stunning surroundings. Western Sonoma County has for decades been a destination for artists and creative-types, gardeners and ecologists, and food and wine enthusiasts. In the Camp Meeker residential area, rent prices are some of the most affordable in the entire county, making this an especially attractive place to call home.

It is also the location of multiple camps and retreat centers, drawing in thousands of visitors each year to partake in games, hikes, camping and lodging along the Dutch Bill Creek and redwood groves.

In the wake of the 2017 North Bay Fires complex, Camp Meeker residents, like so many in Sonoma County, realized that their community is at risk of wildfire and that they needed to take action to create a more fire-safe community. In 2018, the Fire Safe Camp Meeker (FSCM) organization was created by a handful of residents. Members of FSCM reached out to local agencies and NGOs to request support. Fire Safe Sonoma, Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, and Conservation Works wrote a grant to CAL FIRE's Fire Prevention grants program to fund the creation of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which was awarded in fall 2018.

Area History

The land in this area was originally the ancestral territory of the Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo people that have inhabited and stewarded the Sonoma Coast for over 12,000 years. Fire is an integral part of the Miwok and Pomo land management practices. The practice of frequent applied fire shaped much of the ecology in the area over time, and the forest and grassland conditions that resulted from frequent fire was conducive to low-intensity fire effects. Russian settlers arrived in the early 1800s to the Fort Ross area, and subsequently Spanish, Mexican and early American colonials invaded, disputed and settled the area by force. Native populations were decimated and largely separated from the land. This brought major change to land management and culture in the last three centuries. General Vallejo supposedly outlawed the practice of controlled burning in the 1830s, but the ability of Spanish authorities at the time to actually curtail the practice was limited. Fire suppression didn't really gain a major foothold until after WW2.

Melvin C. Meeker, born in New Jersey to William and Sarah Meeker in 1841, owned most of the land around what is now Camp Meeker in the late 1800's. The Meeker Bros (Melvin and brother Amzy P. Meeker) owned about 2,800 acres of timberland, and the Meeker Bros Mill produced about 3,000,000 board feet of timber each year. The North Coast Pacific Railway was built from Sausalito to Duncans Mills around 1874, and ran along Dutch Bill Creek past Camp Meeker (Stindt, 1974). This allowed Meeker to ship lumber to San Francisco (by ferry from Sausalito) and other developing places south of Camp Meeker. Melvin C. Meeker founded Occidental in 1876 and provided the lumber to build the occidental Church ("The Heart of Occidental").

After logging the land, Meeker subdivided Camp Meeker into small parcels in 1898, which soon after became vacation homes for people from San Francisco, easily accessed by the railroad. Trains also brought the first tourists (vacationers from San Francisco) to the area. Logging of the Dutch Bill Creek area began to decrease throughout the first half of the 20th century, with the last large logging occurring in the 1960's. Today, the forested watershed has second and third growth redwood stands, in many places unmanaged since the last

logging. Recreation, conservation, rural residences and a small amount of agriculture are the prominent land uses of the watershed today.

Topography

The area topography is defined by the high ridges of the coastal range, with deep, narrow canyons running between.

Most slopes are quite steep, and elevations range 300'-1000' above sea level. Most residences are located in the valley of the Dutch Bill Creek watershed, 330'-700' above sea level, however others are settled higher up in the hills. The Dutch Bill Creek flows north to the Russian River, through the town of Monte Rio. It has multiple tributaries, including Duvoul, Grab and Lancel creeks. The top of the watershed is Coleman Valley Road to the south of the planning area. South of this ridge is the Salmon Creek watershed, which flows to the Pacific Ocean. To the west is the Willow Creek Watershed (another tributary to the Russian River), and to the east is the Atascadero-Green Valley Watershed.

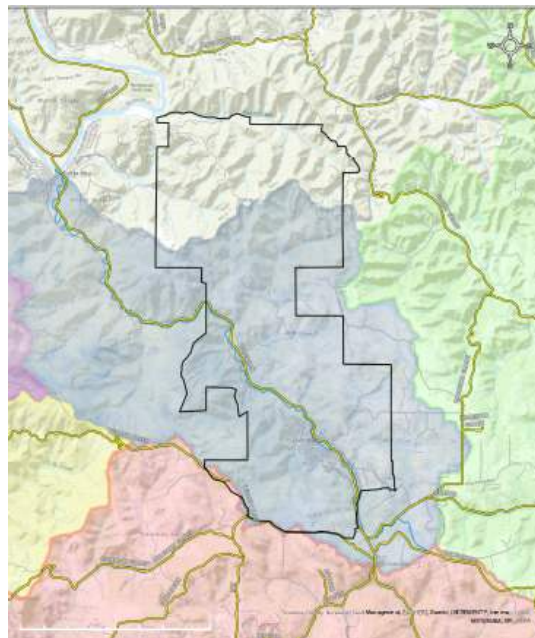


Figure 3: Area watersheds and CWPP Planning Area

Property parcel sizes vary widely. In the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood, the average lot size is 1/6th acre, and there are hundreds of parcels in the roughly 300 acre community, making for a densely populated neighborhood. Residential parcels along Bohemian Highway north average around 4 acres. Ranches, camps and retreat centers, open space preserves, and other large parcels range in size from 70 acres to above 300 acres. The largest land ownership in the area is over 500 acres.

Access

There are just two evacuation option in the planning area, Bohemian Highway and Coleman Valley Road. Just outside of the planning area (less than a quarter mile), there are two more evacuation routes that connect to Bohemian Highway: Graton Road and Occidental Road. While the community desires developing additional evacuation routes connecting the existing roads, it appears that the identified route “candidates” will require significant investment to become safe.

The main route through the planning area is the Bohemian Highway, which runs north-south. Outside of the planning area to the north, Bohemian Highway meets River Road across the Russian River, which runs east-west, and will transport to the coast (8 road miles west) or the city of Santa Rosa (21 road miles east). Outside of the planning area to the south, Bohemian Highway meets Graton and Occidental Roads. Graton Road runs east to the town of Graton (5.5 road miles east) and then to Highway 116/Gravenstein Highway. Coleman Valley Road runs west to the coast (10.5 miles west). Occidental Road runs east to Highway 116 (7 miles east). All of these two-lane roads narrow significantly in sections, have occasional steep drop offs, and are in need of repair and extensive vegetation management.

These main routes then connect with slightly larger two-lane highways (Highway 116 inland, Highway 1 on the coast). The shortest route to the major highway in the region, US101, is 13 miles. Evacuation of the entire population in a short period of time is therefore a daunting challenge.

Feeding into the Bohemian Highway are many miles of minor, one and two-lane roads woven throughout the planning area. The majority of these are in the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood. Many of these tight, secondary roads have few or no turnouts to allow the safe passage of fire-fighting equipment during an evacuation. Most of these are public roads maintained by Sonoma County and are in need of repair and bolstering. Located on steep hillsides, some roads have sheer drop-offs and blind turns. Some dead-end roads are over 300’ long. Narrow roads often have cars parked on the narrow roadside or bushy roadside vegetation, making the streets even tighter passes.

There are historic logging and ranch roads that are not currently functional but are being assessed for their potential to be developed into additional evacuation routes. At this stage, and based on the few candidates that have been identified, these historic roads would require significant investment in order to upgrade to safe conditions.

Population

Within the boundaries of the planning area, there are 817 tax parcels and a population of approximately 800. While the average age of western Sonoma County is early 60s, including many retirees and seniors, the Camp Meeker community is different. There is a larger cohort of 30s-40s, middle aged residents raising young families. The camp and retreat centers also bring in a youthful (though temporary) population. The community is younger, but also less affluent than the population in the surrounding area. Many retired senior residents live on minimal fixed incomes. Property and rental prices are lower along the north Bohemian Highway, attracting and retaining low-income residents.

The area is known for its Health Clinic that serves the low-income population, and also for the Rural Food program, run by St. Philip's Church, which serves 106 families each month. This community includes both full time and part time residents, absentee landlords, and vacation rental visitors. Many new residents and vacationers are unfamiliar with the wildfire risks they face, have minimal knowledge of the roadways, and lack the knowledge needed to respond to evacuation orders appropriately. VRBO and Airbnb type rentals are becoming more common and research is needed to understand the impact of this on ignition prevention and evacuation.

Climate

The Camp Meeker area in general has a Mediterranean climate, with cool, wet winters and warm, dry summers. Average January temperatures range from 42 °F to 54 °F and average September temperatures range from 46°F to 83°F. August and September are the warmest months of the year with recorded high temperatures of 101°F in 2007.

The rainy season typically begins in late November and ends in May with no rainfall during the summer months. Coastal fog is common during normal weather patterns in the summer months. The fall becomes drier with fewer morning fogs. Extended periods of drought across multiple years occur and seem to be becoming more common.

The area can experience both high on-shore and off-shore winds in the typical heat exchange cycle of Coastal California. Both will fan fires along the valleys and ridges of this region. According to longtime local residents, historical fires pre-1970, like the Robertson Fire in 1961 (2,208 acres), Wright Hill fire in 1964 (2,603 acres) and the Coleman Valley Fire in 1965 (1,839 acres) were driven by winds from the west. The Coleman Valley Fire may have been fanned by a north wind.

The winds that have created the most severe fire danger in the last few decades typically blow from the northeast, usually in October. These winds—referred to as Mayacama winds, Mayacama meaning "Mountain lion howl" in the Wappo language—bring low humidity and

elevated fire danger and can wreak havoc in Sonoma County. These are similar to Diablo winds in the east bay and Santa Ana winds in Southern California. These winds are the same ones that blew during the 1964 Hanley Fire; the 1981 Atlas Peak Fire; and the 2017 Tubbs, Nuns, and Atlas Fires, and the 2019 Kincade Fire. Mayacama wind events generally last from 15 to 35 hours, but in 2000, 2003, 2005, 2017, 2018, and 2019 these events in October and November lasted for five to 14 days. As climate change continues to affect weather patterns, the area experiences warmer temperatures, less coastal moisture, and the period of fire danger extends both earlier and later in the year. Rising temperature levels will also increase the frequency and intensity of the fires.

Natural Vegetation

Vegetation in the area is typical of the coastal range in Northern California with mixed evergreen mixed redwood forest, oak woodland and grassland. The forest is home to a wide diversity of native plants and native habitat types. Sensitive habitats include, but are not limited to, the coast redwood forest, riparian forest, coastal prairie grasslands and coastal chaparral. Each of the ecosystems has evolved with frequent, low-intensity fire, as it was a tool used by native populations for millennia to steward beneficial habitat for people and wildlife, sterilize the forest of disease, kill unwanted pests, improve plant fiber quality for weaving and other uses, fertilize the soil and much more.

Land use practices beginning in the 1800s and persisting through today have changed the vegetative community in the Camp Meeker area. Heavy logging in the late 1800's, early 1900's and again in the 1950's removed the largest trees from the forest, cut logging roads and lumber staging areas in the hillside, and reshaped the natural meander of the creeks. Once logging ceased in the mid 20th century, so did much of the area's active forest management. Wildfires and controlled burns were largely suppressed. Without fire or any management, the returning forest grew fairly dense, even-aged stands. Redwood stands contain more Douglas-fir, bay and other hardwoods, due to lack of fire. Advantageous trees like Douglas-fir have seeded in coastal prairie, converting grassland to forestland, without abatement.

Oak species are affected by Sudden Oak Death, particularly the tanoak, which is most susceptible to the disease. Diseased, dying and dead tanoak is a common site throughout the area. Heavy understory vegetation has grown up over time, connecting the ground vegetation with the canopy. Vines such as poison oak, honey suckle and ivy climb pole-width Douglas-fir trees. Bushes such as huckleberry, broom and blackberry can be quite thick in places, particularly along roadsides and forest edges.

The densely inhabited Camp Meeker residential neighborhood is situated in the understory of the redwoods, making it a uniquely urban forest. The overstory is largely redwood, bay,

and Douglas-fir with some oak, maple, buckeye, cherry and other hardwoods. The understory contains tanoak, young trees, ivies and garden-variety plants.

Agricultural areas on the eastern portion of the planning area include cattle pasture and vineyard.

Wildlife Species of Concern

Sonoma County has rich biodiversity. However, these plant and animal communities rely on intact and quality habitat in order to thrive. Laws, such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Endangered Species Act, exist to ensure that wildlife species are considered and managed to provide for their continued existence. The US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) are responsible for administering these laws and for looking ahead to prevent wildlife population declines that would lead to them becoming endangered. Resource Conservation Districts provide local support to rural landowners in managing their natural resources.

While there are some inherent risks to wildlife habitat anytime the landscape is altered, there is also a great need for active forest and rangeland management in the Camp Meeker forest, to improve and protect valuable wildlife habitat. Many activities that make forests more fire safe also have the co-benefit of improving forest stand structure and characteristics important to wildlife.

Species of concern within the planning area include, but are not limited to the following. Activities outlined in this plan must adhere to regulations and best practices that protect these sensitive species and their habitats.

- Central California Coast Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)
- Steelhead trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
- Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*)
- California giant salamander (*Dicamptodon ensatus*)
- California red-legged frog (*Rana draytonii*)
- Foothill yellow-legged frog (*Rana boylei*)
- California Freshwater Shrimp (*Syncaris pacifica*)
- Sonoma Tree Vole (*Arborimus pomo*)
- Northern Spotted Owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*)
- Marbled Murrelet (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*)

Environmental Protections

NEPA and CEQA

NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) and CEQA (California Environmental Quality ACT) are regulations, laws and codes governing projects that have the potential to impact environmental resources. Environmental resources include biological (plants and wildlife) as well as cultural (archaeological) resources. NEPA is triggered when *a federal agency* funds or implements actions with potential for changes in the physical environment. CEQA is the California state equivalent of NEPA. CEQA is triggered when *a public agency* is implementing a project, funding a project implemented by others, issuing a permit, or facilitating or assisting in a project. NEPA and CEQA do not apply to privately funded projects, such as those conducted day to day by private landowners. It will come into effect if federal or state dollars are used by a public agency to conduct on-the-ground work. It is likely that some of the projects outlined in this CWPP will need to comply with CEQA or NEPA. Local agencies are familiar with the requirements and in working with partners at CDFW and USFWS to make projects comply with these regulations.

Creek Alterations

Alterations to creek beds, banks, or channels, including vegetation removal, repair or replacement of a stream crossing, require that California Department of Fish and Wildlife be notified and may also require a permit (Fish and Game Code § 1602). This is because alterations to the stream channel (its bed, banks, channels and vegetation) change the quality of the habitat available for sensitive aquatic and semi-aquatic wildlife species, such as salmon, trout, freshwater shrimp, frogs, turtles and salamanders, all of which utilize stream habitat at some or all stages of their lifecycles.

Disturbing Vegetation during Nesting Bird Season

There are laws in place to protect California's wild birds. CA Fish and Game code Sections 3503 and 3503.5 state that it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird. Bird nesting season is typically defined as February 1 – September 15. We recommend that vegetation management activities be conducted September 16 – January 31 to avoid any potential activities that could harm nesting birds.

Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District (RCD)

Gold Ridge RCD provides technical, financial and educational support to western Sonoma County on natural resource management projects and issues. The RCD is the primary author of this CWPP, and is a committed partner in implementing the CWPP without impacting our shared natural resources.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)

CDFW has been involved in the creation of this CWPP, and is very willing to work with landowners and organizations to help them understand and navigate the permitting process. Anyone can consult with California Department of Fish and Wildlife to learn more.

Parcel Data

CWPP PARCEL DATA*	
TOTAL ACRES:	3,839.5
TOTAL SQUARE MILES:	5.99
TOTAL NUMBER of PARCELS	753
Parcels with structures ("Improved")	
Total number improved	411
Total number of structures	636
Number of improved parcels zoned residential	392
Number of improved parcels less than 1 acre	341
Average size improved parcels less than 1 acres	0.16
Number of improved parcels 1 to 30 acres	56
Average size improved parcels 1 to 30 acres	3.15
Average size of improved parcels more than 30 acres	137.8
Vacant parcels (without structures, "Unimproved")	
Total number vacant	342
Average size of vacant parcels	5.51
Zoning	
Acres zoned residential	363.27
Acres zoned agriculture	2,411.57
Acres zoned commercial	1,064.39
Population	
Approximate Population**	936
<i>*Based on Sonoma County Assessor's data</i>	
<i>** Based on 2.4 people per residence</i>	

Table 1: Camp Meeker CWPP parcel information

Land Use and Ownership

Land use in the area includes agricultural, vineyards, grazing, forestland, recreational and residential. See *Table 1: Camp Meeker CWPP Parcel Information* for more information.

Residences

Approximately 363 acres are zoned residential in the planning area. The majority of these parcels are in the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood, where roughly 400 parcels are improved residential parcels with an average lot size of 1/6th acres. Developed lots are small and close together. The median home value is \$515,152. See *Tables 2-4: Camp Meeker Residential Area (zip code 94519) Demographics, 2020* for more information. The Camp Meeker residential neighborhood is mixed with roughly 340 vacant undeveloped lots, averaging 5.5 acres in size.

Camps and Other Event Centers

Numerous camps and retreat centers call this area home. Three major centers are located along Bohemian Highway north: Westminster Woods (191 acres), St. Dorothy's Rest (380 acres), and Alliance Redwoods (110 acres). These camps host an impressive population of visitors nearly year-round. Individual camps may see 80-200 visitors in a day.

In addition, Land Paths (550 acres) is an open space preserve on Bohemian Highway which welcomes occasional visitors, typically 40 attendees per event day. The Occidental Center for Arts and Ecology Center (80 acres) is an ecological learning site on Coleman Valley Road and on occasion hosts groups of approximately 40 attendees.

Agriculture

Approximately 2,411 acres are zoned agricultural in the planning area. The majority of these parcels are in the hills east of Bohemian Highway. Local agriculture is mostly cattle ranching and vineyard production.

Utilities

PG&E is responsible for the delivery of power to the area. Of special concern are the drop lines from PG&E lines to households, which were installed in the 1970's and before. Many may be uninsulated. PG&E is currently rolling out an infrastructure hardening program to update poles and lines for fire safety.

Other utilities within the Camp Meeker residential community:

- CM drinking water storage & distribution system

- Telephone, cable TV
- Gas: Most homes have propane tanks or wood stove

Other utilities in the greater Camp Meeker area:

- Drinking water storage and distribution is personal wells and tanks, some rainwater harvesting and storing systems
- Telephone, cable TV
- Gas: Most homes have propane tanks or wood stove

Water Supply

Public water supply for fire protection in the community of Camp Meeker is provided by the Camp Meeker Park and Recreation District. CMPRD is contracted with the Russian River Utility to operate the water systems which maintains the facilities and collects all water quality samples. Outside of the residential neighborhood, most parcels are on wells with varying levels of private water storage. Some landowners catch and store rainwater to help augment the summer water supply.

Camp Meeker Park and Recreation District

In 1994 the state legislature passed legislation granting this Recreation and Park District the power of a County Water District. The board of directors secured financing in 1996 for the construction of a water source well at Monte Rio, a transmission main and a pump station to deliver water to a storage tank on Morelli Lane.

Subsequently, a second project replaced all water delivery facilities, and included two additional storage tanks. This project was constructed in 1999/2000. All operations are monitored by a remote telemetry system which reports the status of all critical equipment to a control center and sends alarms to the operator's pager. The system serves 365 customers and provides fire protection with a minimum flow of 750 gallons per minute. The water supply is 14 days' worth of water.

Businesses

There is very little commercial activity in the planning area. The Camp Meeker U.S. Postal Service (USPS) Office is at the entrance to Market Street. The nearest business center is downtown Occidental proper, which hosts a weekly farmers market and arts center and gallery, six restaurants, two hotels, and multiple small shops and businesses and two grocery stores, two churches, a library, a hardware store, butcher shop, and a health center.

Demographics

Demographics for Camp Meeker Planning Area

- Number of Structures: 636
- Approximate number of residents: 936
- Full Time/Part Time Residents: approx. 796/140
- Visitors to the area at height of the season: approx. 680
- Total population at the height of the season: 1,616

Demographics for Camp Meeker Zip Code 94519¹ (Residential Area Only)

Population	
Total Population	576 (100%)
Population in Households <i>(does not include transient population)</i>	576 (100.0%)
Population in Families	404 (70.1%)
Population Density	887
Diversity Index	31

Housing	
Total HU (Housing Units)	359 (100%)
Owner Occupied HU	192 (53.5%)
Renter Occupied HU	89 (24.8%)
Vacant Housing Units	78 (21.7%)
Median Home Value	\$515,152
Average Home Value	\$713,802
Sonoma County Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units 2015-2019 ²	\$609,600

Income	
Median Household Income	\$87,182
Average Household Income	\$159,021
% of Income for Mortgage	25%
Per Capita Income	\$77,578

Households	
Total Households	281
Average Household Size	2.05
Family Households	156
Average Family Size	3

Tables 2-4: Camp Meeker Residential Area (zip code 94519) Demographics, 2020

¹ <https://california.hometownlocator.com/zip-codes/data.zipcode.95419.cfm>

² <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/sonomacountycalifornia>

Community Organizations

- **Homeowners Associations**
 - None
- **Fire Safe Council**
 - Fire Safe Camp Meeker
- **Community organizations and groups**
 - Alliance Redwoods and Conference Grounds
 - Bohemian Grove Social Club
 - Bohemian Highway Business Coalition
 - Camp Meeker Recreation and Park District
 - Safer West County
 - St. Dorothy's Rest
 - Westminster Woods Camp and Retreat Center

The Built Environment

Homes should be thought of as one of the most critical fuel components. Although we naturally worry about the dense vegetation that surrounds us, houses and outbuildings are themselves fuel, and are highly susceptible to ignition from embers, direct flame contact from nearby fuels, or radiant heat from burning vegetation or nearby structures.

Most homes and buildings in the area were built before Wildland Urban Interface building codes took effect in 2007, and most have vulnerable elements (such as old or non-Class A rated roofs, attic or foundation vents that allow for ember intrusion, wooden decks and attachments, and siding) that will increase potential for ignition. Intensive education and outreach will help residents understand the importance of retrofitting vulnerable elements for increased ignition resistance, as well as the necessity of clearing any dry vegetation on and near their buildings.

Additionally, many homes do not have defensible space adequate for this high-risk area. Currently, many residents, for a variety of reasons including physical ability, age, cost, and lack of awareness, don't maintain adequate defensible space. Small lot sizes in the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood make it difficult for any one landowner to achieve 100' of defensible space out from their home without running into a property line. For this reason, it's essential that neighbors decide together to create and maintain defensible space.

It is critically important that homeowners take the initiative both to create and maintain adequate defensible space and to harden their homes against wildfire ignition. Please see

Appendix D, *Creating Wildfire Adapted Homes and Landscape* and Appendix E, *CAL FIRE Fuels Reduction Guide* for specific guidelines about home hardening and defensible space.

Key Assets

Key assets in the built environment include, but are not limited to, numerous private homes, camp and retreat center buildings and infrastructure, farm and ranch infrastructure, the water delivery system for the Camp Meeker residential community and engineered instream wildlife habitat structures in the Dutch Bill Creek.

Homeowners Insurance

All over the state, homeowners are struggling with getting and keeping adequate insurance. In Camp Meeker, this struggle is not new, and in fact the reduced availability of affordable insurance across the state has only worsened an existing problem for this community. At this time, the California Department of Insurance is undertaking a review of applicable regulations and rate filings at the urging of a broad range of stakeholders urging reform to better meet the needs of consumers and related industries in California. The DOI is contemplating regulation that would include: incentivizing individual and community fire mitigation efforts; reducing the risk of loss posed by wildfires; improving accuracy in the classification of wildfire risk and resulting rates and premiums; and increasing transparency in, and consumer awareness of, insurers' rating and/or scoring of wildfire risk; enhancing consumer protections; and potentially improving availability and affordability of property-casualty insurance for communities and properties where wildfire mitigation measures have been implemented. All wildfire mitigation efforts made by individuals and community have the potential to greatly impact insurance affordability and availability.

Access, Egress and Evacuation

Road Infrastructure: Bohemian Highway, the primary road in the planning area, is an adequate width and height for a fire engine to travel (24' wide and 15' clearance). However, roadside vegetation grows thick and close to the road. There are also long stretches where shoulder access is unavailable, creating a pinch point for traffic in an evacuation. The road has a moderate slope, however the perpendicular roadside slope is steep in places, and winter landslides are not uncommon.

Secondary roads in Camp Meeker, by and large, are inadequate in width for fire engine access. Roads within the Camp Meeker residential area were originally sized for oxen to pull lumber down the hillside, circa the late 1880s. The roads are narrow, steep and winding with little shoulder (most roads are cut into the hillside) and have heavy roadside

vegetation and flammable home attachments such as fences, gates and arbors. Many roads are no larger than one-lane, but carry two-way traffic. There are long stretches where two-way traffic or shoulder access is unavailable, creating a pinch point for traffic in an evacuation. Cars parked on the shoulder make narrow roads even tighter passes. Some dead-end roads are 300' long with few or no engine-sized turn-arounds.

Bridges: Dozens of bridges were destroyed by the 2017 Central LNU Complex Fire, leaving residents cut off for evacuation, rescue, or suppression efforts. There are a handful of bridges in Camp Meeker, and many residences along Bohemian Highway have bridged driveways over the Dutch Bill Creek.

Roadside Vegetation: There is significant vegetation on primary roads, secondary roads and driveways. Broom, ivy, dead tanoak, young bay trees and Douglas-fir and stump sprouting redwoods are some of the most common roadside plants. Vegetation maintenance is essential to creating safe passage along roads. See page 31 for more on maintaining roadside vegetation.

Signage: Roads and homes should be marked with bold, reflective signage, with contrasting colors between the sign background and the text. Text should be at least 5 inches in height. Home addresses should be in a clear location on the building and at the driveway entrance. Road signage should clearly indicate road name at all intersections, notify Dead Ends, notify One-Ways, and direct traffic back to Bohemian Highway when appropriate. Currently, roads and homes have inadequate signage as described above.

Gates: Locked gates can impede firefighter access. There are some private residences that use locked gates. Residents should unlock gates when evacuated for ease of first responder access.

Wildland Urban Intermix (WUI) Condition

The term “WUI” comprises both Wildland Urban Interface and Intermix, but there is a distinction. This plan uses the term Wildland Urban Interface/Intermix as defined in the Federal Register (66:751, 2001) report on WUI communities at risk from fire (USDA & USDI, 2001) as follows:

“The **Interface** Community exists where structures directly abut wildland fuels. There is a clear line of demarcation between residential, business, and public structures and wildland fuels. Wildland fuels do not generally continue into the developed area. The development density for an interface community is usually 3 or more structures per acre, with shared municipal services. Fire protection is generally provided by a local government fire department with the responsibility to

protect the structure from both an interior fire and an advancing wildland fire. An alternative definition of the interface community emphasizes a population density of 250 or more people per square mile.”

*“The **Intermix** Community exists where structures are scattered throughout a wildland area. There is no clear line of demarcation, wildland fuels are continuous outside of and within the developed area. The development density in the intermix ranges from structures very close together to one structure per 40 acres. Fire protection districts funded by various taxing authorities normally provide life and property fire protection and may also have wildland fire protection responsibilities. An alternative definition of intermix community emphasizes a population density of between 28-250 people per square mile.”*

Using this definition, the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood and greater Camp Meeker area both are considered a Wildland Urban Intermix Community for two reasons: First, the wildland fuels continue throughout the development; and second, the population density is under 250 per square mile.

Fire History

Fire is recognized as a natural and critical component of Northern California’s forested landscapes. Prior to wildland fire suppression efforts that began in the early 20th century, most of California’s forest lands were subject to frequent low-intensity fires brought on by Native Americans. These anthropogenic fires were frequently low to moderate intensity; they removed excess fuel, thinned vegetation, and reduced competition between residual trees. The planning area falls within the territory of the Southern Pomo. A fire history study was performed by Jackson Demonstration State Forest that found that the pre-20th century mean fire return interval for the redwood and redwood-Douglas-fir forest types ranged from approximately 6 to 20 years (Brown and Baxter 2003).

There has not been a reported wildfire in the planning area since records began in the 1940s, in which time there has been a large accumulation of fuel. Fire suppression, coupled with intermediate logging of larger trees, increased the number of small diameter, shade tolerant trees and reduced canopy height. Areas that historically were open woodland have been encroached by relatively shade-tolerant Douglas-fir trees. This has led to high fuel loadings that may easily carry fire into the canopy and across the landscape. Conversion of the wildlands to residential land uses and occupation of residences within the wildlands has also raised the fire risk by introducing a new fire fuel (homes) and inhibiting traditional forest and grassland management activities (such as controlled burning, grazing and thinning).

Wildfire Risk Designations

Both Occidental and Camp Meeker were designated “Communities at Risk” by CAL FIRE in 2001. Both communities were evacuated during the 2019 Kincade Fire and 2020 Walbridge Fire. Strong offshore winds made the likelihood of fire spread from eastern Sonoma County to western Sonoma County high. As seen in this satellite image of the Kincade Fire, the smoke and ash plume blew directly over the Occidental area.

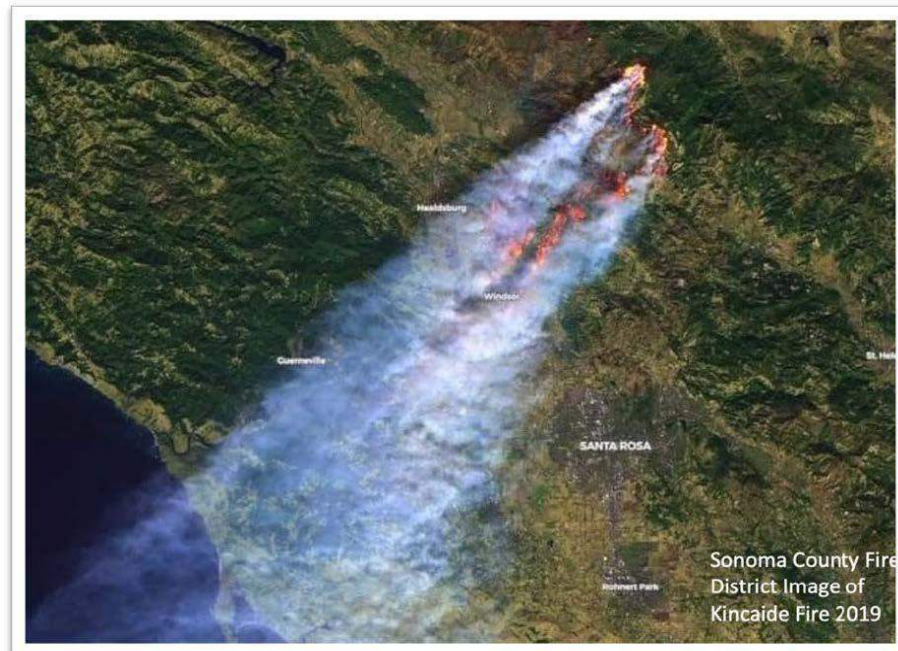
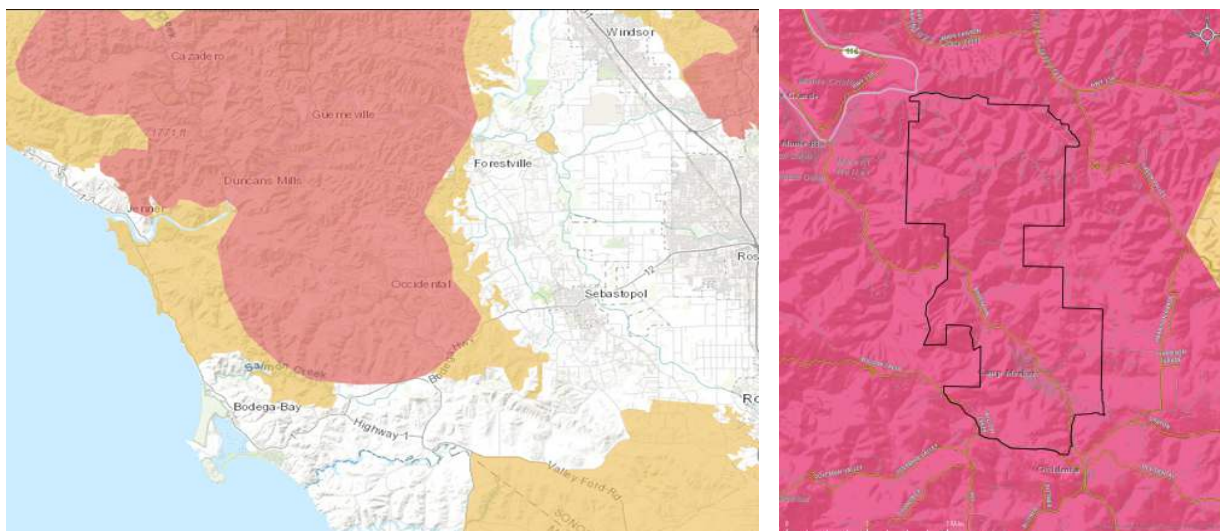


Figure 4: Smoke plume from Kincade Fire over western Sonoma County, California

According to the Sonoma County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, CAL FIRE Battalion Chiefs working in Battalion 1410 listed fuels buildup in Camp Meeker as a high or very-high concern. The California Public Utilities Commission designates the entirety of the planning area as Tier 3 Extreme Fire Threat area (100%).



Figures 5 and 6: Left, CPUC Fire Threat zones in western Sonoma County, California. Right, CPUC Fire Threat zones and CWPP Planning Area

CAL FIRE designates the greater Camp Meeker planning area as in a High (80%) Fire Hazard Severity Zone, and rates the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood as in a Moderate (20%) Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The downgrading of the residential area's risk may be owed to the water hydrant system or northerly aspect. However, at the time of writing, we feel this Moderate rating is not true to the risks posed by the densely populated built environment in this forest community.

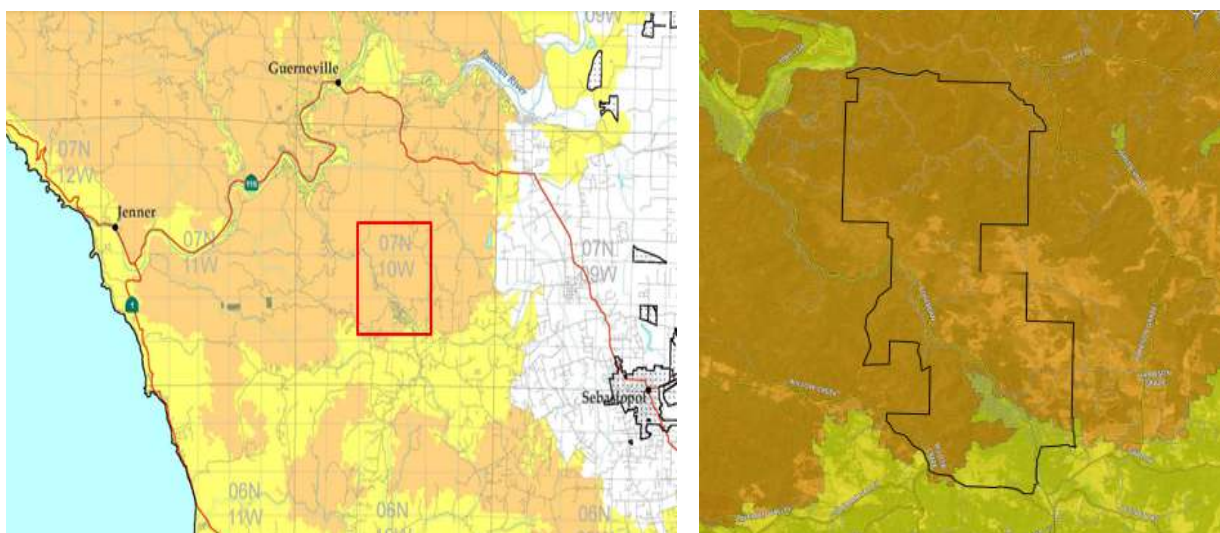


Figure 7 and 8: Left, CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Western Sonoma County, California. Red box shows Camp Meeker. Right, CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones and CWPP Planning Area

Fire Environment

Wildland fire risk factors in Sonoma County include dense fuels buildup within and near residential areas, steep topography, fire history, and dry and windy fall weather. This potential turned into a tragic reality October 8 through October 31, 2017 when the Tubbs, Nuns, and Pocket fires, known as the 2017 Central LNU Complex, burned 110,000 acres in Sonoma County, destroyed nearly 7,000 structures and claimed 24 lives. The fires were sparked during a strong Mayacamas wind event that brought warm, dry wind from the east across the Mayacamas Mountains and Santa Rosa Valley. Match those strong winds with steep slopes, dense vegetation and dry conditions, and the recipe for wildfire was complete. In the fall seasons of 2019 (Kincade) and 2020 (Glass), strong wind events repeatedly created the conditions for fast-spreading wildfires in eastern Sonoma County. In a rare dry lightning storm in August 2020, western Sonoma County experienced wide-spread wildfire for the first time since the 1972 Creighton Ridge Fire, confirming for all that western Sonoma County was not immune to wildfire.

Wildfire behavior is based on three primary factors: topography, weather, and fuel. The three elements are called the “fire triangle.” Ultimately, fire behavior is directly related to the severity of conditions of each of these three factors on any given day. If there is only one leg of the fire triangle present—say the fire starts on a steep slope where it can make a rapid uphill run, but the weather is not hot, dry and windy and fuels are moderate—firefighters should have a good chance to stop the fire. Worst case scenario is when all three elements of the fire triangle are present, e.g., a fire starts on a steep slope on a hot dry, windy day, in heavy fuel. These are the conditions in which there is the potential for fire behavior that will be very difficult for firefighters to contain. Camp Meeker is particularly vulnerable to two of the three elements: steep slope and heavy fuels, however dry weather is less threatening here in the moist, coastal redwood forest than in surrounding locations. Still, as we’ve learned from the Walbridge fire and others, moist vegetation and northern aspect are no guarantee that a fast-moving wildfire will be hindered by these local conditions.

Camp Meeker’s topography is steep. Vegetative fuel build is significant, both in residential and open spaces. Homes should also be thought of as part of the fuel component. Many homes were built long before Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) building codes took effect. Small lots mean homes are closer together (some have just 10 feet between them). It also means that more of the parcel is “home” than “garden.” Homes in this community frequently feature flammable attachments such as decks, fences, gazebos, sheds, arbors and staircases. Residents also store belongings outside in the driveway and around the home, presenting a large amount of flammable material between the home, garden and evacuation route.

Any fire in Camp Meeker will be greatly complicated by the lack of alternative primary roads to Bohemian Highway which is a highly trafficked roadway, narrow one-way-in and one-way-out access, road infrastructure issues (gates, bridges, single lane, roadside congestion, slope, tight turns), and high summertime populations. There will be significant risks to life safety in the event of a large uncontrolled wildfire. It is crucial that Camp Meeker residents understand the risk of wildfire, what to before, during and after a wildfire.

Potential Ignition Sources:

In modern times, fire incidents have been extinguished by first responders before they could advance to wildfires. These initial ignitions were caused by a variety of sources. When identified, the most common sources were camp fires, arson, automobile fires, down power lines and structure fires.

- Homeless encampments are the primary source of hazardous camp fires in the area. Transient homeless occupy remote areas of large rural properties where they are difficult to detect. They use fires to keep warm and heat food.
- This same group is also suspected to be the primary source of arson fires. The homeless population struggles with substance abuse, addiction and mental illness.
- Automobile fires can result from traffic accidents, disrepair, or interaction between vehicle and dry vegetation.
- High wind events commonly bring down power lines in the area when fallen vegetation weighs the line down, breaking it and causing electricity to spark and ignite dry vegetation or other flammable material.
- Structure fires can result from a variety of ignition sources. Faulty electrical wiring, unkempt fireplaces or chimneys, and cooking surfaces are all common home fire hazards. Another source worth mentioning is faulty wiring in houses that have been informally set up as indoor cannabis cultivation sites, or “grow houses.”

Vision for a more fire safe Camp Meeker

We envision a community that is more fire safe in the following ways:

- Community is “emergency literate.” Members understand their wildfire risks and resources. They are proactive about reducing potential ignition sources. They are coordinated so that they can respond swiftly to an emergency.
- Community utilizes the County emergency alert and warning system and is familiar with the community evacuation plan.
- Evacuation routes are maintained for fire engine-access year-round
- Potential sources of ignitions are identified and mitigated.

- Adequate water supply for fire suppression in Camp Meeker residential neighborhood and greater, rural area.
- Local fire departments are in communication with community so they are working hand-in-glove in education, coordination and first response. They have the resources, staff and funding they need.
- Homeowners comply with defensible space regulations that require fuels modification within 100 feet of homes (or to the property line) and neighbors work together to ensure defensible space is maintained for everyone.
- Homeowners modify structural elements on buildings as necessary to harden their homes against ember cast or flaming fire.
- Forests are managed for fire safety and forest health: Reduce legacy of built-up vegetative fuels (dead, dying, diseased trees, over-crowded small diameter “pole” trees). Thin forest stands to retain the largest trees and manage for multi-age, multi-species stand. Increase vertical and horizontal spacing between ground, mid-story and over-story canopies within the forest.
- Creeks are flowing, healthy, protected and lush with high-moisture vegetation.

Fire Department Service Areas

All 3,839 acres of the planning area are within the State Responsibility Area (SRA), which are in unincorporated Sonoma County. In the unincorporated SRA, Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Dept. (CMVFD) is under contract with North Bay Fire Protection District to provide first response services to residents in the Camp Meeker community. Outside of the community, Occidental Community Services District has a response agreement with North Bay Fire Protection District to provide first response services. In the north most part of the planning area, the Monte Rio Fire Protection District provides first response services. However, across the planning area, CAL FIRE has primary responsibility for command and firefighting operations and fire prevention for wildland fires and fires that pose a threat of spreading into the wildland.

CMVFD is an all-volunteer team. North Bay Fire Protection District and Monte Rio Fire Protection District both have a combination of volunteer and paid staff. The CAL FIRE station on Graton Road has an all-paid staff, with higher staff capacity during declared fire season (which changes year to year).

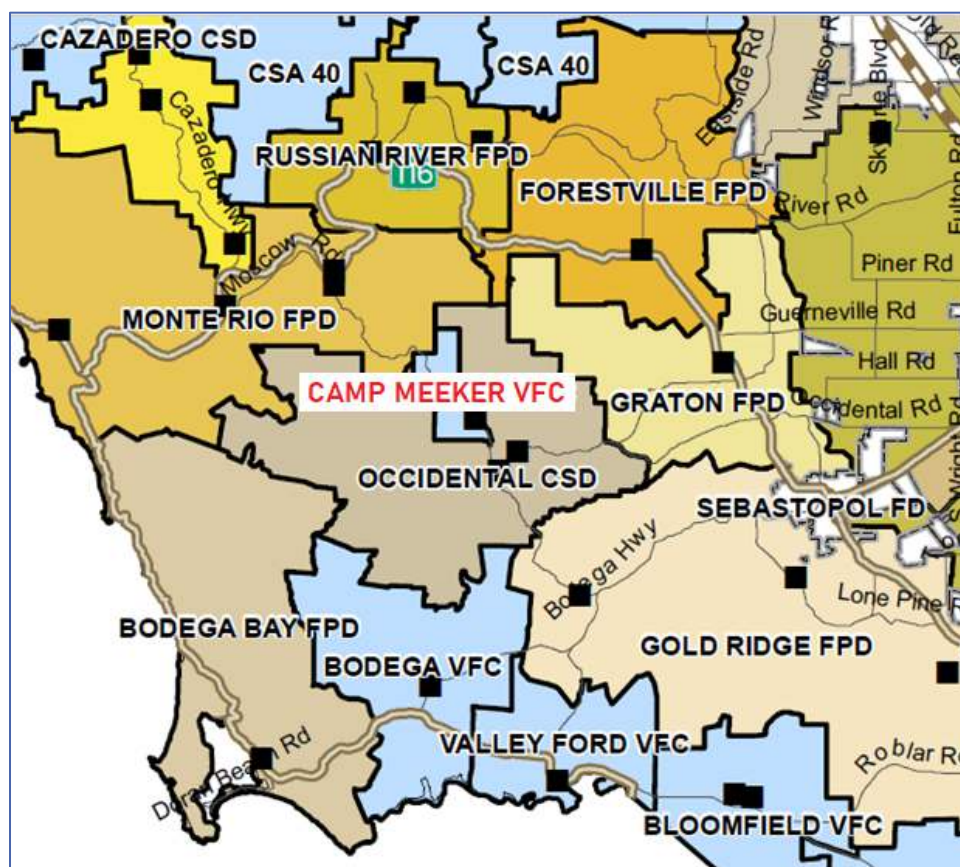


Figure 9: Map detail showing Camp Meeker area of Sonoma County, CA Fire District Stations

CAL FIRE

CAL FIRE responds to wildland fires, structure fires, traffic collisions, hazardous material spills, and a variety of other emergency incidents. CAL FIRE staffs nine stations within the County, as well as the Sonoma Air Attack Base; total fire-season staff is approximately 115, with a reduced staff of approximately 50 during the non-fire season.

The Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit (LNU) is one of 21 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) administrative units. It comprises six counties: Sonoma, Lake, Napa, Yolo, Colusa, and Solano. LNU has primary responsibility for more than 2.1 million acres of State Responsibility Area (SRA), and 2.3 million acres of CAL FIRE Direct Protection Area (DPA) lands, more than any other unit. It has the third largest population living within CAL FIRE DPA, and ranks third in the average number of annual fires.

The Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit is divided into five divisions, and ten field battalions. Sonoma County defines the West Division. The West Division office is located in Santa Rosa. The West division is divided into four battalions, including Battalion 1410. This Battalion spans Sonoma County: its western boundary is the Pacific Ocean and its north-eastern the Lake County line, and encompasses the community of Occidental.

Emergency Notification and Alerts

Currently, the community receives the following emergency alerts:

Red Flag Warning: A Red Flag Warning means warm temperatures, very low humidity, and stronger winds are expected to combine to produce an increased risk of fire danger (NOAA). The local fire departments have signs that indicate the fire danger of the day. Red Flag Warnings are displayed as a red flag on a flagpole at the stations. Red Flag Days are also announced on the news, weather channels and websites and on CAL FIRE's website.

Active fires: You can find information about active fires in Sonoma County through these resources:

- CAL FIRE Active Fire Map online (showing fires in the State Responsibility Area or where they are responding)
- NOAA Radio: When activated by an event, NOAA weather radios generate an alarm, voice alert, and flasher. Sonoma County residents should tune their NOAA radio to frequency 162.475 and SAME code: 006097
- Nixle (email and text messages)
- SoCoAlert (alerts through landline calls, cell phone text messages or pre-recorded verbal messages and email. The system also works with telephone devices for the deaf)
- WEA phone alerts (cell phone messaging)
- Local radio station KSRO (1350AM, 103.5FM/93.5FM)
- Sonoma County Scanner Updates (Twitter, Facebook, website)
- PulsePoint (smart phone app)
- NextDoor (social website and phone app)
- Your neighborhood communication system
- Visual indicators such as smoke in the sky

Evacuation Warning: An Evacuation Warning is a notice, provided by the Sonoma County Sheriff after discussion and consultation with the Incident Commander, that your area *may* need to evacuate because of an imminent wildfire risk. You should get yourself ready to go, and you may evacuate if you feel unsafe. It is not an evacuation order. Sonoma County alerts the community of Evacuation Warnings through:

- Nixle (email and text messages)
- SoCoAlert (alerts through landline calls, cell phone text messages or pre-recorded verbal messages and email. The system also works with telephone devices for the deaf)
- WEA phone alerts (cell phone messaging)

- EAS Emergency Alert System (local radio and television station announcements)
- SoCoEmergency.org (County's emergency website)
- NOAA Radio: When activated by an event, NOAA weather radios generate an alarm, voice alert, and flasher. Sonoma County residents should tune their NOAA radio to frequency 162.475 and SAME code: 006097
- Sheriff's Office (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

You can also receive news about Evacuation Warnings through these other resources:

- Local radio station KSRO (1350AM, 103.5FM/93.5FM)
- NextDoor (social website and phone app)
- Local fire department Facebook pages (social website and phone app)
- Sonoma County Scanner Updates (Twitter, Facebook, website)
- Your neighborhood communication system

Evacuation Order: An evacuation order is provided by the Sonoma County Sheriff after discussion and consultation with the Incident Commander, and indicates that there is an imminent threat to your life safety and means you must evacuate. The evacuation order is issued primarily to prevent loss of life and injury, and secondarily to allow firefighting activities.

Sonoma County alerts the community of Evacuation Orders through:

- Hi-lo sirens will sound off from patrol vehicles (sheriff's deputies or highway patrol cars) driving through the neighborhood. Officer may use the PA system to alert residents to leave the area.
- Deputies may go, home to home, knocking on doors, alerting residents to leave the area.
- The Camp Meeker Volunteer Fire Station may use its stationary siren to alert the community of an evacuation.
- The Occidental Fire Station may use its stationary siren to alert the community of an evacuation.
- Nixle (email and text messages)
- SoCoAlert (alerts through landline calls, cell phone text messages or pre-recorded verbal messages and email. The system also works with telephone devices for the deaf)
- WEA phone alerts (cell phone messaging)
- SoCoEmergency.org (County's emergency website)
- EAS Emergency Alert System (local radio and television station announcements)
- Sheriff's Office (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- NOAA Radio: When activated by an event, NOAA weather radios generate an alarm, voice alert, and flasher. Sonoma County residents should tune their NOAA radio to frequency 162.475 and SAME code: 006097

- Windy.com shows a real-time map of wind strength and direction, information you will want to know as you assess your best evacuation route

You can also receive news about Evacuation Orders through these other resources:

- Local radio station KSRO (1350AM, 103.5FM/93.5FM)
- NextDoor (social website and phone app)
- Local fire department Facebook pages (social website and phone app)
- Sonoma County Scanner Updates (Twitter, Facebook, website)
- Your neighborhood communication system

Evacuation

An evacuation is a complex event. The Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, Department of Emergency Management, and state and local fire departments work together to manage an evacuation event. Often times, these partners will call in mutual aid from around the bay area, across the country, and even internationally, to safely evacuate the area and suppress the fire.

Evacuation Order: The Sheriff's Office will order the evacuation in consultation with local or state fire departments which deem the evacuation necessary due to an imminent fire threat. All three partners alert the community of the evacuation order, as described in the section above. The Sheriff's Office will lift the evacuation order when it is safe to re-enter.

Evacuation Enforcement and Traffic Control: The Sheriff's Office (in partnership with mutual aid law enforcement partners, including those from outside Sonoma County) will enter the evacuation area to alert people to leave, manage out-going traffic, prevent re-entry (unless permission is granted under special circumstance) and patrol the scene for life and property safety needs (preventing looters).

Firefighting: Local, state, federal and foreign firefighting crews may enter the evacuation area to suppress the fire. Water is the main form of suppression for our area (ground and air attacks), though fire retardant may also be used. It is extremely important that the area be evacuated so firefighters can focus and access the area without the impediment.

Emergency information: The Department of Emergency Management will produce information in real time on evacuation warnings and orders, emergency shelters, supplies, resources, and animal rescue. The Sheriff's Office will produce information in real time on the safety conditions within the evacuation zones. The fire agencies will produce information in real time on the fire behavior, structure loss and containment.

Evacuees: The community is responsible for knowing how to be prepared for an emergency, for knowing their potential evacuation routes and for staying informed through the communication channels listed above. Early, coordinated evacuation is the key to life safety in the Camp Meeker area.

Evacuation Routes: The map below shows the evacuation routes in the immediate Camp Meeker-Occidental area.

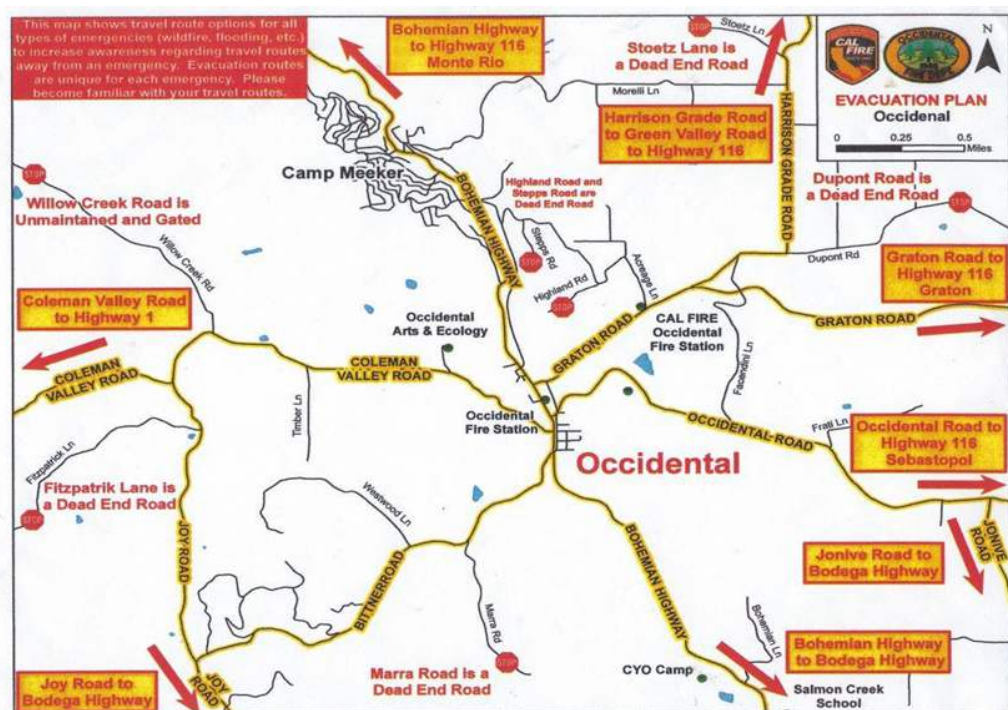


Figure 10: Emergency evacuation routes, provided by Fire Safe Occidental

Fire First Response and Suppression

Call 911 to alert first responders of a fire. Fire departments will respond as quickly as possible to get an engine to the location. Depending on the fire report, they may call for additional resources to make the initial response. Fire fighters utilize a Fire Attack Map to guide them as they enter a community to reach a fire. Many local firefighters are familiar with the ground conditions, risks and resources available to them. As much as possible, they will record this information on the Fire Attack Maps.

In the event that local fire staff are called away on duty, responding to a fire outside the Camp Meeker area, it may mean that out-of-area firefighters are the first to respond to an emergency. These firefighters are unfamiliar with the locale and will rely on the Fire Attack Map and what they've been told by local fire fighters to guide them safely to and from the fire.

Water Supply

Public water supply for fire protection in the community of Camp Meeker is provided by the Camp Meeker Recreation and Park District. CMRPD is contracted with the Russian River Utility to operate the water systems which maintains the facilities and collects all water quality samples. Outside of the residential neighborhood, most parcels are on wells with varying levels of private water storage. Some landowners catch and store rainwater to help augment the summer water supply.

Camp Meeker Park and Recreation District

In 1994, the state legislature passed legislation granting the Camp Meeker Recreation and Park District the power of a County Water District. The board of directors secured financing in 1996 for the construction of a water source well at Monte Rio, a transmission main and a pump station to deliver water to a storage tank on Morelli Lane.

Subsequently, a second project replaced all water delivery facilities and included two additional storage tanks. This project was constructed in 1999/2000. All operations are monitored by a remote telemetry system which reports the status of all critical equipment to a control center and sends alarms to the operator's pager. The system serves 365 customers and provides fire protection with a minimum flow of 750 gallons per minute. The water supply is 14 days of water.

Water Tenders

Water is the primary method of suppression in the Camp Meeker area; the use of retardants or back-burning are secondary methods of suppression. In the event of an emergency, CAL FIRE can request water tenders to increase available water supply. They have had good response on these requests. However, in the thick of fire season, these resources may not be as readily available.

Wildland Water Supply

In an emergency, fire departments will look for rural ponds to draw water for suppression from if they need additional water resources. Landowners can volunteer their ponds as an emergency resource, and this information will go into the attack-map.

Vegetation Treatment

Decades of fire suppression, a warming climate, and introduction of non-native species, in combination with the conversion of managed forest and grazing lands to residential use, have had dramatic effects on virtually all of Sonoma County's ecosystems. In the Camp

Meeker area, the community must mitigate the fire risks associated with dense, brushy roadside vegetation, steep grasslands, and dense forestland with a high proportion of dead materials and brushy fuels that will increase fire behavior and fire spread. Sensitive habitats such as riparian corridors also require care and pose a management challenge as many creeks are flanked by roads, including the area's primary road, Bohemian Highway.

Projects that will help increase forest health and wildlife habitat while reducing available fuel are critically important. Wildland fuels need to be thinned and maintained to create healthier forests and landscapes that are better adapted to our fire prone environment.

While projects that increase forest health on a landscape scale are important, highest priority fuels treatments should be those which will help save lives and property. Reducing flammable vegetation within 100 feet of homes and on roadsides is critically important. It is also essential to educate residents about how to create "wildfire adapted" homes and defensible space, and provide assistance that will help them reduce risks of economic and life loss.

Because vegetation grows back, it is essential to have a maintenance plan. Many funders require maintenance plans. We suggest planning 15 years of maintenance to sustain the impact of the project. Heavy timber: return every 3 years. Brush: return every year. Grass: return in spring and summer each year. Note that annual precipitation can increase the need for maintenance. Maintenance is an ongoing activity that can be hard to sustain with grant funds because grant funding is competitive, unreliable and short term. Instead, we recommend building local capacity for long-term maintenance by purchasing equipment like chippers and mowers and by training landowners, managers, volunteers and others to use and maintain the equipment.

Managing Vegetation in the Home Defensible Space

Landowners are responsible for maintaining defensible space around infrastructure (buildings, homes, granny units, sheds, water tanks, propane tanks, etc.) out 100' or to the property line. Defensible space around infrastructure increases chance of survival from an approaching fire in three ways: First, space separates the home from an approaching fire. Second, space separates the home if it is burning from the surrounding community. Third, space provides fire fighters the room needed to extinguish a fire.

Buildings are a major source of fire fuel and must be hardened against ignition sources as well as protected from surrounding fire fuels. Creating "defensible space," or in other words, a zone that is not fire-prone around the structure, is essential to reducing ignition risks and enabling first responders to protect your home in the case of a wildfire. In Camp Meeker, the majority of residential parcels do not have 100' radius before touching the next property. This makes it essential that neighbors have a common goal of fire safety and work together to reduce fire fuels in the home zone.

Landowners can achieve defensible space by making many small but impactful changes to their garden plants, home attachments, and yard and garden accessories. Learn more about creating and maintaining defensible space in Appendices D and E.

Maintaining Roadside Vegetation

Roadside vegetation is a hazard in an emergency because it can 1) hinder visibility, 2) block emergency turn-around and turn-out access and 3) catch on fire, endangering people on the road and possibly blocking roads with fallen vegetation. All of these make roads less safe to travel in an emergency. Therefore, cutting back and trimming up roadside vegetation is essential to maintaining access routes. According to Sonoma County Code, Sections 13-56, 13-37, and vegetation should be kept back at least 10 feet from the road edge and 15 feet above the road. This zone, 10 feet out from the road edge and 15 feet up, is the “vehicle access area.” Turn-outs and shoulders are considered the road and should be maintained as such.

Not all vegetation is the same. Branching, bushy, dense and dry vegetation is the most hazardous in the vehicle access area. Some common examples are bristly young Douglas-fir trees, bushy Bay Laurel trees, brushy French and Scottish broom, dry dead tanoak, and dry tall grass. On the other hand, low-growing, moist vegetation such as ferns, oxalis (redwood clover) and other green herbs present little threat to vehicle safety. Well-spaced, mature trees with thick branches and trunks and foliage above 15 feet do not present a significant threat to vehicle safety either. Vegetation management doesn’t mean moon-scaping; it means removing the most hazardous fuels to allow safe access.

Primary road: Along Bohemian Highway, the primary evacuation road, the Sonoma County Transportation and Public Works Department (TPW) manages roadside hazards such as vegetation for vehicle line-of-sight, within their right of way. This distance is usually 5-15 feet from the edge of the road within their easement, and as needed around turns to improve visibility. Vegetation is slashed into smaller pieces by the roadside mower, and the debris is deposited on the roadside, left to decompose. Beyond the right of way, the responsibility becomes that of the individual property owner. Landowners along Bohemian Highway may also trim back vegetation to aid visibility and maintain entrances to their properties.

Main secondary roads: The main secondary roads are Hampton, East, Market, Front, Tower and Morelli. These roads are used frequently as the main arteries from Bohemian Highway to the tertiary roads and dead-end roads. Private landowners are responsible for maintaining roadside vegetation. Slope and narrow road widths are challenges here as everywhere in Camp Meeker to achieving and maintaining clearance at least 10 feet out from the road edge and 15 feet vertical clearance.

Other secondary roads, tertiary roads and dead-ends: These roads are the responsibility of the landowners to maintain. Again, 10 feet back from the road edge and 15 feet vertical clearance are needed on these roads for safer access. Dead-end roads especially need clearance for turn-arounds.

The LNU Fire Plan³ calls for a minimum of 100' from the centerline of established arterial and collector roads to be managed for low fuel load and enhanced emergency access:

“Fuel reduction efforts on established arterial and collector roads have two significant advantages during a severe wildfire event. Firstly, fires impacting roads with reduced fuel allow citizens to evacuate and responders to enter the fire area safely. Secondly, roads are often utilized as containment and control lines for wildfire. Fuel reduction along a given road before a fire occurs allows responders to concentrate suppression efforts at the fire’s forward advance. Thus reducing the need to dedicate heavy resources to holding and reinforcing roadside fire edges.

Fuel reduction along Highways and Roadside right-of-way easements are proven inadequate to positively contain a fast-moving fire. Extending fuel reduction into private and public lands beyond a roadway easement is necessary for forming an effective fire break. Landowner and manager cooperation is critical for fuel reduction projects and establishing a reliable network of effective roadside fuel breaks.

The effective width of a roadside fuel break depends on percent of slope, dominant fuel type, and fuel load. Removing all vegetation is not necessary, nor desired, for an effective fuel break. For a starting estimate, a minimum of 100 horizontal feet of fuel thinning, measured from the road centerline, is desired to effectively blunt a fast-moving fire’s impact on the road. Prescribed fuel break width will vary from location to location, based on local factors such as topography, fuel configuration, and land-owner cooperation. Since roadside fuel reduction contributes to life-safety and survivability in the wildfire environment, this is the Unit’s top priority project concept.”

Initial priority roads to treat would be feeder roads (with multiple secondary roads feeding in) that serve as evacuation routes to Bohemian Highway. These include Hampton, East, Front, Market, and Morelli. Bohemian Highway roadside vegetation is maintained by County Transportation and Public Works and CalTrans. The sloped terrain of the hillside community makes the need for vertical and horizontal spacing between fuels even more important and on steeper slopes may need to extend beyond 100' for the desired effect. Along less developed roads like Hampton Road and Morelli Lane, roadside fuels thinning will be fairly in line with the following description: “Ladder fuels” such as invasive species, woody shrubs, and trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of 4” or less will be removed. The limbs of larger trees will be cut to a height of at least 10' to reduce the potential for ground fire reaching the canopy, and to a height of 16' in the road corridor to

³ https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/media/lpafffiu/2021_lnu_fireplan.pdf

allow for safe passage by fire engines. Additionally, dead and downed woody debris will be removed. Healthy mature trees will be retained for best carbon sequestration, while dead, diseased, or otherwise unhealthy mature trees will be removed wherever conditions permit. Large cut materials will be bucked and left in place to decompose. Cut materials from native species under 10" in diameter will be chipped and spread on site to act as a mulch for the project area, while all invasive species will be hauled for disposal.

Along developed roads like Front Street, Market Street and East Avenue, there is a high density and variety of fuels within 100' of the centerline, including homes, fences, sheds, home décor, wood piles, construction materials, garden tools, trees, shrubs, and ornamental landscaping. Homes are close together and close to the roadside (within 5 feet is common). Wherever possible, work with landowners to extend the treatment from the right of way onto their private property to achieve the desired 100' off centerline treatment. An appropriate approach would be to work with landowners to prioritize infrastructure (such as buildings and fences) and mature trees (with large, fire resistant trunks) and remove vegetative and other fuels around them.

Processing vegetative debris: Landowners have a variety of approaches for processing their vegetative debris. Some landowners pile and burn debris during safe burn season. Others retain it onsite and lay it on slope contour to provide erosion control along hills. Others chip it into wood chips to lay along pathways. Others haul the debris to Grab & Grow or the County dump for composting and repurposing. In all cases, the landowner must be considerate about the fire risk posed by the retained debris.

Increasing maintenance activities: Landowners can get more done when they work together, involve neighborhood volunteers and take advantage of additional support offered by AmeriCorps crews. St. Dorothy's Rest, for example, has coordinated with local landowners and AmeriCorps crews to reduce roadside vegetation. Landowners can also work with CWPP partners (Fire Safe Camp Meeker, Safer West County, local fire, Fire Safe Sonoma, etc.) to hire contractors with grant funds. Note that environmental review will be required if government funding will be used for vegetation management.

Maintaining Vegetation around Powerlines

Powerlines run extensively throughout the planning area, along main, secondary and tertiary roads. It is not uncommon to see power lines cross overhead across road ways and even homes in Camp Meeker. PG&E is responsible for maintaining vegetation around their above-ground power lines. They contract with tree services to conduct routine and enhanced vegetation management in the planning area.

Routine management: Continue to meet state vegetation and fire safety standards through our routine vegetation management work, which require clearances of 4 feet around power lines in high fire-threat areas with recommended minimum clearances of 12 feet or more at

the time of prune to ensure compliance year-round. PG&E will also remove hazardous vegetation such as dead or dying trees that pose a potential risk to the lines.

Enhanced management: Respond to the increasing wildfire threat our state faces by addressing overhanging limbs and branches directly above and around the lines. PG&E will also evaluate the condition of trees that may need to be addressed if they are tall enough to strike the lines.

As a service to their customers, PG&E chips wood that is less than four inches in diameter and can spread the chips on-site after tree work is complete. However, in remote areas tree crews lop and scatter wood debris in accordance with best practices to avoid excessive vegetation build-up. Larger wood debris that is greater than four inches in diameter is left on-site as it legally belongs to the landowner since trees are considered assets and property. However, wood from this enhanced vegetation safety work may be eligible for removal at no direct cost to their customers, provided it is safely accessible and requested by the property owner. For all other vegetation management work, larger wood that is greater than four inches in diameter will generally be left on-site, as it is not eligible for removal. Customers who would like PG&E to remove the wood debris from this work will receive a Request for Wood Management form at the time of inspection.

Shaded Fuel Breaks

A shaded fuel break is a “fuel break built in a timbered area where the trees are thinned and pruned to reduce the fire potential, yet retain enough crown canopy to make a less favorable microclimate for surface fires” (i.e. cool and shady) (NWCG.gov). Shaded fuel breaks are aesthetically pleasing, provide habitat for wildlife, reduce surface temperatures and increase local moisture, as compared to a normal (non-shaded) fuel break. A normal fuel break is a break in vegetation with absolutely no flammable material or vegetative growth, designed to stop the forward spread of fire. A shaded fuel break may still carry fire, but it can significantly slow and reduce the intensity of the fire.

Generally, it is recommended that shaded fuel breaks be established in forested areas along ridges between communities and watersheds and near essential infrastructure. Other strategic locations include along a ridge, access road, or other location such as around a subdivision. The size and placement of the break depends on the site conditions. Some possible locations within the planning area are:

- Along the western edge of the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood (separating the neighborhood from the St. Dorothy’s Forest)
- Along the southern edge of the Camp Meeker residential neighborhood and the Coleman Valley Road ridge (separating Dutch Bill Creek watershed from Salmon Creek watershed, and separating Camp Meeker from Occidental)

- Along ridges in the hills east of Bohemian Highway (separating Green Valley Creek watershed from Dutch Bill Creek watershed)
- Along ridges south of Monte Rio, north of Bohemian Highway (separating Monte Rio from Camp Meeker)

There are a few shaded fuel break projects currently planned:

- From Monte Rio west to Willow Creek State Park (northwest of the planning area)
- From Willow Creek State Park to Mendocino Redwood Company property (west of the planning area)
- Along the Alliance Redwoods Conference Grounds perimeter (centrally within the planning area)
- Along the south edge of Camp Meeker, northern Coleman Valley Road (within the southern portion of the planning area)

Normal “bare earth” fuel breaks were not considered in this planning process, though they may be worth considering in the future.

Forest management for forest health and wildfire resilience

If not in place already, large acreage landowners (40+ acres), including camps and retreat centers, ranches and land preserves, are encouraged to create land management plans with the help of a professional forester. Management plans contain a description of the site, the landowner’s management goals, and a plan of activities that will guide them toward their goals. Many landowners have goals of increased fire safety and forest health. Landowners can receive subsidized planning assistance through the Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District, USDA’s NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) and CALFIRE. Once established, landowners can apply for funding assistance for implementing the management activities outlined in the plan, through the USDA’s NRCS Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) and other incentives programs, as available. Management activities might include thinning, mastication, prescribed fire, grazing, planting and tree protection, and many more.

Vegetation management along creeks

Creeks require special consideration when conducting vegetation management because creek-side vegetation is a key component to bank stabilization, stream hydrology, wildlife habitat and water quality. There are regulations that the public must adhere to before any activity within a creek channel may be conducted. Vegetation management along blue-line creeks, also called the Riparian Corridor Combining Zone streamside conservation area, is subject to the allowed land uses, activities and permit requirements set forth in Chapter 26-65-040 of the Sonoma County Code. Landowners shall also comply with all other

federal, state and local laws, including environmental protection laws. You can call CDFW or the Gold Ridge RCD for assistance before beginning work in or near the creek channel.

Camp Meeker Community Wildfire Risk Assessment

Attached in Appendix A is the community wildfire risk assessment, a tool developed by Fire Safe Sonoma to assist local communities in self-evaluating their wildfire risk. This form was filled out during public meetings with the help of wildfire mitigation specialists, local career fire fighters and CAL FIRE staff. The last two pages summarize the risks present in our community and provide a final risk rating.

Camp Meeker Community Priority Projects List

Attached is the list of projects developed by the stakeholders involved in the planning process. Input was gathered from landowners, fire mitigation specialists, fire protection staff, emergency management staff, sheriff's office staff, foresters, ecologists, hydrologists, and others to come up with a focused and strategic list of activities.

The projects have a priority rating, indicating which should be accomplished first. Priorities are in this order:

1. Projects that protect life safety
2. Projects that protect property and infrastructure
3. Projects that protect the environment

Project priorities are also based on feasibility. Projects that require a heavier lift are lower in priority. As conditions change, project priority or feasibility may change, too. For example, a change in landownership may result in a new opportunity to develop a community evacuation route.

Updates

The project list will be updated each year to track progress, new projects, and any changes to project priority. Fire Safe Camp Meeker is responsible for updating the project list. All projects on the original CWPP project list have been approved by key state and local fire departments, the County Supervisor, the countywide fire safe council, and others. New projects will need to be approved by Fire Safe Camp Meeker in consultation with at least one fire authority before they can be added to the project list. This process is not meant to slow work down, but rather to ensure that work is strategic. New projects are those that are not already described (specifically or generally by project type) in the Project List or Plan narrative.

Every five years at minimum, the community should update the CWPP (narrative, risk assessment and projects list) and receive endorsements from the authorizing signatories on the revised plan. Moreover, the list of mitigations should be updated annually.

Role of Partners in Implementing Projects

This plan is designed to be used, not sit on a shelf. Residents and landowners are the primary recipients of this plan, and the responsibility to enact what is written here falls with them. State and local government agencies, non-government organizations and others are committed to supporting residents in implementing the plan.

Each project will have its own project team. Committed partners are listed in the projects document. No partners have assumed responsibility for any project (unless so stated), and it is up to the community to determine who the lead will be. Community-based projects can typically be managed by FSCM community members. Projects requiring significant funding may be managed by a partner agency or organization.

Residents and Landowners: When organized, residents and landowners can make many big and small meaningful changes to the community to reduce fire risk. Raising awareness, increasing coordination and communication of the area's residents for fire safety is the start and most essential step of all community wildfire risk reduction work. Many of the largest landowners surrounding the residential community and along Bohemian Highway have already expressed commitment to reducing fire risks on their property and an interest in working together to access funding and planning support.

Fire Safe Camp Meeker: FSCM is the community-lead fire safe council. Members are local residents or employees of the area, and all are volunteers. The council is *not* an incorporated 501c3. It is an informal entity, completely community-driven. They seek as much public participation as possible.

Safer West County: SWC is a volunteer-run 501c3 nonprofit, and will be the umbrella organization to support FSCM with grant writing, community outreach and liaising with government agencies and NGOs. SWC is a potential fiscal sponsor.

CALFIRE and local fire departments: The staff at the state and local fire departments are committed to supporting community safety and fire protection. They can provide planning, technical and educational support. Their expertise is in fire prevention, fire suppression and first aid medical response. CAL FIRE also engages in fuel reduction activities, including prescribed fire projects and mechanical thinning, during winter preparedness and opportunities presented throughout the year.

Fire Safe Sonoma: FSS can provide planning, technical and educational support. Its expertise is forming local fire safe councils, home hardening and defensible space, emergency preparedness and roadside vegetative fuels management. It is a potential fiscal sponsor.

Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District: RCD can provide planning, technical and educational support. Its expertise is in natural resources management, wildlife habitat enhancement and protection, farm and ranch conservation planning, erosion control, roads evaluation, forest management planning and alternative water supply development. It is a potential fiscal sponsor.

Sonoma County Department of Emergency Management: The staff at DEM are committed to supporting community safety. They can provide planning, technical and educational support. Their expertise is in emergency planning and communication.

Sonoma County Sheriff's Office: The Sheriff's Office expertise is evacuations and public information. They order the evacuations, provide security for the evacuation zones, and lift the orders when it's safe. We issue additional alert and warning and communication throughout the fire. We support DEM and the community's efforts for emergency preparedness and evacuation planning.

Funding Sources

The best projects are those that do not require funding, but are driven by eager community volunteers. These projects and programs have longevity and become an ingrained part of the local culture. They also impress funders who want to see a community committed and capable of making a change.

Grant funding is not a panacea. Grants require grant writers, fiscal sponsors, grant managers and project staff. They do not last forever (typically 3 years or less) and they can trigger regulation and require onerous amounts of reporting.

That said, there are a number of competitive grant programs we suggest considering for project implementation, and they have been mentioned in Appendix B *Community Priority Projects List* and summarized in Appendix G *Funding Opportunities*.