



West Region Wildfire Council: End of Year Report

2014



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West Region Wildfire Council Information

WRWC Staff

The West Region Wildfire Council (WRWC) staff handle the day to day business of the WRWC. The positions are responsible for coordinating planning efforts, applying for and managing grant funds, overseeing mitigation projects, planning and facilitation of WRWC meetings and events as well as promoting education and outreach initiatives. WRWC staff work to ensure that goals and objectives further interagency partnerships while strengthening collaboration within communities at risk from wildfire across the region.

WRWC Director

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WRWC Regional Education and Mitigation Coordinator

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WRWC Steering Committee

The WRWC Steering Committee is a group of individuals who represent different agencies or groups from across the region. The Steering Committee is comprised of federal, state, county and local representatives, each committed to furthering the efforts of the WRWC. The Steering Committee supervises the Director, reviews mitigation grant applications and provides general direction for the WRWC on behalf of the broader Council membership.

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John Bennett, Telluride Fire Department, District Chief

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Fire Departments

- Arrowhead
- Cedaredge
- Crawford
- Crested Butte
- Delta
- Egnar/Slickrock
- Gunnison
- Horsefly
- Hotchkiss
- Lake City
- Log Hill
- Montrose
- Norwood
- Nucla
- Ohio City
- Olathe
- Ouray
- Paonia
- Paradox
- Placerville
- Ridgway
- Telluride

Counties

- Delta
- Gunnison
- Hinsdale
- Montrose
- Ouray
- San Miguel

State

- Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control
- Colorado Office of Emergency Management
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- Colorado State Forest Service

Federal

- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service
- United States Forest Service

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Please note our
NEW office phone
number!!

Website:
www.COwildfire.org



Find us on Facebook!
www.facebook.com/westregionwildfire

Meetings:

The West Region Wildfire Council meets the second Thursday of every month from 1:00-3:00 pm in Montrose, CO at the Montrose Public Lands Center. Updated meeting schedules and information is available on the WRWC website: www.COwildfire.org. Meetings are open to the public and feature a wildfire related ‘educational series’ topic each month.



Fiscal Agent:

The West Region Wildfire Council enjoys a collaborative partnership with the San Juan Mountains Association who, since 2010, has acted as the WRWC’s Fiscal Agent. www.SJMA.org



“The San Juan Mountains Association, a 501 (c) 3 organization, acts as the fiscal agent for the West Region Wildfire Council. SJMA made the decision to support the ongoing efforts of WRWC because the amazing work they do is consistent with furthering our mission. We couldn’t be more honored to partner with WRWC. This partnership helps both organizations carry out our defined goals and objectives. WRWC continually exceeds our expectations.” –*Susan Bryson, Director, San Juan Mountains Association*

From the Steering Committee

“2014 marks the West Region Wildfire Council’s most productive year in regard to wildfire mitigation acres treated. I am proud to say that the unique partnership between the Colorado State Forest Service and the West Region Wildfire Council has fostered a truly effective team. One example of this outstanding teamwork was the acquisition and delivery of the Colorado Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant where over 200 acres were treated within the Log Hill Fire Protection District. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence through thoughtful and tactical delivery of wildfire mitigation techniques for the residents of the Western Slope.” –*Austin Shelby, Forester, Colorado State Forest Service*

“The West Region Wildfire Council is a results-oriented group that demonstrates effective collaboration to address the very real risk of wildfire threat in western Colorado. Through a strategic endeavor to support the development of wildfire planning efforts, provide wildfire education and outreach, and promote fuels reduction and mitigation projects, the West Region Wildfire Council delivers positive, measurable results to reduce future threats of wildland fire and better prepare the communities it serves.

The West Region Wildfire Council has continued to excel - exceeding its goals in 2014; and is poised for another great year in 2015 as a result of strategic planning, commitment to future successes, and a long term vision of assisting local communities in becoming adapted to wildfire.” – *Chris Barth, Fire Mitigation Specialist, BLM*

“The West region Wildfire Council has developed into an organization that fosters cooperation and collaboration between federal, state, county, local and residential partners in a six county region through a well-developed mission. The WRWC provides an avenue for all of these partners to educate, plan and act in an effort to mitigate regional challenges with wildfire risk. WRWC provides all partners a venue to present a common message to reduce confusion across boundaries. These efforts include CWPP’s, operational plans, public presentations of risk and mitigation, social science studies, monthly partner meetings, grant opportunities for mitigation projects and a central clearing house for work completed in our region.” –*John Bennett, Director Telluride Fire Protection District*

Wildfires continue to be the biggest threat to western Colorado, and as such, wildfire mitigation is a critical function not just of fire departments and land management agencies, but for local governments and citizens. The West Region Wildfire Council recognizes this, and offers an excellent platform from which wildfire mitigation activities and wildfire planning occur. The WRWC provides timely, consistent information on mitigation strategies, response/recovery activities, and restriction information. Community Wildfire Protection Plans and related Wildfire Operational Plans have been produced for fire districts by Coordinator Lilia Falk, and have proven to be well written and valuable documents.

The relationship between the WRWC and the San Juan Mountain Association is another good example of the Councils’ long term strategic planning both in terms of personnel and getting the most out of every grant dollar we receive.

It obviously takes a committed and passionate team to achieve all the things the WRWC has. However, the efforts of Lilia Falk and Chris Barth have been instrumental in making the WRWC what it is today. – **Scott Morrill, Emergency Manager, Gunnison County**

The West Region Fire Council is known for their great coordination and desire to get things done. They continue to get do an outstanding job giving our grants to homeowners and making sure the work is getting done and meets the intent of the grant. In 2014, the Council did an outstanding job in promoting the wildfire needs of the counties by having programs on the AOP and fire restriction process and looking at current issues like the continuing sky rocketing costs of wildland fire suppression. We just need to keep up the great work and coordination. – **Steve Ellis, West Area Fire Management Officer, DFPC**



WRWC Goals

- Provide wildfire **education and outreach** resources in order to promote and facilitate educational initiatives as well as program objectives.
- Support the development of wildfire **planning** efforts to better prepare communities, counties and agencies for wildfire.
- Promote **fuels reduction and mitigation** projects in wildland urban interface communities to reduce risk and mitigate potential loss.
- Provide **organizational development and sustainability** to ensure WRWC program success.

Objectives

The West Region Wildfire Council furthers ideas into action through:

- Development of county-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plans to meet HFRA (2003) and Colorado State Forest Service (2009) requirements;
- Implementing fuels reduction and defensible space projects on private lands in the wildland urban interface;
- Working directly with partners to facilitate forward thinking wildfire related discussion;
- Preparing counties, fire protection districts, communities and interagency fire management partners to plan for, and mitigate the potential threats from wildland fire;
- Promoting wildfire preparedness, prevention, and mitigation education; and
- Partnering with wildfire experts and researchers to help shape and strengthen programmatic efforts.

Mission:

The West Region Wildfire Council promotes wildfire preparedness, prevention and mitigation education throughout Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel counties. Our mission is to mitigate loss due to wildfire in wildland urban interface communities while fostering interagency regional partnerships to help prepare counties, fire protection districts, communities and agencies to plan for and mitigate potential threats from wildfire.



Education and Outreach

WRWC Meetings

In 2014, the West Region Wildfire Council continued to provide our 'Continuing Education Series' at each monthly meeting. The education series has proven to garner interest and encourage information sharing between WRWC members on a variety of subjects related to wildfire issues.

The WRWC welcomed guest presenters from local agencies as well as from around the state. The following is a list of WRWC educational topics presented in 2014:

January: End of Year Presentation and 2014 Plans: Lilia Falk, WRWC

February: Pre-Annual Operating Plan Workshop: Steve Ellis & Luke Odom, DFPC

April: Air Curtain Burner Demonstration: Rich Graeber, NRG Consulting

May: Fire Weather Outlook: Tim Mathewson, RMACC

June: Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network: Chris Barth, BLM; Colorado Aviation Bill: Steve Ellis, DFPC; Colorado Wildfire Summit Synopsis: Noah Korper, Senator Bennet's Office

July: Pre/Post Mitigation Project Monitoring: Brett Wolk, Colorado Forest Restoration Institute; Resource Ordering; Scott Morrill, Gunnison OEM

August: Arrowhead Evacuation Exercise- Lessons Learned: Kevin Stilley, Arrowhead Fire

September: Local Bark Beetles, Forest Health & Wildfire: Austin Shelby, CSFS & Matt Tuten, USFS

October: Wildfire Risk Research: Dr. Patty Champ, RMRS

November: Wildfire and Insurance Panel Discussion: Daniel Shaw, American Family Insurance & Karon Jacobs, Western Group Insurance.

December: 2015 WRWC Work Planning and Information Sharing



West Region Wildfire Council meeting- Pre AOP work session.

HOA and Other Events

The West Region Wildfire Council takes a very active role in reaching out to communities in an effort to heighten wildfire awareness while providing homeowners with resources to help reduce their risk. Over the last year, WRWC staff attended the following meetings in each county to address wildfire risk and/or CWPP implementation or development:



Delta County

- Delta County FPD CWPP Stakeholder Meeting
- Delta County AOP
- Delta BOCC Presentation
- Paonia Fuels Projects Collaborative Meeting
- Hotchkiss Fuels Projects Collaborative Meeting
- Cedaredge Fuels Projects Collaborative Meeting
- Numerous Site Visits with Homeowners



Gunnison County

- Wilderness Streams HOA
- Rainbow Placer HOA
- Quartz Creek HOA
- Gunnison County AOP
- Blue Mesa HOA Meeting
- Trappers HOA Meeting
- Arrowhead HOA Meeting
- Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council
- Gunnison Wildfire Mitigation Advocate Meeting
- Homeowner Site Visits



Ouray County

- Ouray County AOP
- Several Ouray County BOCC meetings
- Fischer Canyon HOA
- Ridgeview Estates HOA
- Ouray Fire Protection District Meeting
- Top of the Pines Project Meetings
- Colorado Forest Restoration Institute Field Monitoring
- TOP Board Meeting
- ROCC Presentation
- Numerous Site Visits with Homeowners



Meeting attendees prioritize fuel treatments during the Delta County FPD CWPP Collaborative Fuels Meeting.



WRWC Members watch an air curtain burner demonstration during the April WRWC meeting.



Montrose County

- Title III Funding Meetings
- Montrose County AOP Meeting
- Pizza with Professionals- Youth Career Day
- Beaver Hill Heights Community Tour
- Homeowner site visits



San Miguel County

- San Miguel AOP
- San Miguel County Wildfire Coordination Group Meetings
- Telluride Association of Realtors
- Telluride Fire Protection District Wildfire Risk Assessment Public Meeting
- Town of Mountain Village Owners Association



Regional/ State

- Colorado State Forest Service Video Interview: WUI Feature
- West Region All Hazards Emergency Management Meetings
- Colorado Emergency Management Conference
- Colorado Wildfire Summit
- Southwest Colorado Incident Management Team Wildfire Exercise
- Colorado WUI Conference



Aerial view of the landscape-scale impact that fuels reduction projects are having on Log Hill Mesa-
photo credit CSFS.



WRWC members practice wildfire risk assessments in Ouray County.



February WRWC Meeting- Annual Operating Plan discussion.

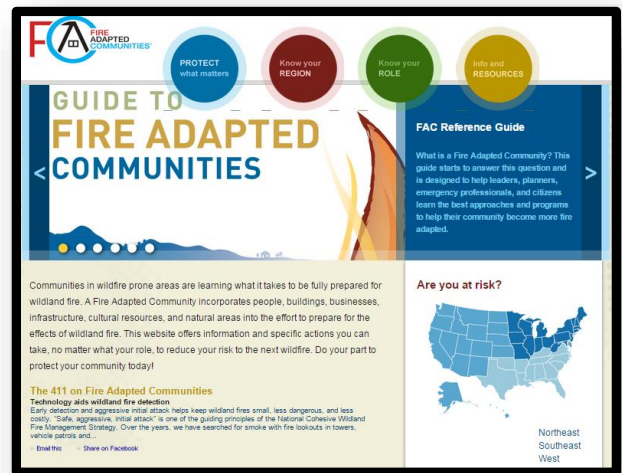


Project monitoring with the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute.

Other Education and Outreach Efforts

The West Region Wildfire Council continues to promote wildfire education and outreach across the region. The WRWC's website (www.COwildfire.org) is a resource for homeowners, WRWC members, mitigation contractors, etc. We plan to continue providing up-to-date information, pertinent articles and publications as well as highlight many of our mitigation projects on our website. WRWC also maintains a Facebook (www.facebook.com/westregionwildfire) page as another conduit for information sharing.

WRWC actively encourages program concepts such as Ready, Set, Go, FireWise Communities/ USA and Fire Adapted Communities as part of our overarching wildfire preparedness and mitigation education efforts.



West Region Wildfire Council

FireWise Communities/USA

- **Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection District, Ouray County-2012**
- **Pleasant Valley Vista, Ouray County-2014**
- **Fisher Canyon, Ouray County-2014**
- **Rainbow Services, Gunnison County-2014**

FireWise Communities/ USA

The FireWise Communities/ USA program provides a great platform for information sharing and community collaboration. WRWC acts as a liaison for communities who wish to apply for FireWise Communities/ USA recognition. Achieving FireWise recognition is often a collaborative process and, once recognized, requires the community to keep up a commitment of educating residents/owners about wildfire risk as well as undertaking risk reduction actions.

In 2014, Colorado became the third state in the nation to reach 100 Firewise Communities. The additions of Pleasant Valley Vista and Fisher Canyon in Ouray County, and Rainbow Services in Gunnison County helped Colorado reach 100 recognized communities.

Colorado Reaches the 100 Community Benchmark

More than 100 Colorado communities have now earned Firewise Communities/USA recognition - an accomplishment achieved by only three states - for taking steps to reduce their wildfire risk.

'Major accomplishment'

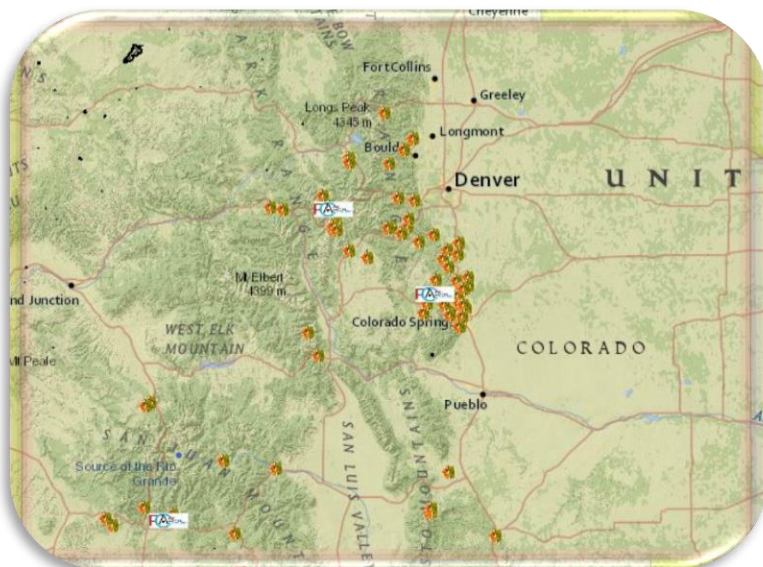
"Reaching the one hundred community benchmark is a major accomplishment," said Cathy Prudhomme, the community outreach program manager for the National Fire Protection Association's Wildland Fire Operations Division. "Until now, only two of the program's 41 participating states have achieved that level of participation."



The national Firewise Communities/USA recognition program is administered by the NFPA and provides a template for wildfire safety at the neighborhood level. The Colorado State Forest Service serves as the liaison between Colorado communities and the NFPA to help private landowners with wildfire mitigation and education efforts.



Slash pile ready to be chipped as part of a community chipping event.



Social Science Research

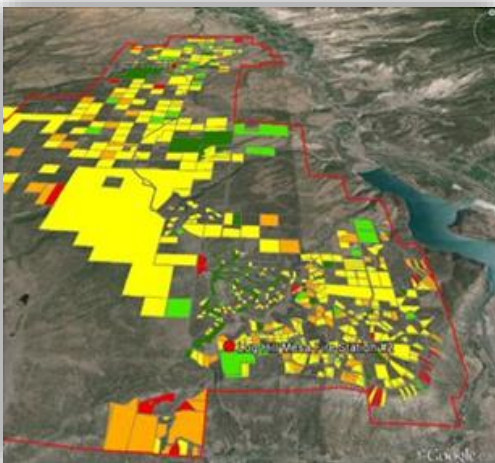
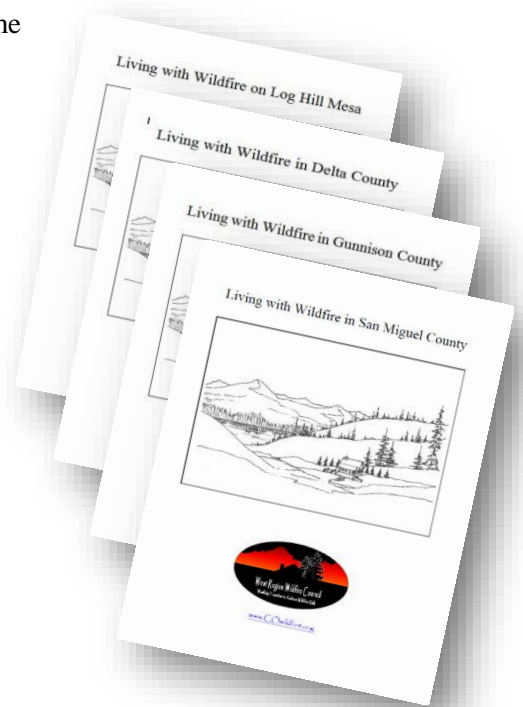
As part of an ongoing effort, WRWC continued their partnership with social science researchers from the Rocky Mountain Research Station (RMRS) in Fort Collins, Colorado and the University of Colorado Boulder's Institute of Behavioral Science and BLM Southwest District Fire Management.



Collectively this partnership, called WiRē (Wildfire Research), initiated an examination of wildfire risk, homeowner perception of risk, and how certain behaviors or experiences influence homeowners to participate in wildfire mitigation activities. More information about the research team can be found on the WiRē blog: <http://wildfireresearch.wordpress.com/>

The initial WRWC research effort in 2012 focused on Log Hill Mesa in Ouray County, Colorado. In 2013, the group continued to conduct research in communities represented by the WRWC, broadening the scope to include a community in Gunnison County and four fire protection districts in Delta County. In 2014, the research effort continued in San Miguel County within the Telluride Fire Protection District where over 1900 residents were sent the 'Living with Wildfire in San Miguel County' survey.

According to the team of researchers, the WRWC has provided them with a unique data set from WRWC's 'Wildfire Risk Assessment' where each home within the community is assessed for wildfire risk. By asking survey participants the same questions used to survey homes in the CWPP, the information obtained will provide a comparative data set between how homeowners rate their own wildfire risk and how their risk was actually assessed in the CWPP.



Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection district wildfire risk assessment results.

Planning Efforts

Wildfire Risk Assessments

The WRWC introduced a ‘Wildfire Risk Assessment’ component to the community level planning process in 2011. Risk assessments assign homes within the WUI an individual relative risk rating based on 11 wildfire risk attributes. Assessed elements include addressing and evacuation, home construction characteristics, defensible space and background fuel types, proximity to steep or dangerous topography as well as other factors influencing wildfire behavior or risk.

Several communities, as well as fire protection districts have completed wildfire risk assessments in order to provide homeowners with a list of actions, specific to their property. This step provides a key educational opportunity that empowers homeowners with the resources and information they need in order to take action.

In 2014, the West Region Wildfire Council (WRWC) completed over 2,000 (4,600 to date) parcel specific wildfire risk assessments. The Telluride and Ouray Fire Protection District’s partnered with WRWC in 2014 to complete a risk assessment of all homes within their respective district boundaries (excluding homes within town limits). Additionally, Quartz Creek, a community in Gunnison County completed risk assessments of over 150 homes as part of the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan. WRWC hired and trained contract field staff to complete the risk assessments during the summer months. With help from partners at the BLM and RMRS, the WRWC implemented tablet based field data collection in 2014.

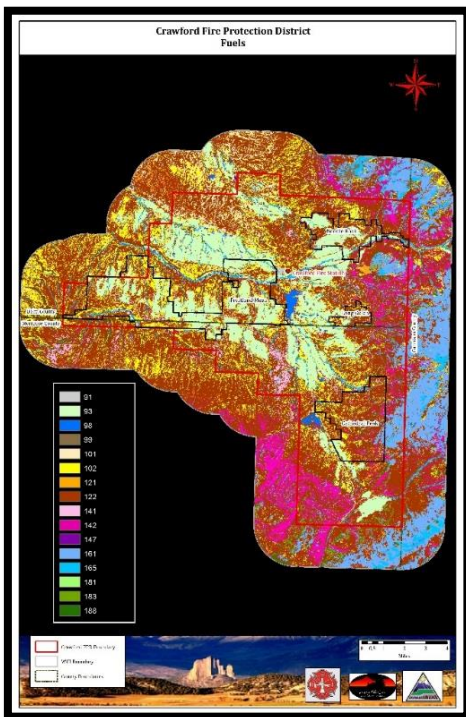
CATGEORY	OBSERVED CONDITION	POINTS	CATGEORY	OBSERVED CONDITION	POINTS
Address Visible	Posted and Reflective	0	Defensible Space	Greater than 100'	0
	Posted, NOT Reflective	5		Between 30'-100'	50
	Not visible from the road	15		Between 10'-30'	75
		Less than 10'		100	
Ingress / Egress	Two or more roads In/Out	0	Roofing Material	Class A: Non-Combustible (Tile, Metal, Asphalt)	0
	One road In/Out	10		Class B or C: Combustible (Wood)	200
Driveway Clearance	Greater than 24'	0	Building Exterior	Non-combustible	0
	Between 20'-24'	5		Log, heavy timbers	20
	Less than 20'	10		Wood, vinyl	60
Distance to Dangerous Topography	Greater than 150'	0	Other Combustibles	None, Greater than 30' from structure	0
	Between 50'-150'	30		Between 10'-30' from structure	10
	Less than 50'	75		Less than 10' from structure	30
Slope	Less than 20%	0	Decks & Fencing	None	0
	Between 20%-45%	20		Non-combustible Deck/Fence attached to structure	20
	Greater than 45%	40		Combustible Deck/Fence attached to structure	50
Background Fuels	Light	25			
	Moderate	50			
	Heavy	75			

Community Wildfire Protection Plans

The West Region Wildfire Council is actively involved in promoting the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans across the region. In 2011, all six of the WRWC's counties completed County level CWPPs in accordance with Senate Bill 09-001 which required all Colorado Counties (with a wildfire risk) to complete such a plan. Since their completion, the WRWC has been working with counties and respective agencies to implement recommendations as outlined in those plans.

In addition to county-wide CWPPs, many 'Community Specific' CWPPs exist within the region. Several communities have decided to take wildfire planning one step further and create CWPPs specific to their community needs, risks and values. The Wildfire Risk Assessments (above) are the platform for WRWC communities wishing to develop CWPPs specific to their communities. The resulting CWPPs provide each homeowner with a relative wildfire risk rating and detailed specific risk reduction recommendations for each homeowner to implement.

Currently, Cedaredge, Crawford, Hotchkiss and Paonia FPDs in Delta County



are in the process of completing plans based on risk assessment data that was gathered in 2013. Additionally, Quartz Creek, a community in Gunnison County, is working to complete their community specific CWPP from wildfire risk assessments that were completed during the summer of 2014. As of December 2014, there are currently 19 active county level or community specific CWPPs within the region.

CWPPs provide specific wildfire education for homeowners which can empower them to take action. CWPPs also provide a platform for FireWise Communities/USA recognition as well as help communities embrace their role in understanding fire adaptedness. These plans have furthered recommendations

into action by directly contributing to mitigation efforts within the community.

County CWPPs:

- Delta
- Gunnison
- Hinsdale
- Montrose
- Ouray
- San Miguel

Community CWPPs

Delta County:

- Hotchkiss FPD CWPP (2015)
- Paonia FPD CWPP (2015)
- Cedaredge FPD CWPP (2015)
- Crawford FPD CWPP (2015)

Gunnison County:

- Arrowhead CWPP
- Blue Mesa CWPP
- Ohio City CWPP
- Star Mountain Ranch CWPP
- Upper Crystal River CWPP
- Wilderness Streams CWPP
- Gold Basin CWPP
- Gunnison Highlands CWPP
- Rainbow Estates CWPP
- Quartz Creek CWPP (2015)

Hinsdale County:

- San Juan Ranch Estates CWPP

Ouray County:

- Log Hill Mesa FPD CWPP
- Four Neighborhoods CWPP

CWPP Implementation

To help ensure the success of Community Wildfire Protection Plans and to reduce the risk of life and property loss, the WRWC offers private landowners the opportunity to apply for funding assistance in an effort to implement recommendations as outlined in approved CWPPs and as appropriate to reduce risk to wildland urban interface communities.

The WRWC Community Assistance grant opportunity has seen great success in the region since 2010 and continues to help communities reduce wildfire risk. Additionally, in 2013 the WRWC was awarded Department of Natural Resource funding to help continue the Council's fuels reduction efforts on private land.

The WRWC has provided funding assistance and project coordination for treating over 650 acres in wildland urban interface communities within the region (2011-2014). All projects have been implemented with the premise of helping to protect homes and critical infrastructure from wildfire. Strategic fuelbreaks, roadside thinning projects, defensible space and extended defensible space in high risk WUI communities receive top priority for cost-share funding.



Mechanically treated fuelbreak in Ouray Fire Protection District.



Roadside thinning along County Road 1.



CSFS Forester Austin Shelby with one of EnviroLand Management's Hydro-axes.

Fuels Reduction Projects: 2014 Highlights

Lake Lenore/Panoramic Heights Fuel Break

This project is located in the Lake Lenore/ Panoramic Heights Community near Ouray, Colorado. The WRWC worked with this homeowner to achieve two objectives. The first objective was to create defensible space around their home; and the second was to reduce the fuel loading on the rest of their eight acre parcel. These homeowners also reached out to surrounding neighbors and got them involved in defensible space projects as well. The fuel break, completed with a masticating machine, helps protect homes uphill in the neighboring subdivision of Panoramic Heights



Before and after photo of the Lake Lenore/Panoramic Heights fuel break.



Defensible space before and after- Ouray County.

Wilderness Streams Defensible Space

Located in Gunnison County, Wilderness Streams Homeowners Association members worked together this summer to complete several defensible space projects. Six homeowners participated in 2014 and an additional five homeowners have projects in the works for completion in 2015.

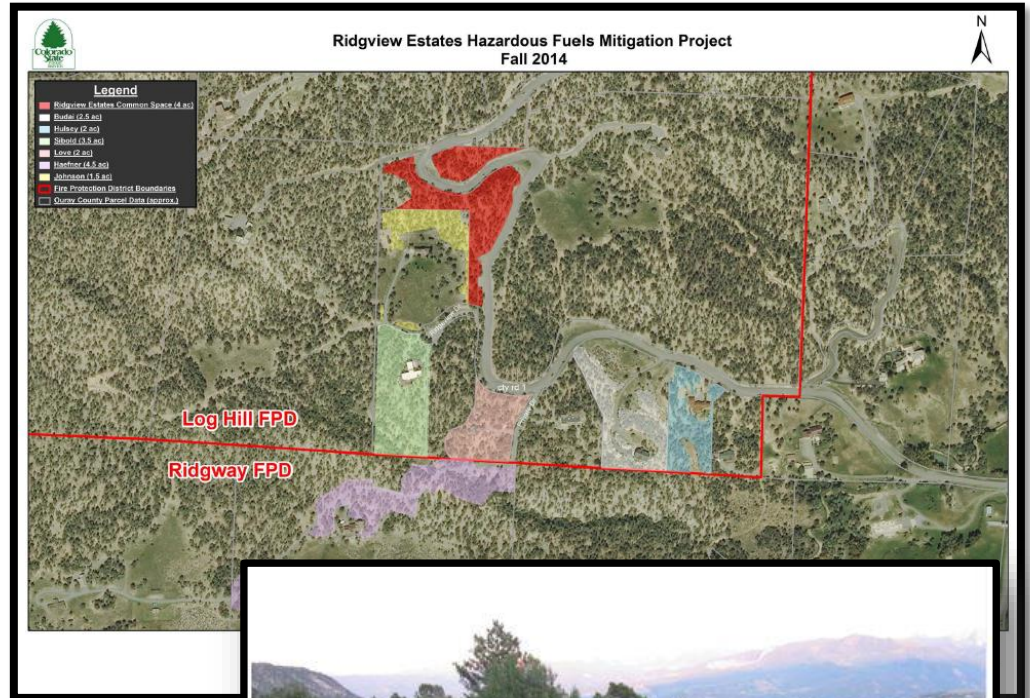


Wilderness Streams defensible space projects.

Ridgeview Estates

At an HOA meeting in early 2014, Ridgeview Estates HOA members starting putting together a plan to mitigate the HOA open space along County Road 1. As part of the project, WRWC and CSFS staff recommended that

homeowners also implement defensible space and extended defensible space around homes. WRWC's Community Assistance Grant funded close to 20 acres in this community in 2014. The completion of this project ties in nicely with an adjacent project that was completed in 2013 as part of the WRWC's grant funding through the Department of Natural Resources Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program. To date, a total of 36 acres have been treated in an effort to improve defensible space around homes, reduce fuel loading near the base of Log Hill Mesa and improve the community's main ingress/egress route. WRWC and partners plan to continue working with homeowners/landowners in the area to further roadside thinning efforts in the future.



Ridgeview Estates roadside thinning project.

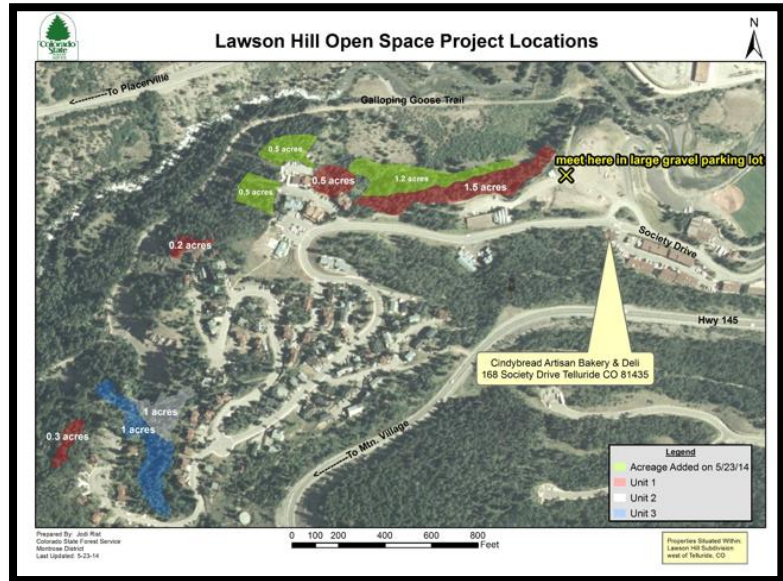


Lawson Hill- Fuels Reduction

The West Region Wildfire Council helped to fund 6.7 acres of fuel reduction in the Lawson Hill community in San Miguel County. This project was identified in the San Miguel County CWPP as a high priority for implementation. This project was completed utilizing a hand crew and chainsaws. Additionally an air curtain burner was utilized for slash disposal.



Pre-project photo in Lawson Hill.



Lawson Hill project map.

Trapper's Crossing Roadside Thinning Phase II

In 2012, the WRWC helped to fund a roadside thinning project along two miles of the Wildcat Road in Trapper's Crossing- an 'Extreme' rated community in Gunnison County. In 2013 and 2014, those efforts were continued to treat an additional 1.3 miles along the community's only ingress/ egress route. Seven landowners along the road participated in the 2013 project by allowing a 50' easement (in addition to the road ROW) on their respective properties for the implementation of this project. In 2014, an additional 20 acres was approved for funding to complete the prescription along the entire length of Wildcat Road. The prescription, among other specifications for the project, was to remove all conifers less than eight inches DBH (Diameter at Breast Height) from the project area. Because of early high mountain snow, work will be completed in the spring of 2015.



Multi-agency field tour of Trapper's Crossing roadside thinning.

Log Hill Mesa Fuels Reduction

2014 brought continued mitigation efforts in Log Hill, a ‘Very High’ rated community in Ouray County. Several defensible space and extended defensible space projects as well as strategic fuelbreaks were completed this year with funding assistance from the Bureau of Land Management’s Community Assistance opportunity made available to private landowners through WRWC programs.

Additionally, WRWC and Log Hill Mesa Fire Protection District were awarded grant funds from the Department of Natural Resources as part of their Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program, which made funding available for fuels reduction in wildland urban interface communities across Colorado. Just over 210 acres were treated on Log Hill Mesa between 2013 and 2014 with the funding awarded to WRWC through DNR.



Log Hill Mesa fuel break funded through the Department of Natural Resources Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant program.

“Our family has lived in the mountains of Colorado for 52 years. I wish that we knew of this program in the beginning. Our original thoughts were the more trees the better. We were afraid of fire, disease and beetles killing the trees. After finding out about the WRWC, and the grants in our local newspaper, we contacted the WRWC. They provided all the information and benefits that fire mitigation provides for the landowner, neighbors, and subdivisions. The finished project adds safety, security from fire, wildlife benefits, and the view is fantastic.” **–WRWC Grant Recipient**

“The WRWC Community Assistance Grant [gave] us the opportunity to participate in a project that has the potential to save our property, our home, and, most importantly, our lives, as well as the lives of our neighbors and our volunteer firefighters...From a communal perspective, our project will exemplify to our neighbors a visually profound and lasting education; that the WRWC will work in concert with us to prioritize protection for our homes and our community.” **–WRWC Grant Recipient**

WRWC Funding

Grants

The West Region Wildfire Council has applied for, and has been awarded several grants to support Council goals and objectives.

Federal:

- **BLM Community Assistance-** \$499,200.00 for fuels mitigation, education and outreach and personnel support 2010-2015
- **Joint Fire Science Program (RMRS)-** \$10,700.00 for the completion of wildfire risk assessments
- **National Fire Plan (RMRS)-**\$7,000.00 for the completion of wildfire risk assessments

State:

- **Department of Natural Resources:** Wildfire Risk Reduction Program- \$68,302.00
- **State Fire Assistance:** Education and outreach- \$10,370.00
- **State Fire Assistance:** Personnel support-\$60,000.00
- **House Bill 1199:** 2013 personnel support- \$22,250.00

Other Funding

➤ County Contributions:

The West Region Wildfire Council also thanks all of the regional counties for continued funding support, made possible through County Title III obligations as well as other budget allocations.

➤ Title III Partnerships

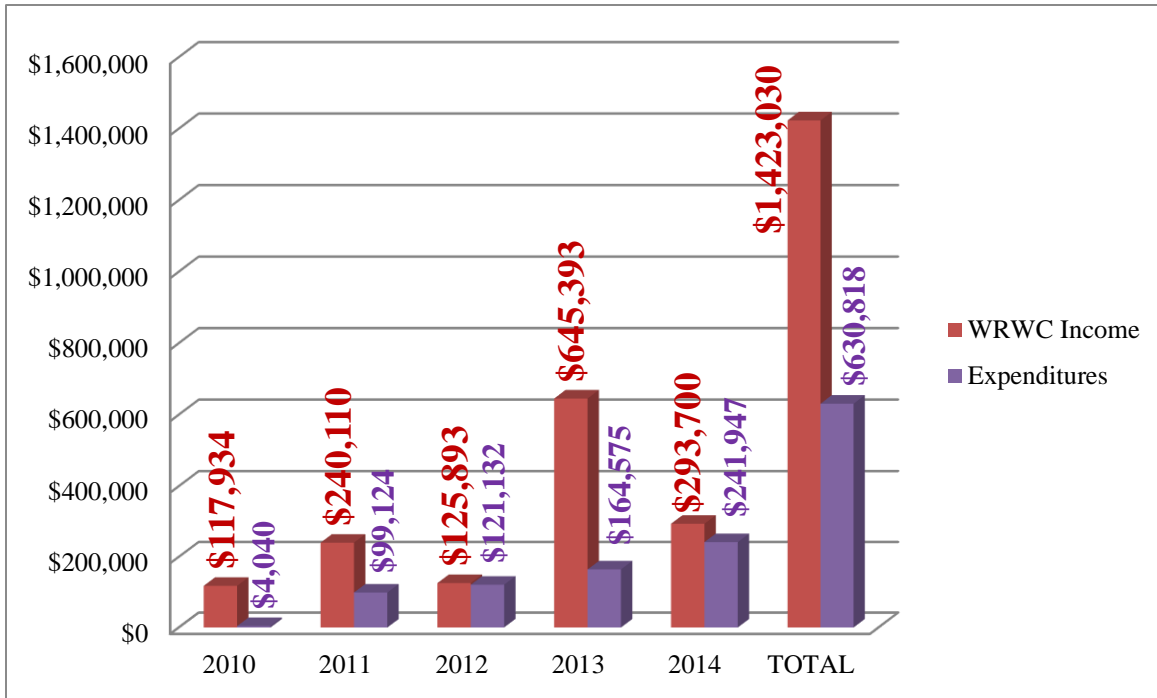
The West Region Wildfire Council has partnered with Delta, Gunnison, Montrose and San Miguel Counties to administer County Title III funds (USDA dollars) to be used for wildfire mitigation and planning efforts.

- **Gunnison County Title III-** \$415,830.96 for Gunnison County specific defensible space projects, CWPP development and other FireWise activities in coordination with Title III funding parameters.
- **Delta County Title III -** \$71,000.00 toward the development of four fire protection district specific Community Wildfire Protection Plans in their county. These plans will be developed in collaboration with the WRWC. All four FPD plans should be completed in early 2015. Delta County has also allocated an additional \$33,721.90 of Title III funds to be used for FireWise activities including mitigation efforts in high risk communities in Delta County.
- **Montrose County Title III -** \$87,964.76 for Montrose County specific defensible space projects, education initiatives and planning efforts.
- **San Miguel County Title III-** \$7,000.00 for completing wildfire risk assessments in the west end of San Miguel County.

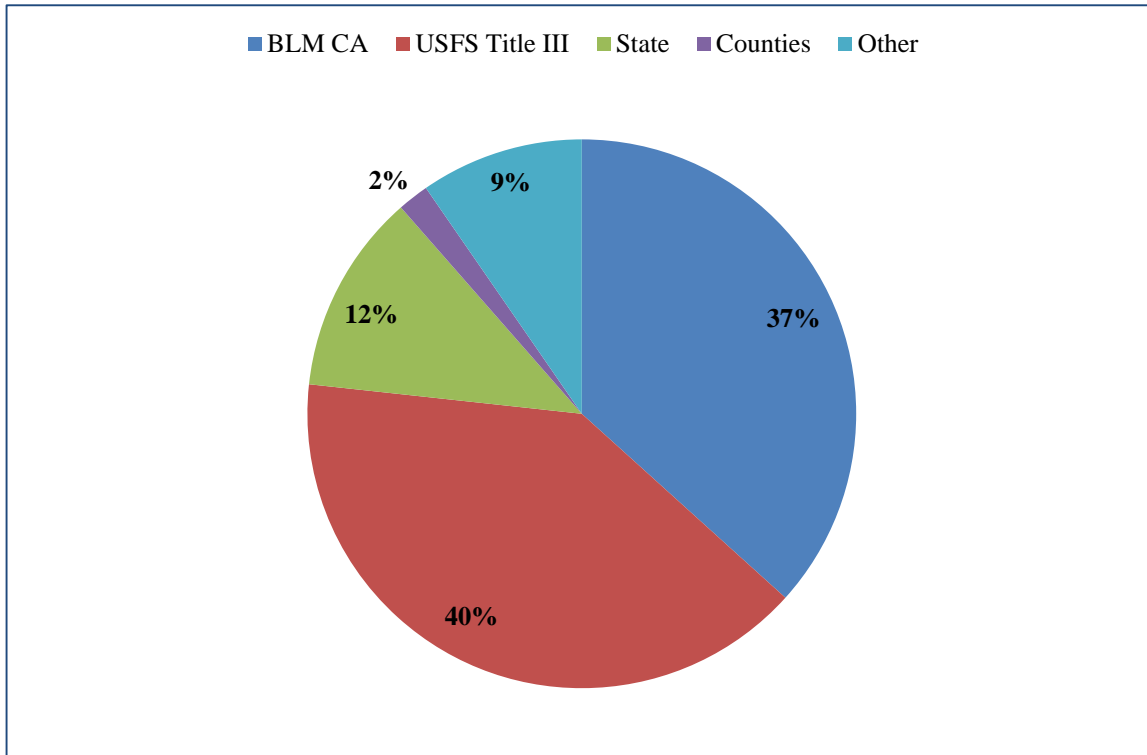
➤ In-Kind

The West Region Wildfire Council tracks in-kind or volunteer hours on behalf of WRWC members and homeowners. Since 2011, WRWC has documented approximately \$99,000.00 of in-kind contribution from WRWC meetings, community chipping days, mileage and other meetings attended.

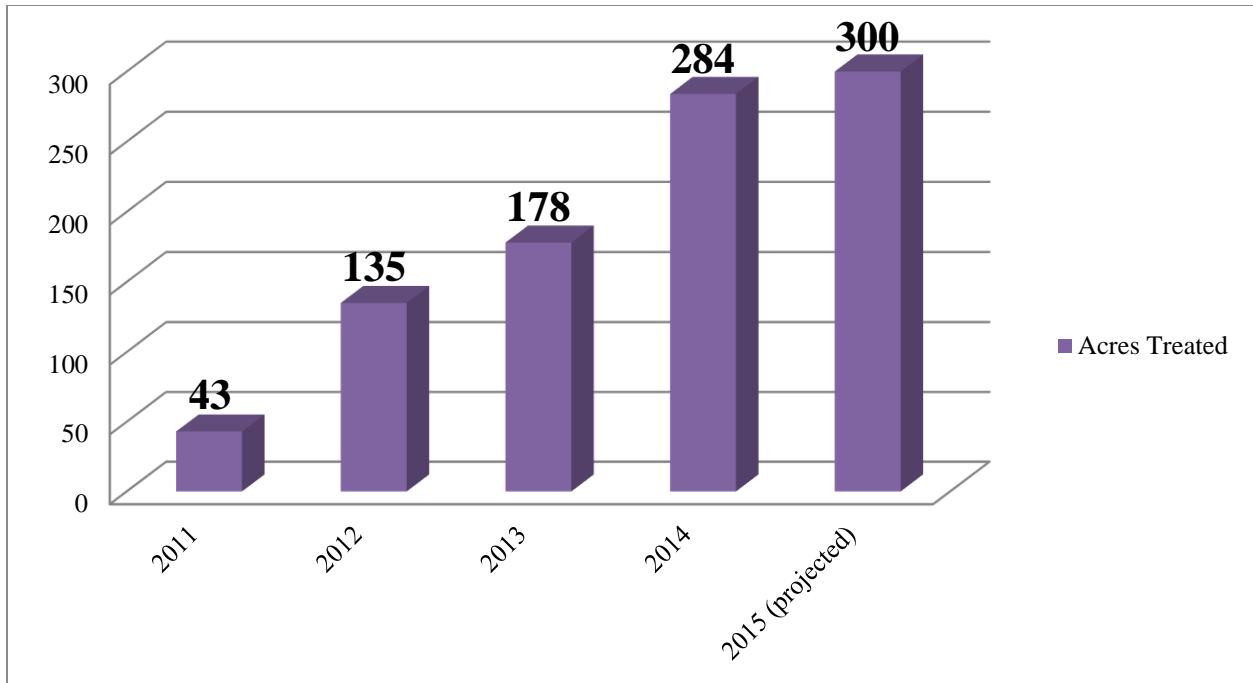
2010-2014 Income vs. Expenditures



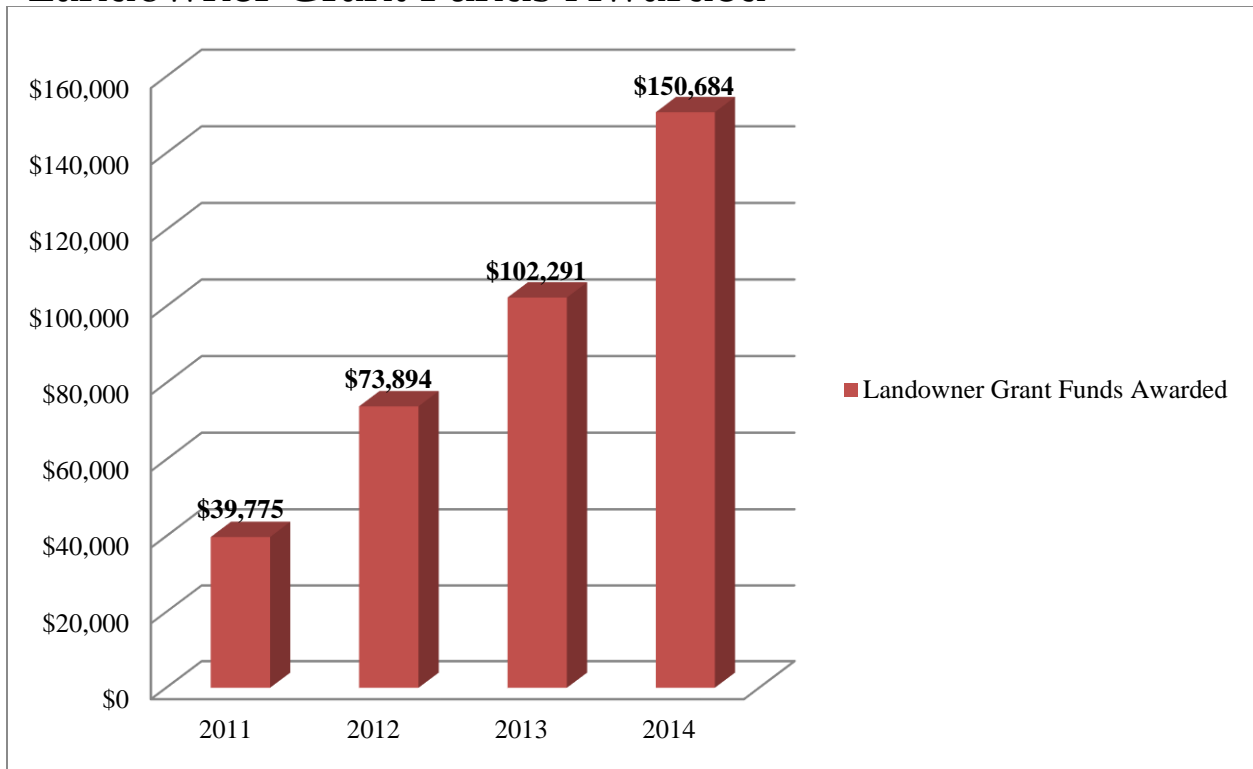
Income by Funding Source 2010-2014



Acres Treated



Landowner Grant Funds Awarded



Partnerships

Interagency Collaboration

The West Region Wildfire Council truly represents an example of an organization which promotes multi-agency and multi-level collaboration. Over the last few years, Council participation has grown to include not only BLM, USFS, NPS, DFPC, CSFS and COEM, but now attracts local fire departments and districts, county sheriffs and emergency managers, local area residents and Wildfire Mitigation Advocates and wildfire mitigation/forestry contractors.

San Juan Mountains Association

The West Region Wildfire Council has also enjoyed a collaborative partnership with the San Juan Mountains Association since early 2010.

SJMA acts as the WRWC's fiscal agent. This partnership furthers each other's program goals and objectives. www.SJMA.org



Mission: SJMA promotes responsible care of natural and cultural resources through education and hands-on involvement that inspires respect and reverence for our lands. The San Juan Mountains Association is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) corporation located in Durango, Colorado. We provide the most complete and personalized information source for public lands in Southwest Colorado.

Firewise of Southwest Colorado

Our neighbors to the south covering Archuleta, Montezuma, Dolores, La Plata and San Juan counties have a great program that promotes similar goals and objectives to the WRWC. www.southwestcoloradofires.org



Mission: The Firewise Council of Southwest Colorado seeks to keep homes, properties and lives from being damaged by wildfire. It does so through neighborhood-based, citizen-driven approaches including overseeing a Neighborhood Ambassador program, completing public education projects, encouraging and facilitating homeowners to undertake mitigation, and changing the public will so as to improve community safety."

"The task of wildfire safety is dynamic and at times very daunting and I feel it can only be achieved through persistence and cooperation. Looking back on 2014, the wildfire mitigation program in Gunnison County grew exponentially...we treated more acres and made more landowner/community contacts than ever...and it's all due to the cooperative approach and hard work of the WRWC, Gunnison County and all of the many stakeholders and contractors involved. The wheels are in motion for 2015, and I am very much looking forward to expanding the cooperative model and precedence we've set the past couple of years."
-Sam Pankratz, Forester,
Colorado State Forest Service

From the Director

I can't say enough about the continued progress made by the West Region Wildfire Council in 2014. As a cohesive multi-agency organization, WRWC continues to promote diverse projects and initiatives that engage professionals and homeowners alike. Council members deserve recognition for the many accomplishments as well growth that the Council has seen this year.

As the WRWC continues to promote wildfire education, mitigation and preparedness on a regional level, it is both encouraging and rewarding to see where our collaborative efforts are making a difference in our regional communities. 2014 can be characterized by several goals in which the WRWC set out to accomplish this year; completion of mitigation projects, development and implementation of planning tools and educational resources, continued partnership with our research team, efforts towards organizational sustainability and the opportunity to facilitate dynamic and forward thinking discussions top the list from my perspective.

In 2014, the WRWC expanded staffing to include two Regional Mitigation and Education Coordinators. This growth has allowed WRWC to further our efforts and provide additional resources to the communities we serve.

I expect to see continued collaboration and program accomplishments in our efforts to promote wildfire preparedness, prevention and mitigation education in 2015. It is imperative that the West Region Wildfire Council continues to provide the platform and resources for engaging communities across western Colorado with reducing wildfire risk.

A special thanks to the WRWC Steering Committee for their commitment and dedication to WRWC goals and objectives.

I look forward to the continued progress, projects and new initiatives that are sure to come in 2015.



Lilia C. Falk
WRWC Director

