



# 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

## WEST REGION WILDFIRE COUNCIL

The West Region Wildfire Council (WRWC) promotes wildfire preparedness, prevention and mitigation education across Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Montrose, Ouray and San Miguel Counties. As a collaborative regional focal point for wildfire related information, the West Region Wildfire Council:

**EDUCATES** homeowners about wildfire risk and promotes activities that help communities and homeowners increase fire adaptation.

**PROMOTES** wildfire risk reduction through community preparedness and planning.

**PROVIDES** funding to assist landowners with hazardous fuels reduction projects and defensible space.

**SUPPORTS** cooperator efforts to collaboratively achieve common wildfire related objectives.

## 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**505.5**

acres treated with funding support from the WRWC Cost-Share Program in 2018.

**1,020**

homes rapidly assessed for wildfire risk in Ouray and Gunnison Counties.

**152**

homeowners participated in Community Chipping Program projects across 12 communities.

**2,935**

acres treated with funding support from the WRWC Cost-Share Program.

**\$152,030**

Reimbursed to homeowners for mitigation expenses.

**511**

Piles of slash chipped with assistance from the Community Chipping Program.

**207**

homes directly benefitted from mitigation activities.

**\$180,092**

spent by homeowners to complete mitigation projects on private land.

**89,425**

cubic feet of slash chipped = 184 dump truck loads of material.

[COWILDFIRE.ORG](http://COWILDFIRE.ORG)

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# 2017 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

## COUNTY COMMISSIONER TOURS

### GUNNISON COUNTY

WRWC utilizes several different funding sources to assist homeowners with the completion of defensible space projects in Gunnison County. In July WRWC provided an opportunity for county leadership to tour the wildfire mitigation work that was completed with this funding. Mike Tarantino (WRWC), J.T. Shaver (CSFS) and Scott Morrill (Gunnison OEM)

led Commissioners Messner, Houck and Chamberland as well as County Manager Birnie through mitigation projects completed in the Blue Mesa Subdivision.



### MONTROSE COUNTY

Montrose County Commissioners Rash, Caddy and Davis were invited to visit a large landscape scale fuelbreak completed in the Bostwick Park community. The project improved evacuation routes from the Black Canyon NP. Austin Shelby (CSFS), Don Angell (Montrose OEM) and Mike Tarantino (WRWC) toured the commissioners through the completed project and gave the elected officials the opportunity to hear from landowner Mr. Bob Romeo about the experience he had working with the Council.

### OURAY COUNTY

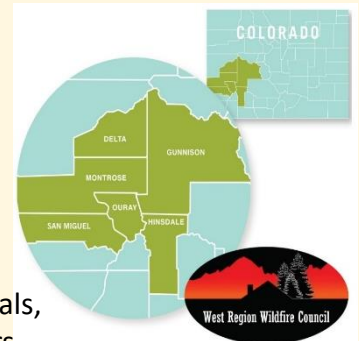
In Ouray County, WRWC staff provided an opportunity for county leadership to get outside and see what actual wildfire mitigation looks like.

Commissioner's Peters, Tisdell, and Batchelder were joined by County Administrator Connie Hunt as they heard from Chief Tom Austin (Log Hill Fire), Jodi Rist & Austin Shelby (CSFS) as well as Lilia Falk & Jamie Gomez (WRWC) about the Log Hill Community Fuel Break & Waterview Knolls Fuelbreak.



## 2017 COUNCIL MEETINGS

The West Region Wildfire Council meets the second Thursday of each month in Montrose. Meetings are a combination of partner updates and educational topics relevant to homeowners, firefighters, natural resource professionals, emergency service providers, and mitigation professionals



## CRESTED BUTTE WILDFIRE AWARENESS EVENT

In June WRWC partnered with the Gunnison Country Association of Realtors (GCAR) and the Crested Butte FPD to provide a wildfire education event. At this event realtors from the GCAR toured wildfire mitigation projects in the Trapper's Crossing Community in Gunnison County. WRWC, CSFS and Emergency Management staff provided information to the association about wildfire risk and locally available resources.



## FIRE ADAPTED COLORADO



WRWC was actively involved in Fire Adapted Colorado activities in 2017. Notably, WRWC assisted with a wildfire risk assessment learning exchange that brought together practitioners from across the state. Lilia Falk continues to act as Treasurer for FACO. Several new members have joined the organization. In 2018, new networking and learning opportunities will be available through FACO.



# 2017 EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

## THE WILDFIRE RESEARCH TEAM

In 2017, the WiRē Team continued to work on several ongoing social science nudge projects in the region. WiRē also focused on the completion of three whiteboard videos that highlight the Team's approach to infusing research into local place-based mitigation organizations. In addition, WiRē work was showcased at the National Academy of Sciences Symposium in Washington, DC.



Your community's overall wildfire risk is rated as: HIGH

Your own property's wildfire risk rating is: VERY HIGH

The average wildfire risk rating of your ten closest neighbors: HIGH

LOW MODERATE HIGH VERY HIGH EXTREME

West Region Wildfire Council has additional information about your property's wildfire risk and what you can do about it. To learn more, you can visit a website built and maintained by WRWC that is specific to your home.

Go to ([www.COwildfire.org/myhome](http://www.COwildfire.org/myhome)) and type in this code when asked: **AA123**



## COLORADO WILDLAND FIRE CONFERENCE

WRWC staff delivered several presentations at the 2017 CWFC which took place in Pueblo in April.

- **There's an App for That- Wildfire Risk Assessments in CO**
- **Infusing Social Science into Wildfire Mitigation and Education Programs**
- **"Nudges" in the WUI- Engaging WUI Residents**
- **Barriers to Breakthrough- FACO Networking Session**

## 2017 FIREWISE SITES

- Log Hill Mesa FPD
- Fischer Canyon South
- Pleasant Valley Vista
- Rainbow, Inc.
- Arrowhead FPD
- Blue Mesa Recreation Association



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT 2017 FUELS REVIEW

WRWC staff hosted a field tour for National and State BLM representatives that were conducting a review of the BLM Southwest District's fuels programs. The BLM Community Assistance Program provides funding to WRWC for completing hazardous fuels reduction projects in WUI communities.



## COMMUNITY MITIGATION ASSISTANCE TEAM

WRWC mitigation specialist Jamie Gomez became a CMAT member in 2017 after attending a training in Boise, ID and then going on an assignment to the Chetco Bar Fire in southwest Oregon. For WRWC staff, the CMAT provides a unique opportunity to share best practices with others while cross-training and learning about other effective mitigation strategies.







# West Region Wildfire Council

## 2017

### Montrose County- Zwarych Landscape Scale Fuel Break

The WRWC shared 75% of the cost to complete this 28 acre fuel break along Dave Wood Road. This project reduced fuels on the landscape level by connecting previously completed treatments on BLM lands. Additionally this project reduced roadside fuels and improved defensible space.



### Montrose County- Flynn Landscape Scale Fuels Reduction Project

In 2016, the WRWC worked with Mr. Flynn to mitigate 105 acres in Mailbox Park. The 2016 treatment was a step in creating the Mailbox/ Deer Mesa Fuel Break identified in the Montrose County CWPP. In 2017 WRWC worked with Mr. Flynn to treat an additional 198 acres in North Mailbox Park further enhancing the CWPP recommendation.

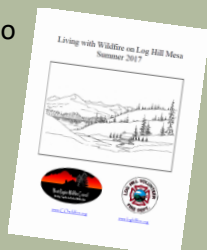
### San Miguel County- Beaver Pines Defensible Space Project

The WRWC shared 75% of the cost to complete a four acre defensible space project for a Beaver Pines resident in 2017. Beaver Pines is a small community, approximately five miles SE of Norwood, that is recognized in the San Miguel County CWPP as being at "Very High" risk to wildfire.



### Ouray County- Log Hill Rapid Risk Assessment & Survey

In 2011-12, the Log Hill Mesa FPD and WRWC partnered on a project to rapidly assess every WUI home within the district. This was done in conjunction with a homeowner survey that was sent to every resident in the district. The resulting wealth of information has provided residents with a deeper understanding of their wildfire risk as well as Council staff with a deeper understanding of the community's thoughts, perceptions and attitudes related to wildfire. As a five year follow-up to that study, Log Hill Fire and WRWC conducted a Rapid Wildfire Risk Assessment and homeowner survey in the summer of 2017. This new project is serving multiple purposes by updating existing information, adding additional information for new homes and providing a unique window into numerous potential changes in wildfire risk and attitudes over time.



### Delta County- Colby Canyon Defensible Space

This defensible space project is located within the far north end of Cedaredge in the Colby Canyon area. The Delta County CWPP identifies Colby Canyon as having a "Very High" wildfire risk, with the number one priority fuels reduction recommendation being the creation of defensible space around homes.



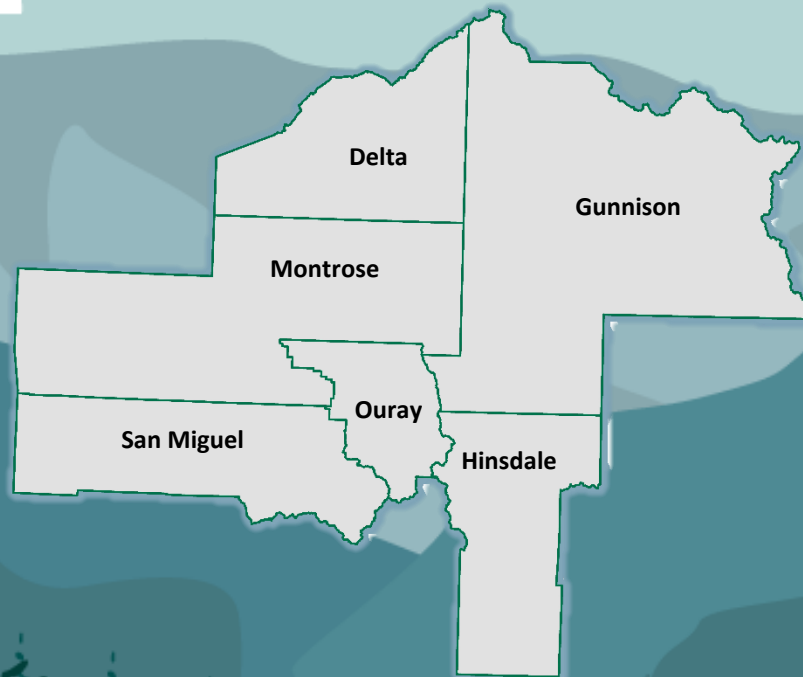
### Gunnison County- Kraft Defensible Space

A 2.28 acre defensible space was created around the Kraft Residence in Gunnison County. This project mitigated fuels in a dense Douglas-fir stand and enhanced zones one, two and three of the home's defensible area. Utilizing Gunnison County Title III Funds, the homeowner was reimbursed \$4,436 for the completion of this work.



### Gunnison County- Brown and Roberts Connected Defensible Space

This 3.65 acre project involved two neighboring landowners in the Blue Mesa Subdivision. The combination of the two defensible spaces created a break in a dense and diseased Douglas-Fir stand growing down slope of the residences. Utilizing Gunnison County Title III Funds 54% of the total cost of this project was reimbursed to the landowners. These landowners took action to mitigate fuels on their properties after the WRWC completed a Community Wildfire Risk Assessment for the Blue Mesa Community in 2016. Since the completion of this assessment seven homeowners have mitigated a total of 11.43 acres in this newly recognized FireWise Community. In addition the WRWC has completed 25 home site visits in this community.



### Ouray County- Tackling Priority #1: Defensible Space

In the Ouray County CWPP (2011), the "North Log Hill Mesa" community is rated as having a "High" wildfire risk rating while "Log Hill Village/Fairway Pines" was given a "Very High" Risk Rating. The plan recommends a variety of fuels treatment actions to mitigate risk for these risks, and the creation of Defensible Space is the #1 priority for each and every community within the county. The Council's Cost-Share Program continues to be utilized by community members in Log Hill and across the region – such as these before (top) and after (bottom) photos of defensible space project sites.



### Hinsdale County- Lower Lake Fork Defensible Space Projects

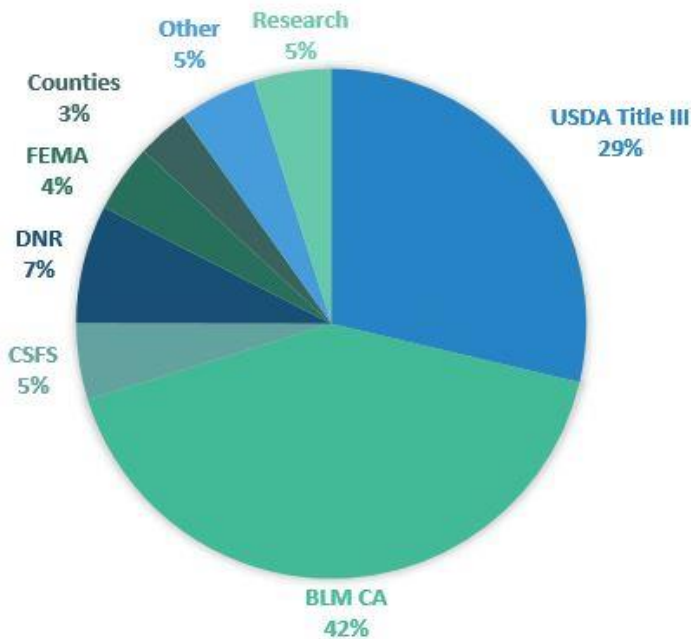
In 2017 the WRWC worked with five homeowners in the Lower Lake Fork WUI Area around the town of Lake City to mitigate hazardous fuels. A total of 4.57 acres were treated and the WRWC reimbursed homeowners a total of \$9,287.95 for the completion of this work.





# REVENUE BY SOURCE 2010-2017

Total: \$2.83M



## HOMEOWNER PERSPECTIVE:

"I would like to thank you [WRWC], Rick [Hinsdale County], J.T. [CSFS] and anyone else involved in making the program work for me. I am very happy with the results and hope that more people in my neighborhood decide to take advantage of this program in the future" - Floyd Keeble, Lake City Resident and participant in WRWC Cost-Share Program

"Each time a mitigation project or the chipping program occurred, others requested additional information. Enthusiasm appears to be heading in the right direction. The relationships and the cooperation between our community and the participating staffs have been extremely positive. The recognition as a Firewise designated community is an achievement we are very proud to embrace and will do our best to continue future efforts to mitigate the community wildfire hazards. As 'Community Coordinator' I wish to thank you all!" -Roy Swanson, Community Mitigation Ambassador in the Blue Mesa Subdivision

"It was a pleasure having you [CSFS] and Mike [WRWC] out to assess our cabin last Friday. I just want to say you both were very professional and friendly during the site-visit. Your professionalism coupled with your knowledge of the environment was very impressive as well as informative" – Chuck Reasy, Gunnison County Resident

"I appreciate the education and help you have provided to me in developing a fire mitigation project. Thank you all again for your assistance to me in this process- it has been worthwhile, informative, and helped me in knowing what I should continue doing to keep my structures as fire-safe as possible" – Barbara Bernhardt, Montrose County Resident

# 2017 DONORS



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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. SJMA is a 501c3 charitable organization.

## WRWC STAFF

The WRWC staff handle the day to day business of the organization. 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- Left to Right: Mike Tarantino, Jamie Gomez, Lilia Falk

## WRWC STEERING COMMITTEE

The WRWC Steering committee is comprised of federal, state, county and local representatives, each committed to furthering the efforts of the WRWC.

AUSTIN SHELBY: Colorado State Forest Service  
CHRIS ASBJORN: Bureau of Land Management  
JOHN BENNETT: Telluride Fire Protection District  
STEVE ELLIS: Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control  
SCOTT MORRILL: Gunnison County Emergency Management

## CONTACT US

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