

# Home Hardening & Defensible Space Innovation



Plumas County Fire Safe Council

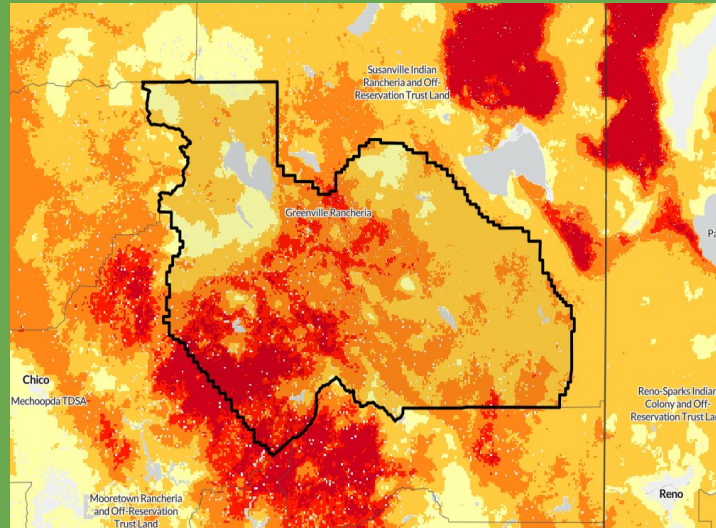
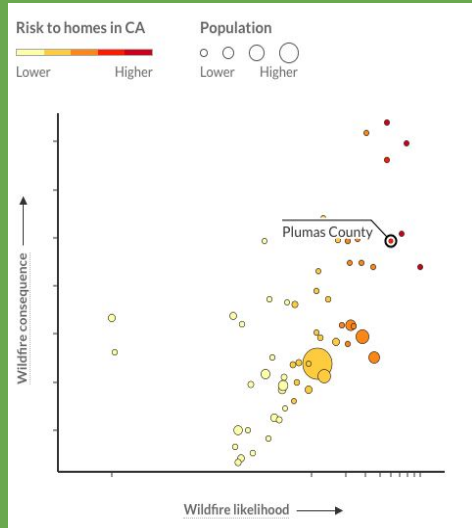
CFSC Northern CA Regional Monthly Meeting

23 February 2023



# Plumas County

Compared to all counties in California, Plumas is in the **91st** percentile of wildfire risk to homes and the **95th** percentile of wildfire likelihood.



Source: *Wildfire Risk to Communities - USDA Forest Service*

**Personal  
Responsibility**

**Plumas Passion**









# Fire Aside

supporting communities as they continue to adapt to wildfire.

Plumas County Fire Safe Council partners with Fire Aside for two assistance programs:

## Chipper Day

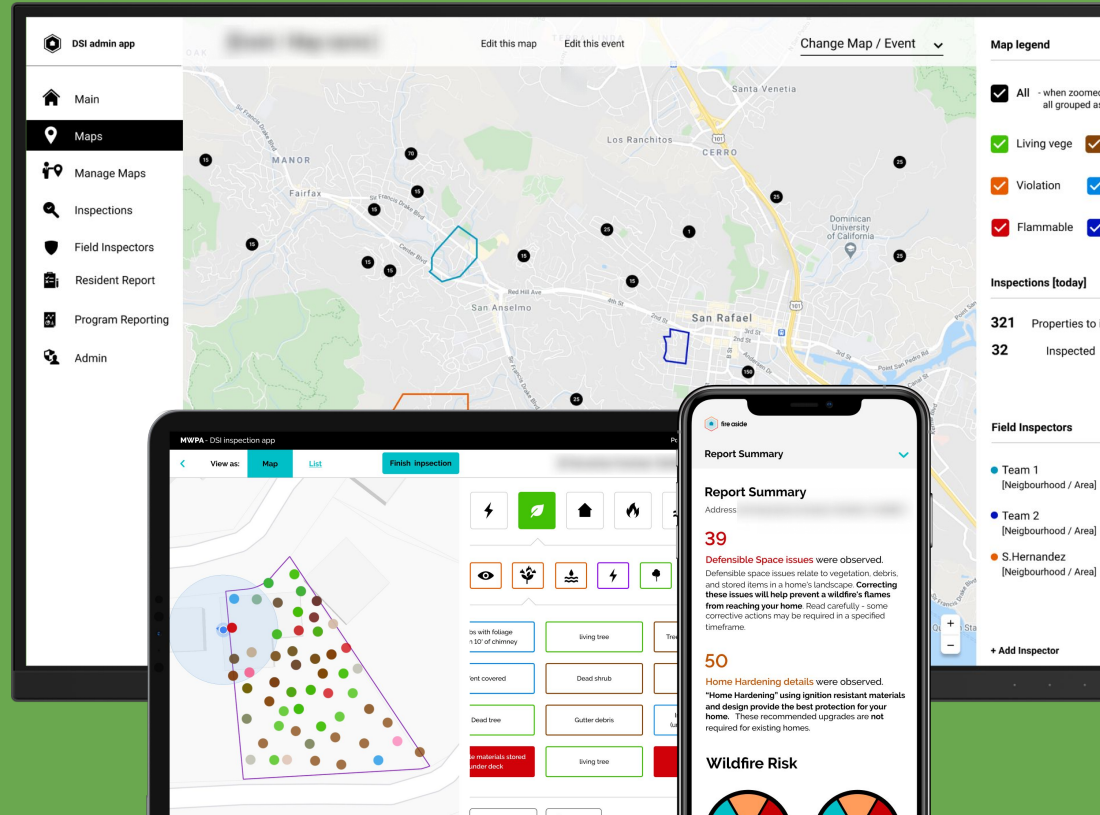
- \*Increases community participation & fuel removal
- \*Easy online scheduling, route planning, and management

## Fire Safe Home Visits

- \*Easy, interactive, personalized reports to help residents prioritize hazard mitigation
- \*Consistent updates
- \*Active, face-to-face education



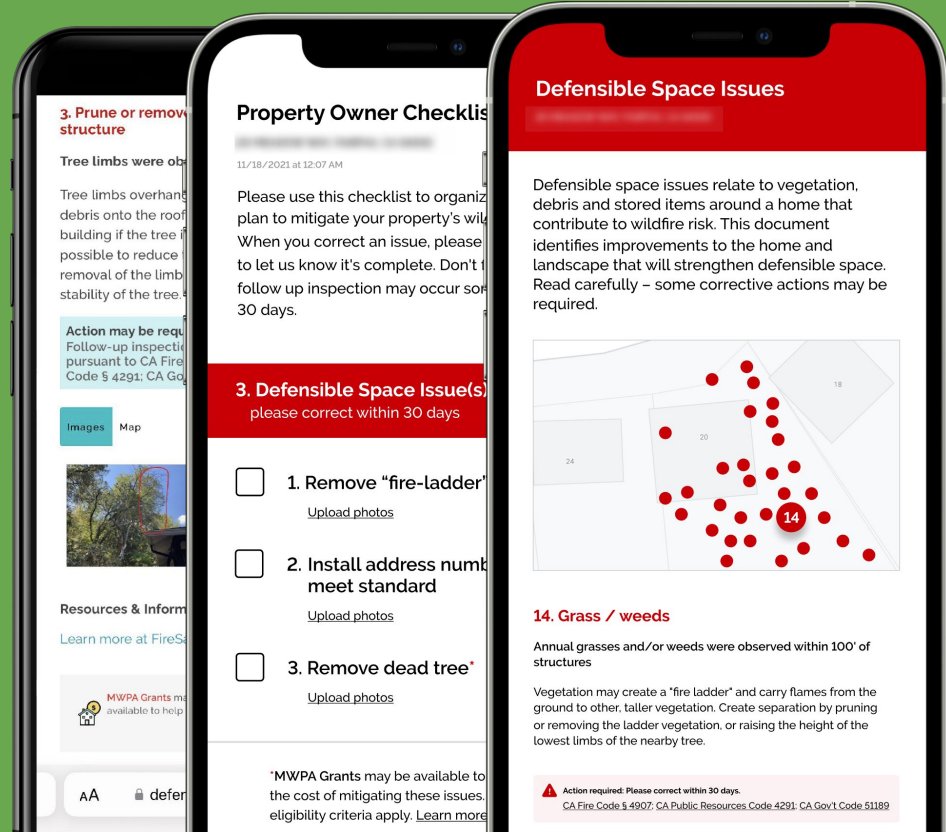
fire aside



# Fire Safe Home Visits

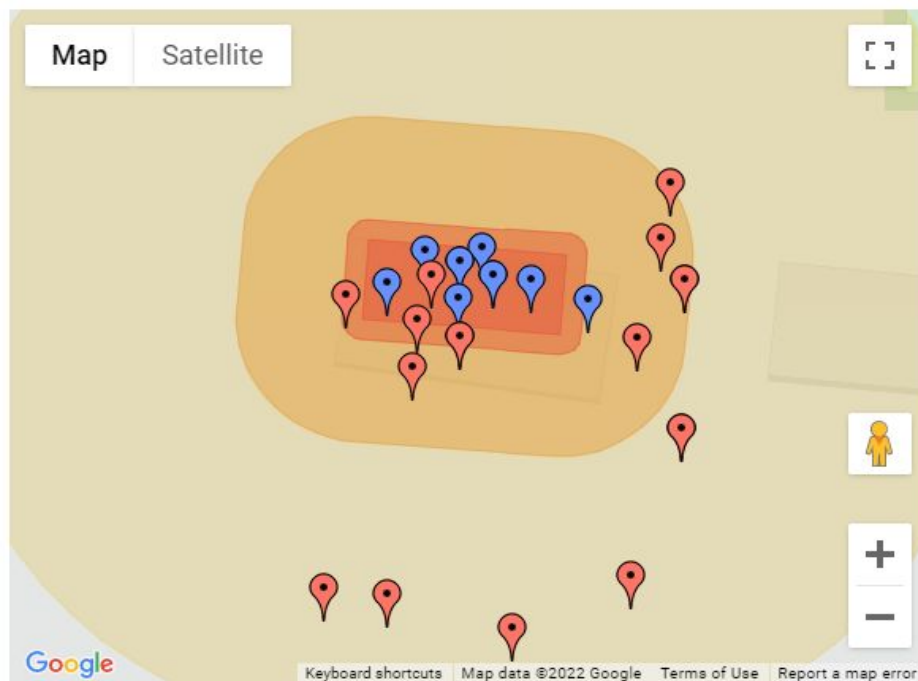


Home visits are conducted by trained Fire Safe Council staff and volunteer Plumas County residents. These consultations are considered “Peer-to-Peer” to uphold a spirit of open, fire-safe communication between Plumas residents; in no way is this program meant to “inspect” or “assess” homes.



## Discovery Locations

These are the approximate locations where fire safe consultants observed potential improvements. The following pages will help you understand the actions necessary to ensure your home is more fire prepared.



## 8. Remove "fire-ladder" vegetation x2

### Live vegetation creating a "fire ladder" was observed

Vegetation may create a "fire ladder" and carry flames from the ground into a tree's canopy. Create vertical separation by removing ground vegetation, shrubs, and small trees that are in the drip line(underneath) of mature trees. Also, raise the height of the lowest limbs of the nearby trees. Follow minimum vertical clearance in link.

**Minimizing the "ladder fuels" on your property plays a pivotal role in reducing the fire risk on your property. If desired, the Plumas County Fire Safe Council is available for a follow-up visit post-treatment. Visit the "Additional Resources" page to see if any of our programs can assist.**

California Public Resources Code 4291

Images [Map](#)



### Resources & Information:

Learn more at Ready for Wildfire [>](#)



## Property Owner Checklist

Utilize this checklist to organize an action plan to prepare your property for wildfire. When you fulfill an improvement, please "check it off" to let us know it's complete. Please email the Fire Safe Council County Coordinator at [liam@plumascorporation.org](mailto:liam@plumascorporation.org) or call (530) 927-5339 with any questions.

### 4 Defensible Space Improvements

- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 1. Remove needle or leaf litter, vegetation, and items that could catch fire under decks and/or other overhangs
- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 2. Remove juniper
- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 3. Add spacing between tree(s)
- 4. Remove tree limbs overhanging structure

### 5 Home Hardening Recommendations

- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 1. Wood roof
- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 2. Plastic / Vinyl Skylights
- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 3. Vinyl gutters
- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 4. Open eaves
- SUBMIT RESOLUTION** 5. Wood Shingle Siding

# Evacuation Notifications & Information

## Plumas County Wildfire Preparation & Evacuation Plan

Learn about [Plumas County's Wildfire Preparation & Evacuation Plan](#). Follow the 7 steps for an evacuation in Plumas County - from pre-evacuation steps to returning home after a wildfire.



### CodeRED

Register your contact information with CodeRED to receive wildfire and evacuation notifications in your neighborhood

[CodeRED](#)



### Plumas County

Know the primary and secondary evacuation routes out of your community by looking at the Plumas County Wildfire Evacuation Maps.

[Wildfire Evacuation Maps](#)



### Plumas County Sheriff

Take care of your animals during an evacuation by following along with the Plumas County Animal Wildfire Preparation and Evacuation Guide.

[Evacuation Guide](#)

# Additional Plumas Fire Safe Council Services

## Chipping Program

Our no-cost Chipping Program is available to all Plumas County residents. Contractors will chip piles up to 16 linear feet of material that is no more than 4 feet in depth. See when your next chipping days are at the bottom of this page, or find more details on our [website](#).

## Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance

The Senior/Disabled Defensible Space Assistance program is for Plumas County residents over 65 years of age or for residents with a medical physical disability. The Plumas Fire Safe Council will provide a free consultation to determine what work is necessary. For more information, or to sign up for the program, visit our [website](#).

## Hazardous Fuels Reduction

The hazardous fuels reduction program is designed to encourage community-wide collaboration to reduce wildfire risk. The Plumas Fire Safe Council offers resources to model large-scale community projects of at least 100 acres. For more information, or to sign up for the program, visit our [website](#).

## Plumas Underburn Cooperative

The Plumas Underburn Cooperative (PUC) is a group of citizen volunteers and fire professionals promoting healthy, resilient forests/communities through the use of fire. If you are interested in volunteering for PUC or would like more information about underburning on your property, visit the PUC [website](#).

## Fire Safe Home Visits

If you are receiving this report, you've just participated in our [Fire Safe Home Visit program](#). We will continue to offer free home visits to help create more fire-resilient properties.

## Contractors for Hire

If you would like to hire a contractor for work on your property, view our [website](#) for a comprehensive list of trained professionals.

## Firewise Communities

If you are a part of a firewise community, you may track the volunteer hours/money you've invested in wildfire preparedness activities on our [website](#). If your community is not associated with firewise, but you want to initiate a movement in your neighborhood, visit the [Firewise USA website](#).



# Adapting to Community Needs



## Mission

PCFSC has a mission to reduce losses from wildfire through pre-fire activities and has been providing fuels reduction assistance to residents of Plumas County for nearly 20 years.

## Funding for Program

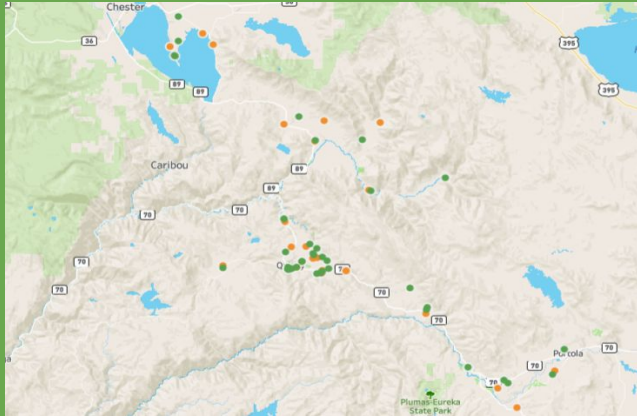
Program is funded with State Grants: California Fire Safe Council CALFIRE County Coordinator Grant

## Staffing for Program

Fire Safe Home Visit program consists of 1 full time program manager. Future plans consist of training a network of volunteers.

# Software & innovation as a Nonprofit

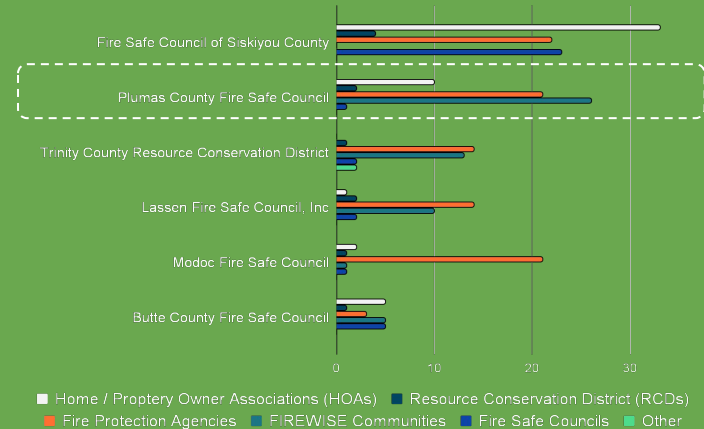
It's our job to develop educational tools that are up to speed with mountain living in the 21st century; the DSI software enables face-to-face learning experiences with personal roadmaps to wildfire mitigation.



## Within 4 months:

- 694 Unique Discoveries
- 117 Residents received personal, face to face education
- 71 Unique Home Visits
- 2 Community-Wide events led with the DSI software

## Mitigation groups



- Grant reporting / applications
- The software is malleable
- Provides easy data recording for our 26 Firewise communities

# Notable Statistics - Grant Reporting

Discovery Type	Percentage of Homes with Discovery
Vegetation in Zone Zero	77%
Trees Overhang Structure	72%
Exposed Space Underneath Deck	71%
Tree Requires Limbing	71%
Unenclosed Eaves	68%
Additional Spacing - Trees	57%



# Fire Adapted Communities



# Best Practices

**"From the front door to the forest"**

Emphasize the importance of curating a more resilient home, then expanding outward to create a fire-resistant landscape. Prioritize structure hardening, then defensible space - landscaping, then larger scale fuel treatments.

**Avoid jargon**

Terms such as fuels, HIZ, and defensible space are commonly used, but if you use them, take the time to explain them.

**Refer to home consultations as home visits**

Words like assessment or evaluation can discourage people from inviting you to visit; we want to refrain from making folks feel judged.

**Give credit where credit is due**

Acknowledge what the homeowners have already done to reduce their risk; it's something to be proud of!

**Micro-moments of connection**

Refrain from staring at your data collection tool (tablet/clipboard). Eye contact can be scary, but we love that it builds trust!

# Not All Hazard Mitigation Is Expensive

- Focus on roofs and gutters by routinely removing debris.

Do not store combustible materials (firewood, lumber) under the deck.

- Install weather stripping around garage doors to stop embers from entering the garage.

- Replace combustible fences with non-combustible fences.

- Replace decking and siding with ignition-resistant materials. Avoid untreated wood and vinyl siding.

## Low Cost

- Install window screens.

Consider enclosing decks and installing non-combustible material underneath them.

- Install metal spacers between wood fences or install noncombustible barriers on fences.

- Remove vegetation and debris from decks.

Enclose vents, soffits, or chimney openings with 1/8 inch metal mesh screening.

- Ensure that the start of exterior siding is a minimum of 6 inches above the ground.

## Higher Cost

- Install class A fire-rated roofing.

- Box in all open-eave construction

- Replace single-pane windows with dual or multi-pane windows (tempered glass).







[Liam@plumasfiresafe.org](mailto:Liam@plumasfiresafe.org)



(530) 927-5339



- **Who are the entities that run defensible space inspections in your county?**
- **Does your organization have a similar program?**
- **Do you have any reservations with adopting a program like this?**
- **Would your organization adopt this software as an educational tool, or for evaluations?**