HAMMOND RANCH FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN-CWPP

PHOTO COURTESY OF JACK HOWARD

PREPARED BY THE HAMMOND RANCH FIRE SAFE COUNCIL
www.hammondlandowners.org

NOVEMBER 2018
FIGURE 1  HAMMOND RANCH FIRE SAFE COUNCIL AREA
HAMMOND RANCH FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN-CWPP

CWPP APPROVAL

Hammond Ranch
Fire Safe Council

________________________ Date 4/10/2018

Hammond Ranch
Landowners Association

________________________ Date 4/10/18

Hammond Ranch Fire and Emergency
Response Zone of CSA #4

________________________ Date 4/11/18

CAL FIRE

________________________ Date 11/4/18

Siskiyou Co. CWPP
Coordinating Committee

________________________ Date 12/6/2018

Siskiyou County
Board of Supervisors

________________________ Date 12-4-18

Shasta-Trinity NF
Mt. Shasta

________________________ Date 4/15/2018

HAMPSON RANCH WILDFIRE SAFETY--INTERESTED PARTIES (STAKEHOLDERS)

- Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council (HRFSC)
- Hammond Ranch Landowners Association (HLA)
- Hammond Ranch Emergency Response Zone Fire Department
- Hammond Ranch Volunteer Fire District Community
- Greater Weed Fire Safe Council
- Weed and Mt. Shasta Communities
- Siskiyou County
- California Dept. of Forestry-CAL FIRE
- California Dept. of Transportation and the California Highway Patrol
- U.S.-Shasta-Trinity National Forest
- Union Pacific Railroad
- Pacific Power
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is to reduce the threat of wildfire in the Hammond Ranch Fire and Emergency Response Zone.

Wildfire is the greatest natural threat to the safety of the residents living in this area.

CAL FIRE has rated the danger from wildfire as "Very High." This rating is based on:
- Abundant flammable forest fuel.
- Marginal firefighting water supplies.
- Limited evacuation roads.
- Frequent high winds.
- Difficult hilly terrain.

The goal of this plan is to build an educated community that works together to reduce wildfire danger. The Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council looks forward to working with the Hammond Ranch Community, Fire Departments and Siskiyou County to accomplish a common goal:

REDUCE THE THREAT OF WILDFIRE!!

1.1 Appendix A is an action plan to reduce wildfire danger. Hammond Ranch residents can accomplish many of the tasks, but some will require the assistance and support of fire and Siskiyou County agencies.

1.2 This plan has been developed in cooperation with CAL FIRE-Battalion 3 (located at Weed), the USFS-Shasta-Trinity (located at Mt. Shasta) and the Hammond Ranch volunteer fire department (Hammond Fire and Emergency Response Zone of CSA #4).

2 OVERVIEW
2.1 AREA DESCRIPTION (See Figure 1)

The Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council (HRFSC) area is located at the southern end of the Shasta Valley in Siskiyou County, CA. The area is bounded by the Shasta-Trinity National Forest to the south and west, the city of Weed to the east and Interstate 5 to the east and north. This area is the same as the Hammond Fire and Emergency Response Zone of CSA #4.

The area is approximately 29 square miles. There are about 500 homes and 450 residents located within the area. The population will vary during the year due to visiting absentee owners, transient campers and vacation rental visitors.

Located within the area is a U-shaped parcel of Shasta-Trinity National Forest land. Wildfire protection for this parcel is the responsibility of the Federal Government-U.S. Forest Service. Wildfire protection for the remaining HRFSC area is the responsibility of the California Department of Forestry (CAL FIRE).
2.2 AREA HISTORY

1800’s—In the mid-1800’s the area was the site of dense forests and scattered ranches. In 1891, Abner Weed built a large lumber cutting and drying facility in nearby Weed to take advantage of the local timber and the strong dry winds. For many years, lumber was the primary industry in the area.

Today the HRFSC area is a rural wildland-urban interface area (WUI) with a diverse population. Many people now living in the HRFSC area previously lived in an urban city environment. These people have little knowledge of how to prepare for wildfire in a rural environment.

HAMMOND RANCH SUBDIVISION—The Hammond Ranch Subdivision is the largest residential development in the area. In 1969 about 2500 acres of Hammond Ranch were subdivided into residential parcels (minimum 5 acres). The parcels were sold as vacation sites with the promise of a major ski resort in the adjacent Shasta-Trinity forest. The ski resort was never built and the subdivision was never fully developed.

Today the subdivision has 356 property owners of which about 228 (64%) are residents and 128 (36%) are part-time residents or absentee owners.

The original Hammond Ranch subdivision did not provide a safe infrastructure for living in a wildfire area. Major deficiencies included:

- Unpaved primary roads (Old Stage and College Avenue),
- Unpaved “dead-end” secondary roads,
- No water fire hydrant system,
- No shaded wildfire fuel breaks (Green Belt),
- No fire department,
- No community fire alarm system.

Hammond Ranch residents have corrected some of the major deficiencies. The most serious remaining deficiencies include 50-miles of unpaved secondary “dead-end” roads, no water fire hydrant system, and incomplete shaded wildfire fuel breaks.

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS PROPERTIES—Also included within the HRFSC area are smaller subdivisions (such as Lakewood Ranch) and individual homes, farms and ranches. Many of the smaller subdivisions and properties have wildfire deficiencies similar to the Hammond Ranch Subdivision.

2.3 AREA TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of the region is a mix of flat grasslands and meadows to the north, foothills in the central area and mountains to the south and west.

The range of elevation is from 3,000 feet in the north to 7,000 feet at the Shasta-Trinity mountains in the south and west. The foothills in the central area have an average elevation of 4,000 feet.
2.4 HYDROLOGY
Located within the area are a small river, several small creeks and a reservoir (Hammond Pond). The river, creeks and reservoir are not reliable sources of water for fighting fires due to low water levels during the fire season.

- The Shasta River starts in the Shasta-Trinity mountains and flows north past Hammond Pond (Hammond Reservoir). The river flows to Yreka where it joins the Klamath River.
- Dale Creek, Eddy Creek and Parks Creek start in the Shasta-Trinity mountains and flow to the Klamath River.
- Hammond pond is a privately-owned 70-acre (when full) water reservoir. The pond is not a reliable source of firefighting water. Each summer the pond is drained to provide water for downstream agriculture. There are two standpipes in the pond to pump emergency firefighting water when water is available.

2.5 HIGHWAY, ROADS AND RAILROAD

INTERSTATE HIGHWAY I-5—Federal Interstate-I-5 is a major highway running parallel to the east and north sides of the area. The highway is a heavily-traveled main route for vehicle traffic in the western United States. The highway is a potential site of wildfires caused by careless disposal of cigarettes and vehicle fires.

COUNTY ROADS-PRIMARY ROADS—Siskiyou County maintains two primary roads (Old Stage Road and College Avenue) that run through the center of the HRFSC area. These roads are the primary evacuation routes out of the area. These roads comply with current CAL FIRE standards for simultaneous civilian evacuation and firefighting.

PRIVATE ROADS-SECONDARY ROADS—There are approximately 50 miles of private secondary roads within the area. With few exceptions, the roads are unimproved gravel or dirt “dead-end” roads that do not meet current CAL FIRE road standards.

RAILROAD—A Union Pacific railroad track and underpass runs adjacent to the southeast side of the HRFSC area. The railroad track is a heavily-traveled main route for transporting materials in the western United States. The railroad area is a potential site of wildfires caused by trains and transient people who use the railroad underpass as an illegal campsite.

2.6 VEGETATION AND WILDFIRE FUELS (See Figure 2)
78 years ago, the Deer Creek wildfire burned the forest and grasslands in the HRFSC area. Since that time the area has re-grown with three dominant vegetation types (See Figure 2):
- Grasslands and Meadows
- Mixed Dense Brush
- Mixed Dense Forest

There is an abundance of wildfire fuel that has been accumulating since the 1939 Deer Creek fire. Much of the dead dry wood is “ladder” fuel. When ignited, ladder fuels allow a wildfire to burn from the ground into the upper crown of a forest. Crown fires are difficult to control and potentially dangerous to wildland firefighters.
FIGURE 2 HAMMOND RANCH AREA VEGETATION MAP
2.7 METEOROLOGY--WINDS

Winds can be highly localized within the HRFSC area.

- Data from the automated weather station at the Weed airport (located about 5-miles north) indicates that during the wildfire season (June to October) daytime winds blow about 70% of the time with an average wind speed of 10 mph. The wind direction is usually South-South-East or North.
- Data from a resident weather station located in the High Meadow area indicates that during the fire season the average wind speed is 5 mph. The wind direction is usually East-South-East or North.

Strong winds can cause a wildfire to quickly spread. Strong winds increase the intensity of a wildfire and cause the release of airborne fire embers (firebrands). The firebrands create unpredictable fire showers that can travel miles downwind and start multiple new wildfires.

3 WILDFIRE ENVIRONMENT
3.1 WILDFIRE HISTORY (See Figure 3)

Since 1915 there have been 270 fires that have burned 137,500 acres in the Siskiyou Shasta Valley Region. The largest single wildfire (1939 Deer Creek Fire) burned the entire HRFSC area.

From 2010 to 2015, CAL FIRE Battalion 3 (located in Weed) responded to an average 35 wildfires each year. CAL FIRE quickly extinguished 95% of these fires. Total burn damage has been limited to about 260 acres per year.

There have been two major fires in the HRFSC area (See Figure 3).

- Deer Creek Fire (1939)--This fire started north of Lake Siskiyou and quickly burned 21,683 acres including all of the HRFSC area. The fire was driven by winds blowing from the south. A news article reported: “Outstanding memories of the period will be those of raging fires, high winds and damage to forest and watershed areas…”

- Boles Fire (2014)--This fire started south of Weed and quickly burned 157 homes, 8 commercial buildings, 2 churches and the public library. The fire was driven by winds blowing from the south. A news article reported: “In a matter of hours, a quarter of the town was little more than smoldering ash. What started small exploded into a wind-whipped apocalypse.”
Wildfires in the HRFSC area have been started by lightning, arson, campfires, smoking, debris burning, equipment use, playing with fire, vehicles, railroad and electrical equipment. About 75% of wildfires were caused by human activity.

The leading causes of wildfires were:
- Debris/Illegal Burning (28%),
- Lightning (26%),
- Campfires (6%).
4 WILDFIRE RISK AND HAZARD ASSESSMENT

4.1 US FOREST SERVICE COMPUTER STUDY-HAMMOND RANCH AREA

Computer wildfire modeling predicts fire behavior such as how fast a fire might spread, how much heat it might generate and what direction it might move.

NOTE-A computer study is only a "prediction." An actual wildfire could behave differently depending on critical factors such as wind, place of ignition, terrain, fuel loading and firefighting actions. The computer study did not include firefighting actions.

For the Hammond Ranch study, the US Forest Service used the "FlamMap" computer modeling program. This program is commonly used by the USFS and other fire agencies to predict fire behavior.

Fire simulations were conducted at four locations in the HRFSC area. USFS and Fire Safe personnel sited each location and recorded and photographed the GPS location, condition of fuel and topography. Additional data such as area topography and fuel loading were obtained from overhead satellite data.

Weather data was obtained from the Weed Airport Automated Weather System. For this study, the weather data was similar to the Weed Boles Fire (a week with no rain, low humidity, high temperatures and a wind blowing from the south at 14-mph with gusts to 26-mph).

The computer study predicted the following:

- **Fast Moving**--The predicted fire would move relatively quickly (about 1-mile per hour). After 6 hours, the fire would have burned outside the HRFSC area.
- **Crown Fire**--The predicted fire would quickly become a "crown" fire. Predicted flame lengths from the face of the fire would exceed 30 feet. The computer model did not include new fires that could be caused by wind-blown embers.
- **Roads**--The primary evacuation roads (Old Stage Road, and College Ave) and many secondary roads (roads that lead to landowner homes) would be overrun by fire. The loss of a road due to wildfire could force people to turn back and "shelter-in-place."

![Diagram of wildfire behavior]

*In a forest where fires rarely happen, fuel builds up. There's surface fuel (grass, logs, woody debris, brush); ladder fuel (shrubs, small trees, snags); and tree crowns. Surface fires spread quickly through brush and woody debris. Ladder fuels allow the fire to move up toward the forest canopy. Tree crown fires are so intense, they're difficult to control.*
4.2 WILDFIRE HAZARD AND RISK ASSESSMENT

HAZARD -- Wildfire "Hazard" is a rating that predicts if an area will burn over the next 30 to 50 years if nothing is done to reduce the danger of wildfire. CAL FIRE has rated the HRFSC area at the highest hazard rating--"VERY HIGH".

RISK--Wildfire "Risk" is a rating that predicts the damage a wildfire can do today under existing conditions including completion of wildfire abatement actions. The HRFSC area Wildfire risk is rated "HIGH".

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Existing Fuel Hazard</th>
<th>Risk of Wildfire Occurrence</th>
<th>Structure Ignitability</th>
<th>Firefighting Capability</th>
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5. HRFSC PLANNED WILDFIRE ABATEMENT ACTIONS (SEE APPENDIX A)

5.1. CONSTRUCT A SHADED FUEL BREAK AT DEER CREEK AND MULE DEER ROADS

This project would create a shaded fuel break along Deer Creek and Mule Deer roads on the east side of Hammond Ranch. The fuel break would be strategically located to slow a wildfire to protect the populated downwind areas and reduce dangerous wildfire fuel along emergency evacuation roads. This project is a continuation of previously completed shaded fuel breaks in the HRFSC area. The project is currently being revised and will be submitted for funding approval.

5.2. PROVIDE AN IMPROVED WILDFIRE COMMUNITY ALARM SYSTEM

The recent computer study demonstrated how rapidly a wildfire could burn in the HRFSC area. Evacuation roads could be quickly overrun by the wildfire. There is an urgent need to ensure residents are immediately alerted to a rapidly moving wildfire.

Current wildfire warnings include the following:

- **Smoke**--Smelling smoke is probably the way most people will detect a wildfire. Smelling smoke indicates a windblown wildfire is heading toward the person.
- **Code Red**--This is a free service provided by Siskiyou County that provides an alert signal via a phone or computer. The signal is activated after an incident commander confirms the wildfire and identifies the affected area. When activated, the system can make 1,000 telephone calls per minute. Residents have been encouraged to join this free service.
- **Note**--This system should not be relied upon as the only warning system. For example, there are areas where cell phone coverage is not available and times when people do not hear or answer their cell phone. In addition, there can be a time lag between the start of a wildfire and the release of an evacuation warning.
• **Door-to Door**--This is a procedure where Sheriff and/or Fire Dept. personnel drive the roads alerting people by siren or pounding on doors.

• **Note**—This method cannot be relied upon as there are few available Sheriff and Fire Department personnel to travel 50-miles of secondary roads. In addition, a fast-moving wildfire could block access to the roads.

• **Telephone Tree**--This is a volunteer system where neighbors have a list of people to quickly contact. One neighbor contacts three people. Each of those three people contact three other people. This system has been started but not been fully implemented in the HRFSC area.

• **Siren Alarm System**—This is a siren warning system similar to the Tsunami warning systems on the Oregon Coast and community fire alarm systems in the Midwest. Upon detection of a wildfire, a siren is immediately sounded to alert the community. This system is probably the fastest and most effective warning system currently available. A siren alarm system is not installed in the HRFSC area.

### 5.3 PROVIDE HOME OWNER WILDFIRE EDUCATION

Wildfire “education” is currently a “hit-or-miss” selection of highway signs, brochures, books and internet information. The information does not provide a coordinated plan to create a safe wildfire environment.

The following recent events have changed resident interest in wildfires and wildfire education:

- The Weed Boles fire which quickly destroyed homes, businesses, public library and churches in one afternoon. Residents learned how rapidly a wildfire could destroy a community.

- The US Forest Service computer study showing the predicted path of a wildfire in the HRFSC area. Residents learned what could happen in the HRFSC area during a fast moving wildfire.

- Constant news of large out-of-control wildfires. “Mega-Wildfires” are now commonly reported across the United States and in foreign countries such as Chile, Russia, Portugal, Australia and Canada. Residents learned that rapid moving wildfires are no longer a rare event.

### 5.4 PROVIDE AN IMPROVED CHIPPER PROGRAM

Wildfire fuel reduction is a private landowner responsibility. Many landowners will cut wildfire fuel, but have problems trying to dispose of the cut fuel.

The following disposal options are available to landowners:

- **Haul to the Black Butte Landfill**—This requires a truck and/or a trailer and can be expensive and time consuming. The current Landfill rate is $6.75/cubic yard or $58/ton.

- **Burning**—This requires a safe area to burn the material. Burning is only allowed during the wet season (typically November to May). There are also burning restrictions from the Siskiyou County Air Pollution Control Board. Burning is prohibited during the fire season.
• **Rent a Chipper**—A medium-sized chipper is available from the local Weed Rental Store. The current rental rate is $165 for 4 hours or $275 for 24 hours.

• **County Chipper**—This a new program that allows Fire Safe Council members, who have insurance and received training, to use a County chipper. This program is currently available in the HRFSC area.

• **Chipper Days**—In the past, this program was *very successful* in the HRFSC area. Landowners cut and stack their materials. The materials are then chipped by a contractor, Fire Department personnel or California Department of Corrections personnel (Deadwood Camp). This program requires a source of funding. The costs vary depending upon who performs the chipping. This program is currently available in the HRFSC area.

5.5—**IMPROVE EMERGENCY WILDFIRE EVACUATION ROUTES**

The highest priority in any wildfire is the safe evacuation of people. Many of the roads in the Hammond Ranch area are single lane dead end roads. During a wildfire, people have only one escape route. It is critical that evacuation routes be identified and upgraded to a reasonable safe condition for emergency evacuation. To provide safe access for emergency wildland fire equipment and civilian evacuation concurrently, access should be a minimum of two ten (10) foot traffic lanes, not including shoulder and striping. These traffic lanes shall provide for two-way traffic flow to support emergency vehicle and civilian egress (see 1273.01-Road Width, CCR Title 14 Article 2 Emergency Access and Egress).

Most evacuation roads in the Hammond Ranch are not in a safe condition due to excessive wildfire fuel growth along the edges of the road. Vegetation has been allowed to grow onto the side of the road narrowing the road in some cases to a 10-foot width. This problem is commonly found on roads adjacent to absentee landowner properties where dead fuel has been allowed to accumulate for approximately 80-years. This fuel must be cut back away from the road to provide safe access for emergency wildland fire equipment and civilian evacuation.
5.6--PROVIDE IMPROVED WATER STORAGE SUPPLY

The HRFSC area does not have a distributed water firefighting hydrant system. Water is the primary method used to fight structure and wildland fires. Additional water sources are needed to ensure water is quickly available at all locations.

Water for firefighting is currently provided from the following sources:

- Hammond Ranch Volunteer Fire Department--The Fire Department currently has a 4,000 gallon mobile water-tender; 200 gallon mobile fire truck (pickup); 500 gallon mobile fire truck (4210 Truck); 400 gallon mobile fire truck (42 Truck) and a 10,000 gallon water storage tank at the fire station.

- Private Owner Storage Tanks--2500 gallon firefighting water storage tanks are located at 3710 Dale Creek Road; 3715 Dale Creek Road; 2718 Dale Creek Road, 8839 Rocky Road; 7945 Ponderosa Road; 2825 Lakewood Ranch; 8234 Oak Ridge Drive; a 2000-gallon tank at 9112 Rocky Road and a 10,000 gallon (?) tank at Twin Hills.

- Hammond Pond--Hammond Pond has two access standpipes for pumping water into a Fire vehicle. However, water from Hammond Pond is of limited use during the fire season as the pond is drained to a low level in the summer. The water in Hammond Pond is privately owned and not available for general public use.

5.7--PROVIDE TEMPORARY WILDFIRE ASSEMBLY AREAS

The recent US Forest Service computer study indicated some evacuation roads could be cut off by a wildfire. During a wildfire, residents would be forced to turn back and attempt to “Shelter-in-Place.” There are currently no identified areas that could serve as temporary assembly areas to allow people to shelter in place until a safe evacuation is possible.

NOTE--SHELTERING-IN-PLACE IS CONSIDERED A LAST RESORT

A “temporary assembly area” is an area at lower risk from wildfire that allows people to temporarily shelter-in-place. The temporary area would have fire-resistant tent shelters, communications, emergency power, smoke masks, water, parking and helicopter landing. This area would serve as a temporary shelter until a safe evacuation is possible.

One possible assembly area is the large open meadow in the High Meadow area.

5.8--PERFORM WILDFIRE SAFETY INSPECTIONS

CAL FIRE performs periodic residential wildfire safety inspections (LE-100) depending upon priority and availability of inspection personnel. The inspections provide residents with a list of wildfire safety concerns and recommended corrective actions. The Hammond Ranch area was inspected in 2017 and 2018.
## APPENDIX A-HAMMOND RANCH -- CWPP ACTION PLAN

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*See the CAL FIRE Butte Valley/Weed Battalion #3 Unit Fire plan:  http://cdfdata.fire.ca.gov/fire_er/fpp_planning_plans
VOLUNTEER TO HELP!!
WILDFIRE SAFETY IS A COMMUNITY EFFORT—

THE HAMMOND RANCH FIRESAFE COUNCIL

The Hammond Ranch Fire Safe Council is a volunteer organization dedicated to promoting wildfire safety. We welcome your help and participation.

If you need wildfire information or would like to join the Fire Safe Council, please contact us at: www.hammondlandowners.org.

HAMMOND RANCH VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY
Hammond Fire and Emergency Response Zone of CSA #4

Volunteer Firefighters are neighbors helping neighbors in a time of need. The job is hard and demanding and pays nothing but when someone in need says “Thank You” the rewards are priceless. If you are looking for a way to serve your community, give us a call and see what it is all about.

Dave Jenkins--Fire Chief, Hammond Ranch Fire Company
Contact Dave at: 530-938-4200

HAMMOND RANCH LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION (HLA)

Hammond Landowners Association, Inc. is a concerned landowners volunteer organization.

Our Mission Statement is to provide information, to assist in the coordination of group actions, to determine guidelines and make suggestions in matters relating to the development and use of property on Hammond Ranch.

It’s also social. There’s opportunities to meet neighbors at the annual picnic and annual luncheon meeting.

Check us out at: www.hammondlandowners.org.