

Infrastructure Investments and Improvements Needed to Ensure El Dorado County is Wildfire Resilient



Many residents seek out a rural lifestyle in El Dorado County that is often characterized by country roads that lead to open space and forest lands. While this idyllic setting has many advantages, it can be challenging to ensure that these rural areas in the county are wildfire resilient. Under the County of El Dorado's leadership, progress is being made to implement a Community Wildfire Protection Plan that promotes a unified approach to addressing local wildfire hazards and risks. As the County works with local, state, and federal agencies and non-government partners to create and maintain fire-adapted communities it is important the plan includes efforts to:



Increase water capacity for fire suppression

Robust and resilient water infrastructure is imperative to address fire suppression needs. Small water tanks in the county often do not have the capacity to hold enough water needed for fire fighting. Without access to local water systems, water has to be shuttled in to fight wildfires which is costly and time intensive. Building, maintaining, and filling tanks is critical for increasing water distribution capacity as is identifying the entity responsible for performing the required maintenance. Creating interconnections between public and private water systems, replacing old, undersized waterlines, and increasing the number of fire hydrants in small communities will also go a long way in mitigating fire damage and protecting residents, structures, watersheds, and wildlife habitat.



Add additional ingress and egress routes

As evidenced by the devastating Camp Fire in Paradise, it is essential that small rural communities have more than one road leading in and out. CAL FIRE has identified parcels with 30 homes that have only one ingress and egress and these areas must be prioritized for transportation investment and work.



Maintain critical infrastructure

Regular maintenance of roads, bridges, power lines, and water infrastructure is especially important as wildfires become more intense and frequent. Keeping up with aging infrastructure can help reduce impacts from wildfires and ensure that critical roadways and water and power systems are accessible during a wildfire emergency.



Increase defensible space

The single most effective means to reduce the spread of wildfire and improve public and firefighter safety is the maintenance and removal of hazardous vegetation and combustible materials around habitable structures and along roadways.