

Progress Report for the Western Sandhills Community Wildfire Protection Plan

In early 2019 the Nebraska Forest Service initiated preparation of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for the western Sandhills area of Nebraska, including Arthur, Deuel, Garden, Grant, Hooker, and McPherson Counties, plus the east part of Cheyenne County and the northeast corner of Morrill County. The purpose of the plan is to provide a tool for effectively managing fire and hazardous vegetative fuels and to bolster collaboration and communication between the various agencies and organizations who manage fire in the western Sandhills.

Having a CWPP in place allows the Nebraska Forest Service to apply for federal grant dollars to cost-share forest fuels reduction treatments in at-risk areas within the boundaries of the CWPP. It also may increase opportunities for counties, municipalities, and rural fire districts to seek grant funding for activities related to fire protection.

The whole process generally takes about a year or less. Here is a snapshot of what's been accomplished so far and what still needs to be completed:

Task	Status
Identify stakeholders and establish steering committee	Completed March, 2019
Organizational meeting, solicit stakeholder input; identify data needed	Completed March, 2019
Gather baseline data; develop maps and tables	Completed April, 2019
Identify critical infrastructure; conduct risk analysis	Completed May, 2019
Develop Action Plan and recommendations	Completed May, 2019
Prepare draft document	Completed June, 2019
Steering Committee and public review of draft CWPP	Completed August, 2019
Incorporate comments and finalize CWPP	Completed August, 2019
Adoption by local officials	In Progress
Publication and distribution of final CWPP	

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Stay Tuned!