



MONTEZUMA COUNTY, COLORADO

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NEWSLETTER

July 1, 2011

Fires are in the news and on everyone's mind right now. Those of us "in the biz" devote a lot of time and energy to the subject at this time of year. And what better time to talk about the Montezuma County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, as this year we are in the process of updating our Plan.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan was put in place several years ago in response to the terrible fires of the last decade. County, State and Federal fire officials saw the benefit to having a local plan specific to the needs of local communities.

The Plan is an "umbrella" plan. It identifies risk areas in our County; sets goals for using technological aids such as GIS to enhance the information about those risk areas; and most important of all, is a clearinghouse of information for property owners, public officials, land developers and fire officials.

The overall goal of the Plan is to create a community which is educated, prepared and works to mitigate the impact of wildfires.

Here in the high desert, wildfires are a fact of life. For thousands of years before man arrived on the scene, fires burned away the undergrowth and thinned the forests, creating a healthier environment. The historical record shows that fires periodically burned vast areas of the Southwest. They were, and are, a part of the natural cycle.

Man changed all that. For many years, the established practice was to fight every fire. However, this only served to make the situation worse. Modern communities have grown and encroached into the “Wildland Urban Interface.” As a result, more and more properties are at risk from fires. As climate patterns change, these risks increase even more. The Community Wildfire Protection Plan is a way for property owners to assess the risk to their property and work to mitigate those risks. It’s a much wiser, and less costly, alternative.

People live here because of the natural splendor. Many people build in or near the forest. It’s a wonderful way of life.

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan is *your* Plan; we want, and need your input. We want to know how the Plan can best serve your needs.

There will be a series of public meetings throughout the summer and early fall where you can lend your voice, learn about the resources available to you, and play a part in making our community safe.

For more information about meeting dates and locations, check my Facebook page, “Montezuma OEM”. In the meantime, have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Until next month.

Be Prepared!

Doug