GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
PUBLIC NOTICE AND AGENDA
Tuesday, November 17, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
1600 East Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737

*Pursuant to ARS § 38-431.02, ARS § 38-431.03 and ARS § 38-431.05, the Golder Ranch Fire District Governing Board will meet in Regular Session that begins at approximately **9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 17, 2026**. The meeting will be held in the Fire District Headquarters Board Room, which is located at **1600 East Hanley Boulevard Oro Valley, Arizona 85737**. The order of the agenda may be altered or changed by direction of the Board. The Board may vote to go into Executive Session, which is not open to the public, on any agenda item pursuant to ARS § 38-431.03(A)(3) for discussion and consultation for legal advice with the Fire District Attorney on the matter(s) as set forth in the agenda item. The following topics and any reasonable variables related thereto will be subject to discussion and possible action.*

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

2. **SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **FIRE BOARD REPORTS**

4. **CALL TO THE PUBLIC**
   This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board are not permitted to discuss or take action on any items raised in the Call to the Public, which are not on the agenda due to restrictions of the Open Meeting Law; however, individual members of the Board are permitted to respond to criticism directed to them. Otherwise, the Board may direct staff to review the matter or that the matter be placed on a future agenda.

5. **PRESENTATIONS**

   A. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL

   - RETIREMENT
     - CHRIS ERICKSON, CAPTAIN

   - PROMOTION
     - JEFFERY SARGENT, FINANCE DIRECTOR

   - NEW HIRE
     - DANIELLE ROTHROCK, ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

     Loyalty and behavioral oaths will be administered.

   B. THE CEREMONIAL SWEARING IN OF NEWLY APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS VICKI COX GOLDER AND SANDRA OUTLAW WITH TERMS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2026, THROUGH DECEMBER 1, 2030

6. CONSENT AGENDA

The consent portion of the agenda is a means of expediting routine matters, such as minutes or previously discussed or budgeted items that must be acted upon by the Board. Any item may be moved to Regular Business for discussion and possible action by any member of the Board.

A. APPROVE MINUTES- OCTOBER 20, 2026, REGULAR SESSION

B. APPROVE MINUTES- OCTOBER 20, 2026, EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM 6A

7. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – CHIEF BRANDHUBER
- UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
  - BOARD SERVICES
  - COMMENDATIONS/THANK YOU CARDS RECEIVED
  - DISTRICT ACTIVITIES
  - HUMAN RESOURCES
  - MEETINGS, TRAININGS, AND EVENTS ATTENDED
  - PERSONNEL
  - POLITICAL & PUBLIC SAFETY INTERACTIONS/UPDATES
- LEADERSHIP TEAM REPORT – PRESIDENT JONES

B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT - ASSISTANT CHIEF PERRY
- UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
  - COMMUNITY EDUCATION, ENGAGEMENT & RISK REDUCTION
  - FINANCE
  - FIRE PREVENTION

C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT - ASSISTANT CHIEF CESAREK
- UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
  - STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS
  - FACILITIES MAINTENANCE
  - FLEET
  - HEALTH & SAFETY
  - TECHNOLOGY
  - PLANNING
  - LOGISTICS
  - SUPPLY

D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISON'S REPORT – ASSISTANT CHIEF GRISSOM
- UPDATES ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS:
  - EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES/OPERATIONS
  - HONOR GUARD/PIPES AND DRUMS
  - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
  - PROJECT MANAGEMENT

- SPECIAL OPERATIONS
- WILDLAND

8. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POLICIES: 223 OPEN DOOR POLICY; 1042 ANTI-RETALIATION; 1043 EMPLOYEE LEAVE- PAID AND UNPAID; AND 1045 HOLIDAY TIME OFF

B. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN PIMA COUNTY AND PARTICIPATING FIRE DEPARTMENTS/DISTRICTS IN PIMA COUNTY FOR REGIONAL WILDFIRE EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCE SHARING

C. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

D. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT RECONCILIATION AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

This provides an opportunity for the Board to direct staff to include items on future agendas for further consideration and decision at a later date or to further study the matter.

- Regularly scheduled meeting – December 15, 2026

10. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

This is the final opportunity, on this agenda, for a member of the public to address the Governing Board. Please refer to agenda item four (4) for additional clarification and direction.

11. ADJOURNMENT

_____

Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District

To view the meeting online please visit our website at https://grfdaz.gov/grfd-agenda, there is an agenda posted, with background information linked to each agenda item, as well as a link to the live Zoom meeting.

If any disabled person needs any type of accommodation, please notify the Golder Ranch Fire District Headquarters at (520) 825-9001 prior to the scheduled meeting. A copy of the agenda background material provided to Board members (with the exception of material relating to possible executive sessions) is available for public inspection at the District Headquarters, 1600 E. Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737.

Posted by: Shannon Ortiz 11/11/2026 by 12:00 p.m.

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Tom Brandhuber, Fire Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Fire Board Reports

ITEM #: 3

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This item allows for the Fire Board Members to report to the public and/or staff any events, meetings, conferences, etc. they may have attended and/or points of interest that took place throughout the month.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Tom Brandhuber, Fire Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Call to the Public

ITEM #: 4

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not on the agenda. The Board is not permitted to discuss or take action on any item raised in the Call to the Public, which are not on the agenda due to restrictions of the Open Meeting Law; however, individual members of the Board are permitted to respond to criticism directed to them. Otherwise, the Board may direct staff to review the matter or that the matter be placed on a future agenda.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Tom Brandhuber, Fire Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL

ITEM #: 5A

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This is the time for recognizing personnel who have achieved employment milestones.

- RETIREMENT
  - Chris Erickson, Captain
- PROMOTION
  - Jeffery Sargent, Finance Director
- NEW EMPLOYEE
  - Danielle Rothrock, Administrative Assistant
    Loyalty and behavioral oaths will be administered.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion required for this agenda item.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Employee Name: Chris Erickson

Date of Hire: 08/30 1993

Current Position: Fire Captain - Retired

Reason for Recognition: Retirement

Prepared by: *Jarrold*

Date of Board Meeting: *The third Tuesday of each month.*

The employee named above will be recognized for Years of Service milestone, Job Promotion, New Employee, or Academy Graduate. This information will be used when the employee is recognized at the next GRFD Board Meeting.

Questions regarding the completion of this form can be addressed to Human Resources.

- *GRFD/CAREER HISTORY: Chris began his career with the Golder Ranch Fire District (GRFD) in early 1993 as a reserve firefighter. He was hired full-time in August 1993 and went on to attend the CEP class in 1998.*
- *In May 2001, Chris was promoted to Captain. Throughout his 33-year career, he served in a variety of assignments, gaining valuable experience across multiple areas of the district. He began as an Engine Captain before moving to the Ladder, where he spent more than 14 years. He then served as an EMS Captain for four years before returning to the Ladder for a short period. Chris ultimately finished his career serving on an Engine, bringing his 33 years of dedicated service to a close.*
- *PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACHIEVEMENTS:*
- *Firefighter of the year -1996*
- *Advanced Associate Degree in Fire Science -1997*
- *CEP degree in -1998*
- *CEP of the year -1998*
- *Fire Captain -2001*
- *PERSONAL OR SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST:*
- *Outside of the fire service, Chris enjoys spending time outdoors and making memories with family and friends. His favorite activities include fishing, hunting, and mountain biking.*
- *Chris is engaged to his beautiful fiancée, Nicole, and is excited to begin this next chapter of their lives together. He is also proud of his daughter, Bailey, and son-in-law, Robbie, as well as his son, Shane, and Shane's girlfriend, Mia.*
- *Chris would also like to express his heartfelt gratitude to his children for their support and understanding throughout his career. Their patience, encouragement, and willingness to share him with the demands of the fire service meant more than they may ever know. Their support helped him through long shifts, holidays, missed family events, and the many sacrifices that came with serving the community.*
- *Chris looks forward to the future and to all the adventures still ahead with Nicole, Bailey, Robbie, Shane, Mia, and the rest of his family and friends.*

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Employee Name: Jeff Sargent

Date of Hire: 8/19/24

Current Position: Director of Finance

Reason for Recognition: Job Promotion

Prepared by: Eric Perry

Date of Board Meeting: *The third Tuesday of each month.*

The employee named above will be recognized for Years of Service milestone, Job Promotion, New Employee, or Academy Graduate. This information will be used when the employee is recognized at the next GRFD Board Meeting.

Please return to Human Resources via email by the 25th of the month, prior to the Board Meeting.

Questions regarding the completion of this form can be addressed to Human Resources.

- *GRFD CAREER HISTORY:*

- 8/19/24 started as our Finance Supervisor
- 9/28/26 promoted to Director of Finance

- *PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACHIEVEMENTS:*

- Extensive prior history in the Fire and EMS service:
  Group President of Rural Metro SW Region
  Mountain Vista Fire District Governing Board member
  Skagit County WA EMS Director
  Fire Chief of the City of Nogales

- Education:
  Bachelors in Business Admin
  Masters in Public Admin
  PhD in progress in Organizational Leadership

- *PERSONAL OR SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST:*

- Married to his wife Tammy for 34 years
- Three children (Samantha, Russell, Mason)
  Sam works for the University of Alaska out of Anchorage Alaska
  Russell works at Banner UMC
    Two daughters, Kennedy and Pasley
  Mason is an Attorney specializing in environmental law in Minnesota
    Son Emerson born last month

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Employee Name: Danielle Rothrock

Date of Hire: 10/26/26

Current Position: Administrative Assistant

Reason for Recognition: New Employee

Prepared by: Danielle Rothrock

Date of Board Meeting: *The third Tuesday of each month.*

The employee named above will be recognized for Years of Service milestone, Job Promotion, New Employee, or Academy Graduate. This information will be used when the employee is recognized at the next GRFD Board Meeting.

Please return to Human Resources via email by the 25th of the month, prior to the Board Meeting.

Questions regarding the completion of this form can be addressed to Human Resources.

- *GRFD CAREER HISTORY:*

It is my pleasure to introduce Danielle Rothrock. Prior to being hired by GRFD, Danielle worked for Cross Middle School - Administration. Prior to that she worked at Amazon as a Health & Safety Specialist and she was a Senior Site Lead for COVID testing and vaccination sites.

- *PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACHIEVEMENTS:*

Danielle has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and a certificate in Human Resources. So in addition to having to be worried about FLS stealing her from Board Services, I will have to now be concerned about HR stealing her as well!

- *PERSONAL OR SPECIAL NOTES OF INTEREST:*

Danielle is the proud mom to two daughters, Adelyn and Brielle. During Danielle's first week, the District participated in a Trunk or Treat hosted by the U of A Vet school. Danielle was able to bring her daughers to the event. They had a blast and asked if they could help with the table. They helped with the games and did such a great job. Next year they even want to do their own trunk!

We are excited to welcome Danielle and her two daughters to the GRFD family.

Golder Ranch Fire District

Behavioral Oath

I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will be alert in my duties at all times.

I will strive to be mindful of the welfare and rights of others.

I will be impartial in my treatment of all persons coming under my jurisdiction.

I will be courteous and helpful to all and my feelings shall not influence my decisions.

I will refrain from being vulgar or profane in my speech or actions while on duty.

I will cooperate fully with my supervisors to provide greater protection to the public and the Fire District I serve.

I will strive to become more proficient in my duties as an employee of Golder Ranch Fire District through diligent study and training.

I will regard my employment with Golder Ranch Fire District as a symbol of trust from my State, my Fire District, and the community in which I serve, and act accordingly.

I will constantly strive to obtain these objectives as I serve as an employee of Golder Ranch Fire District.

_____	_____	_____
Employee Name - Printed	Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Administering Official - Printed	Administering Official Signature	Date

Golder Ranch Fire District

Loyalty Oath of Office

I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution and laws of the State of Arizona, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and defend them against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of the office of _____ according to the best of my ability, so help me God (or so I do affirm).

_____	_____	_____
Employee Name - Printed	Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Administering Official - Printed	Administering Official Signature	Date

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Shannon Ortiz, Board Services Supervisor

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: THE CEREMONIAL SWEARING IN OF NEWLY APPOINTED BOARD MEMBERS: VICKI COX GOLDER, AND SANDRA OUTLAW WITH TERMS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2026, THROUGH DECEMBER 1, 2030

ITEM #: 5B

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☐ Staff ☐ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

The GRFD Governing Board had two seats up for election in 2026. The two incumbents, Vicki Cox Golder and Sandra Outlaw filed their nomination paperwork. No other candidates filed and as a result the election was uncontested. As a special district, uncontested general elections can be canceled. The Pima County Board of Supervisors canceled the election at their September 25, 2026, Board meeting and appointed the two incumbents to the GRFD Governing Board. The Certificate of Clerk is attached as reference.

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-231 and §38-232 in order to ensure to the statewide application of this section on a uniform basis, each board, commission, agency, and independent office of this state and any of its political subdivisions, and of any county , city, town, municipal corporation, school district and public educational institution, shall completely reproduce this section so that the form of written oath or affirmation required in this section contains all of the provisions of this section for use by all officers and employees of all boards, commissions, agencies and independent offices. The oath must be taken, if elected, at any time after receiving the officer's certificate of election, and at or before commencement of the term of office.

The oaths will be ceremoniously administered to the newly appointed board members by Vice-Chairperson Wally Vette. The official oaths were administered by Board Services Supervisor Ortiz at least 24 hours prior to this meeting.

RECOMMENDED MOTION
No motion needed for this agenda item.

Golder Ranch Fire District

Loyalty Oath

I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution and laws of the State of Arizona, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same and defend them against all enemies, foreign and domestic, and that I will faithfully and impartially discharge the duties of the office of Golder Ranch Fire District Board Member according to the best of my ability, so help me God (or so I do affirm).

_____	_____	_____
Employee Name - Printed	Employee Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Administering Official - Printed	Administering Official Signature	Date

16-410. Cancellation of certain elections; appointment to office; filling vacancies

A. Notwithstanding any other law, in any election that is to be held pursuant to title 15 or 48 or section 16-822, if the total of the number of persons who file a nomination petition for a candidate and the number of persons who file a nomination paper for a write-in candidate as prescribed by chapter 3, articles 2 and 3 of this title is less than or equal to the number of positions to be filled at the election for which the nomination petition or nomination paper is filed, the county board of supervisors may cancel the election no earlier than one hundred five days before the election and appoint the person or persons who filed the nomination petition or nomination paper to fill the position for the term of office for which the candidate was nominated by the qualified electors.

B. A person who is appointed pursuant to subsection A of this section is fully vested with the powers and duties of the office as if elected to that office.

C. If no nomination petitions for a candidate and no nomination papers for a write-in candidate have been filed to fill the position for which the election was being held, the position is deemed vacant and shall be filled in accordance with laws governing the filling of those vacancies.

D. Canceled elections shall not appear on any ballot, but if a withdrawal or disqualification of one or more candidates results in the cancellation of an election after the ballots have been printed, the results of any vote for that office shall not be canvassed.

Certificate of Clerk

Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona

State of Arizona
County of Pima ss

I, Melissa Manriquez, the duly appointed, and qualified, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona, hereby certify that the following is a true, correct, and compared extract of the minutes of a meeting of the Board of Supervisors held on the 25th day of August, 2026, and that a quorum was present thereat.

ELECTIONS

Cancellation of Uncontested Fire, Water and Health District Elections

Staff recommends approval of the resignations and appointments put forth by the County and the cancellation of the uncontested fire, water and health district elections for the November 3, 2026, General Election.

It was moved by Supervisor Christy, seconded by Supervisor Cano and unanimously carried by a 5-0 vote, to approve the item.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Board of Supervisors of Pima County, Arizona, this 26th day of August, 2026.

Clerk

2026 General Election Special District Candidates

The following fire, water and health districts have asked that the Board of Supervisors cancel their uncontested election for Novemeber 3, 2026 and appoint the candidates below.

Arivaca Fire District #23 - Number to Elect: 3

Robert McGuire

Avra Valley Fire District #8 - Number to Elect: 3

Eric Neilson

Thomas Armendarez (Pinal County Filing)

Cody Bren (Pinal County Filing)

Corona De Tucson Fire District #6 - Number to Elect: 3

Roosevelt McKnight

Robert Edwards

Nathan Weber

Golder Ranch Fire District #12 - Number to Elect: 2

Sandra Outlaw

Vicki Cox Golder

Mount Lemmon Fire District # 13 - Number to Elect: 3

No Candidates

Picture Rocks Fire District #10 - Number to Elect: 2

David Putnam

Sandra Watson

Rincon Valley Fire District #15 - Number to Elect: 3

Darin Gregg

Jennifer Spears

Chris Klasen

Sabino Vista Fire District #11 - Number to Elect: 2

Michael Halladay

John Sinclair

Santa Rita Fire District #3 - Number to Elect: 2

Judith Zabicki

Thomas Allen

Sonoita/Elgin Fire District #9 - Number to Elect: 2

No Candidates

Tanque Verde Valley Fire District #4 - Number to Elect: 1

No Candidates

Three Points Fire District #21 - Number to Elect: 2

2026 General Election Special District Candidates

Amanda Head

Lorie Wallace

Tucson Country Club Estates Fire District #7 - Number to Elect: 2

David Nasser

Eric Geile

Why Fire District #16 - Number to Elect: 2

Vern Denning

Daniel Goodin

Ajo/Lukeville Health District - Number to Elect: 2

Prucilla Krznarich

Central Arizona Water Conservation District - Number to Elect: 4

Karen Novak Cesare
Pat Jacobs
Mark Taylor
Justin Manuel

bR

OFFICIAL RECORDS OF
PINAL COUNTY RECORDER
Dana Lewis

When recorded mail to:
Clerk of the Board
PO Box 827
Florence, AZ 85132

DATE/TIME: 08/27/2026 0848
FEE: $0.00
PAGES: 6
FEE NUMBER: 2026-071696

RESOLUTION NO. 082626-ED-01

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PINAL COUNTY CANCELLING THE REGULAR ELECTIONS OF NOVEMBER 3, 2026, FOR CERTAIN POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS IN PINAL COUNTY.

WHEREAS, Pinal County is a regularly constituted and organized County within the State of Arizona; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to A.R.S. §16-410(A), in any election that is to be held pursuant to title 15 or title 48 or Section 16-822 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, if the total of the number of persons who file a nomination petition for a candidate and the number of persons who file a nomination paper for write-in candidate is less than or equal to the number of positions to be filled at the election for which the nomination petition or nomination paper is filed, the county board of supervisors may cancel the election and appoint the person or persons who filed the nomination petition or nomination paper to fill the position for the term of office for which the candidate was nominated; and

WHEREAS, each of the following listed are elections to be held pursuant to either title 15 or title 48 or Section 16-822 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, for regularly constituted and organized political subdivisions within the State of Arizona and Pinal County; and

WHEREAS, for each of the following listed elections for the following person, or persons, have filed a nomination petition for election to the governing board of that particular political subdivision;

CENTRAL ARIZONA WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT DISTRICT (CAP):

Stephen Miller (6-year term)

COLLEGE AND JOINT TECHNICAL EDUCATION DISTRICTS:

CENTRAL ARIZONA VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Casa Grande Union High School District Seat: Linda Good (4-year term)
Santa Cruz Valley Union High School District Seat: Mary Duarte (4-year term)
Maricopa Unified School District Seat: No candidate (2-year term)

COBRE VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Superior Seat: Louie Rabago (4-year term)

EAST VALLEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

District 9 – Jayson Hunt (4-year term)

PIMA JOINT TECHNICAL EDUCATION DISTRICT

No candidates

PINAL COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

District 2: Beverly Goldstein (6-year term)
District 3: Evelyn Casuga (6-year term)

DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS:

ANTELOPE PEAK DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Susan Atherton (4-year term)

DESERT SPRINGS DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

No candidates

MARICOPA CONSOLIDATED DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Debra Chitwood (4-year term)
Lucia Rodriguez (4-year term)

MARICOPA MOUNTAIN DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Glenn Adamson (4-year term)
Teresa Hughes (4-year term)

PAPAGO BUTTE DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

No candidates

PICACHO DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Tom Hussak (4-year term)
Michael Legate (4-year term)

QUEEN VALLEY DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Greg Mecsey (4-year term)
Carol Schumacher (4-year term)

THUNDERBIRD FARMS DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Christy Hicks (4-year term)
Beverly Smith (4-year term)

VIILLA GRANDE DOMESTIC WATER IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

David Christensen (4-year term)

Bernardo Vargas (4-year term)

FIRE DISTRICTS:

AVRA VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

Thomas Armendarez (4-year term)
Cody Bren (4-year term)
Eric Neilson (4-year term)

DUDDLYEVILLE FIRE DISTRICT

Frank Davila (4-year term)
Olivia Morales (4-year term)

ELOY FIRE DISTRICT

Marie "Toni" Lorona Carlson (4-year term)
Joseph Giampietro (4-year term)

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT

Vicki Cox Golder (4-year term)
Sandra Outlaw (4-year term)

ORACLE FIRE DISTRICT

Laura Calvert (4-year term)
James McNulty (4-year term)

PINAL COUNTY FIRE & MEDICAL AUTHORITY

Ken Davis (4-year term)
Allen Rogers (4-year term)

PINAL RURAL FIRE RESCUE & MEDICAL

No candidates

QUEEN CREEK FIRE ISLAND DISTRICT

No candidates

QUEEN VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

Phyllis Joyce (4-year term)
Carol Schumacher (4-year term)

SAN MANUEL FIRE DISTRICT

Dan Riekofski (4-year term)

Liana Romero (4-year term)

STANFIELD VOLUNTEER FIRE DISTRICT

No candidates (4-year term)

SUPERSITION FIRE & MEDICAL DISTRICT

Kathleen Chamberlain (4-year term)
Cornelia Van Driel (4-year term)

THUNDERBIRD FIRE DISTRICT

Carol Shrock (4-year term)

SANITARY DISTRICTS:

ARIZONA CITY SANITARY

Matt Parker (4-year term)
Brigitt Taylor (4-year term)

ORACLE SANITARY

No candidates

QUEEN VALLEY SANITARY

Pam Bennett (4-year term)
Robert Langefeld (4-year term)
Thomas Thomsen (4-year term)

SCHOOL DISTRICTS:

CASA GRANDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #4

Rob Paquette (4-year term)
Blanca Varela (4-year term)

COOLIDGE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #21

Michael Flores II (4-year term)
Keith Seaman (4-year term)
Victoria Quintero (4-year term)

ELOY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #11

Fansy Calvin (4-year term)
Sonnette Cherry Federico (4-year term)
Maggie Whatley (4-year term)

RESOLUTION NO. 082626-ED-01

FLORENCE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

Andrew Pioske (4-year term)
Megan Weagant (4-year term)

J.O. COMBS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #44

Dianne Taylor (2-year term)
Ella Wright (2-year term)

MAMMOTH-SAN MANUEL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #8

No Candidates (2-year term)

ORACLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #2

Jodi Barczak (4-year term)
Joy Reid (4-year term)

PICACHO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #33

Priscilla Alderete (4-year term)
Michelle McLaughlin (4-year term)
Karen Tidwell (4-year term)

RED ROCK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #5

Luis Vargas (4-year term)

SACATON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #18

Karen White (4-year term)

SANTA CRUZ VALLEY UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT #840

Jerry Olveda (4-year term)
Emilio Ysaguirre (4-year term)

STANFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #24

Lee Ann Feenstra (4-year term)
Dulcey "Shane" Garcia (4-year term)
Cindy McDonald (2-year term)
Jadee Rohner (4-year term)

SUPERIOR UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #22

Jessie Arroyos (4-year term)

RESOLUTION NO. 082626-ED-01

Monica Denogean (4-year term)
Henry (Hank) Gutierrez (4-year term)
TOLTEC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #22

Steve Cortright (2-year term)
Mark Lindgren (4-year term)
Ernesto Lopez (4-year term)
Andrew Rodriquez (4-year term)

and are the only persons to have done so, thus rendering each election an uncontested election; and

WHEREAS, cancellation of said elections would result in substantial savings for the taxpayers of Pinal County by avoiding the numerous costs associated with conducting an election for the position of governing board member in these listed political subdivisions;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the County of Pinal as follows:

1. The elections for the positions of governing board member, scheduled for November 3, 2026 are cancelled pursuant to the authority granted to the Pinal County Board of Supervisors.

2. The persons listed above are hereby appointed to fill the position of governing board member for the terms indicated in the respective political subdivisions in Pinal County

3. If no nomination petitions for a candidate and no nomination papers for write-in candidate have been filed to fill the position for which the election was being held, the position is deemed vacant and shall be filled in accordance with laws governing the filling of those vacancies.

4. This action is taken pursuant to the authority granted the Pinal County Board of Supervisors under A.R.S. §16-410(A).

Approved by the Board of Supervisors of Pinal County on this 26th day of August 2026.

Jeffrey McClure, Chairman

ATTEST:

Natasha Kennedy, Clerk of the Board

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Deputy County Attorney

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Shannon Ortiz, Board Services Supervisor

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: APPROVE MINUTES- OCTOBER 20, 2026, REGULAR SESSION AND OCTOBER 20, 2026 EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEM 6A

ITEM #: 6A & 6B

REQUIRED ACTION: ☐ Discussion Only ☒ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☒ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☒ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

In compliance with A.R.S. §38-431.01, approval of:

A. OCTOBER 20, 2026, REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
B. OCTOBER 20, 2026, EXECUTIVE SESSION MEETING MINUTES ITEM 6A

RECOMMENDED MOTION

If items remains on consent agenda:
Motion to approve the November 17, 2026, Consent Agenda.

If item is removed from consent agenda: State the motion for the item that was removed from consent agenda after discussion has taken place:

Motion to approve the October 20, 2026, regular session meeting minutes and October 20, executive session meeting minutes item 6A.

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
GOVERNING BOARD MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 9:00 a.m.
1600 East Hanley Boulevard, Oro Valley, Arizona 85737

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairperson Vicki Cox Golder called the meeting to order on Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at 9 a.m.

Members Present: Chairperson Vicki Cox Golder, Board Clerk Sandra Outlaw, Board Member Steve Brady, and Board Member Tom Shellenberger

Member Absent: Vice-Chairperson, Wally Vette (excused)

Staff Present: Assistant Chief Cesarek, Assistant Chief Grissom, Assistant Chief Perry, Fire Marshal Akins, Deputy Chief Rutherford, Deputy Chief Wilson, Deputy Chief Hilderbrand, Information Technology Director Martinez, Finance Director Sargent, HR Director Delong, Billing Supervisor Massie, and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz

2. SALUTE AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Those in attendance said the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. FIRE BOARD REPORTS

Board Member Brady stated he attended a fall prevention session presented by Community Education Supervisor Habinek and Community Educator Massie. He said he received compliments from the Homeowner's Association (HOA) that it was the best presentation they have ever had. Board Member Brady commended Supervisor Habinek and Community Educator Massie for their great work.

Board Clerk Outlaw attended the Oro Valley State of the Town Address. She congratulated outgoing Mayor Winfield and thanked him for his past eight years of service to the community. He has been a great partner to Golder Ranch Fire District. She thanked him for his service and wished him well. She also congratulated the new mayor, Mayor Barrett, and wished Mayor Barrett and the new Town of Oro Valley Council the best of luck.

4. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented.

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5. PRESENTATIONS

A. PRESENTATION OF PERSONNEL

- RETIREMENT
  - SCOTT ROBB, FORMER ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF

- PROMOTIONS
  - JAKE BISHOP, CAPTAIN
  - MICHELLE CHAVEZ, PERMIT TECHNICIAN

Chief Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Cesarek, Assistant Chief Perry, and Assistant Chief Grissom recognized former Assistant Chief Robb for his retirement from GRFD a few years ago.

The Governing Board took a brief recess at 9:20 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 9:22 a.m.

Captain Drury recognized Jake Bishop for his promotion to captain.

Fire Marshal Akins recognized Michelle Chavez for her promotion to Permit Technician.

6. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. EXECUTIVE SESSION: THE BOARD MAY VOTE TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.03.A(3) FOR DISCUSSION OR CONSULTATION WITH THE ATTORNEY FOR THE DISTRICT REGARDING A SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT BETWEEN VALDEZ AND GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT

CHAIRPERSON'S NOTICE: EXECUTIVE SESSIONS ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND THOSE PRESENT DURING EXECUTIVE SESSION ARE PROHIBITED BY STATUTE FROM DISCLOSING EXECUTIVE SESSION INFORMATION PURSUANT TO A.R.S. §38-431.03(C)

MOTION by Chairperson Cox Golder to enter executive session for Item 6A.
SECONDED by Board Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

Those who entered executive session included the Governing Board, Chief Brandhuber, Attorney Aversa, Attorney Jeff Matura, and Board Services Supervisor Ortiz.

The Governing Board entered executive session at 9:36 a.m.

The Governing Board reconvened into regular session at 9:59 a.m.

Chairperson Cox Golder read the Chairperson's notice reminding those in attendance, Executive Sessions are confidential [pursuant to ARS § 38-431.03(C)].

7. CONSENT AGENDA

A. APPROVE MINUTES- SEPTEMBER 15, 2026, REGULAR SESSION

MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to approve the October 20, 2026, Consent Agenda.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Brady.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

8. REPORTS AND CORRESPONDENCE

A. FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT – Chief Brandhuber presented the Fire Chief's report to the Governing Board. He thanked the Assistant Chiefs and executive staff for their support of him the past month.

President Jones said the Union just recently did a fundraiser for Fleet Maintenance Technician Dicochea in Fleet. The fundraiser was to assist him with medical bills. He said the fundraiser turned out good and he appreciated everyone's generosity. The Union had a tailgate at a University of Arizona football game on October 3rd. About thirty employees and family members attended. Another is scheduled for November 6th. The Union is preparing for the Shop With A Firefighter event and the Players Pub event.

B. COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Perry presented the Community Risk Reduction's report to the Governing Board. He congratulated Jeff Sargent for accepting the Finance Director Position. He noted Finance was excited to have Martha Farrell in the interim Finance Supervisor position as well. Assistant Chief Perry added performance metrics would be consolidated into one report in the next board packet. He also highlighted that Deputy Chief Wilson and Community Risk Reduction staff partnered with Rural Metro to start the first Arizona Chapter of Fire Buddies. The team went above and beyond to help the first Fire Buddy, who was a child who has a life expectancy of a couple of months.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked if the division can explain the Fire Buddy program and she also wondered how the Fire Buddies were selected.

Deputy Chief Wilson replied when the program started, his division reached out to a couple of different hospitals. They inform families of the program and those interested start an application process. Project Fire Buddies, a non-profit organization reviews the applications for approval or denial.. GRFD is not involved in the application process. Once a child is approved, they will notify the District it has a Fire Buddy.

Chief Wilson explained the first Fire Buddy participant event for the District. Ladder 380, Captain Drury's crew(who was phenomenal), a Rural Metro engine, and Spider-Man showed up to the Fire Buddy's apartment. Spider-Man went up the ladder on the engine. The facility allowed them to use the clubhouse due to the heat. They had gifts for the child, his siblings, and their cat.. The funding for this program is provided by Project Fire Buddies.

Chief Brandhuber said many people showed up off-duty to volunteer to help. He thanked all the personnel that attended the event. He said it was an incredible event for a good cause and spoke to the caliber of people that work at Golder Ranch Fire District.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked how often Fire Buddies were selected.

Deputy Chief Wilson responded that a timeline had not yet been established. GRFD and Rural Metro partnered for the program. The child that was recently selected did not live in GRFD's or Rural Metro's boundaries. He lived in the City of Tucson; however, the District assisted because it was an extenuating circumstance due to the timeline.

Board Member Shellenberger noted the record of exceptional performance for Deputy Fire Marshal Brad White. He commended Deputy Fire Marshal Brad White for a job well done.

C. SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION'S REPORT - Assistant Chief Cesarek presented the Support Services' report to the Governing Board. He reported personnel went to Wisconsin to view the engine being built for the District. The company will notify the District this week when the engine will be delivered. Assistant Chief Cearek said construction at Training and Fleet were going well. Asphalt was laid at the Quasar building. He also mentioned the old asphalt was taken up at Quasar before the new asphalt was laid. The millings were brought from that location and taken to the lot next to Fire HQ to be spread to mitigate dust and weeds.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked if all of the vehicles that were assigned to personnel were leases.

Assistant Chief Cesarek responded they were leases. There were a few vehicles that were owned that would be sold, and new vehicles would be leased.

Chairperson Cox Golder noticed the report stated that Ford Mavericks would be used for the Community Resource Technicians (CRTs). She thought trucks were being used for CRTs.

Assistant Chief Cesarek stated pickup trucks were used, however, they wanted to use a vehicle that was more efficient in using fuel.

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Chairperson Cox Golder read in Support Service's report they were testing new Lion personal protective equipment (PPE). She asked what that was.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied staff were reviewing the different turnout gear crews were using. Staff had to go to bid for PPE, so they were reviewing what product was best for personnel.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked IT Director Martinez to explain the Statewide Cyber-Readiness Program it applied for through the Arizona Department of Homeland Security.

IT Director Martinez said IT worked with their partners at Northwest Fire District's (NWFD) IT and it allowed his department to apply for a grant similar to grants that have been applied for through the Arizona Department of Health Services (AZDHS). The program allows IT to use Arizona's Department of Homeland Security tools free of charge. It is an exciting program he was looking forward to. He would keep the Board updated on the status of the program.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked what caused the fiber optic line to be cut last month.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied it was a contractor that accidentally cut the line. IT Director Martinez was working to get multiple points of connectivity to prevent loss of service in the future.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked about World Suicide Prevention Day.

Community and Media Relations Supervisor Camarillo reported World Suicide Prevention Day was September 10th and was mentioned in GRFD's social media.

D. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISON'S REPORT – Assistant Chief Grissom presented the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Fire Response's report to the Governing Board. He highlighted the incredible work suppression and special operation crews have done. He stated September was a busy month for fires, mountain rescues, and significant motor vehicle accidents.

Board Clerk Outlaw asked about the Physician One program.

Assistant Chief Grissom explained Physician One was comprised of a group of physicians from Banner hospital that respond within 30 minutes. They have the capabilities to assist crews on-scene with things such as blood transfusions and high tech extrications. They can perform multiple skills and assist the crews at high levels of emergency.

Board Member Shellenberger asked if paramedics could give blood transfusions.

Assistant Chief Grissom replied physicians were required on-site to give blood transfusions.

9. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT REGARDING VALDEZ AND GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve the settlement agreement between the Valdez family and Golder Ranch Fire District.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

B. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT'S GOVERNING BOARD AS CHAIRPERSON TO THE GRFD PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL RETIREMENT SYSTEM'S LOCAL PENSION BOARD

MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to appoint Wally Vette as Chairperson of the Golder Ranch Fire District's Public Safety Personnel Retirement System's Local Pension Board in pursuant to A.R.S. §38-847(A)(3).
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Brady.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

C. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT OF TWO CITIZEN MEMBERS; ONE RESIDENT OF THE FIRE DISTRICT AND THE OTHER WITH EXPERIENCE IN PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION TO THE GRFD PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL RETIREMENT SYSTEM'S LOCAL PENSION BOARD

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to appoint Lee Mayes (resident of the Golder Ranch Fire District) and Allison Delong (who has experience in personnel administration) as citizen members of the Golder Ranch Fire District's Public Safety Personnel Retirement System's Local Pension Board pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-847(A)(3).
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

Chairperson Cox Golder thanked Mr. Mayes for volunteering to serve on GRFD's PSPRS's Local Pension Board and for attending the Governing Board meetings.

D. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A PROPOSED LEASE AGREEMENT WITH MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS TO ACQUIRE NEW PORTABLE RADIOS AND ACCESSORY EQUIPMENT TO ENHANCE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

Chief Brandhuber stated this agreement was to ensure GRFD personnel had the best and safest equipment. This was budgeted in the capital expenses for the fiscal year.

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Assistant Chief Cesarek said he was asking for the Board to approve the agreement that was presented. He explained about ninety radios were becoming obsolete. The new radios would be a technology upgrade with supported radios. The radios would be covered for seven years. The radios would also put the District ahead of technology atthe city's communication center.. At the command central, they would have the availability to locate any of the radios.

Chairperson Cox Golder asked how long the radios could be used.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied Motorola anticipated supporting the new technology for ten to twelve years. He stated this was a seven-year lease agreement.

Board Member Brady asked how many radios it would include.

Assistant Chief Cesarek replied eight-eight radios would be leased. Including previously funded radios, there would be a total of one hundred and twenty-five supported radios.

MOTION by Board Member Shellenberger to approve the proposed lease agreement with Motorola Solutions to acquire new portable radios and accessory equipment as presented.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Brady.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

E. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POLICY 1028 DISTRICT BADGES, IDENTIFICATION (ID) CARDS, AND UNIFORM PATCHES

Chief Brandhuber explained that the policy had been reviewed by leadership and the Union.

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve Policy 1028 District Badges, Identification (ID) Cards, and Uniform Patches.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

F. DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT RECONCILIATION AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

Finance Director Sargent presented the monthly financial report to the Governing Board. He reported the bank balance was $7 million, which included $1.3 million of a Certificate of Deposit (CD) that was still being set up. The $1.6 million was paid for the ladder truck and was paid early to obtain a vendor discount. The flexible spending account was being closed and the auditors were involved to ensure compliance with the 90-day spend-down rule. The county tax collections picked up about $200,000-$250,000 per day in October. The approximate $30,000 on the bond was expected to be spent by the end of the fiscal year if the construction finishes on

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schedule. Last month's expenses were approximately $1.2 million; approximately $500,000 in labor and benefits, $200,000 in dues/subscriptions/licenses, $300,000 in capital, and $800,000 in a ladder truck payment. Year-to-date, the expenses were $3.4 million with a $1.4 million variance. This is mostly explained by a workers' comp audit cleanup.

Billing Supervisor Massie reported the financials for ambulance billing for the month of September. She stated September's transport revenue was $397,000, which was down 8% from the previous year due to a refund processing of $40,000 and a backlog cleanup from a system transition. There were 623 transports in the month, which was an average of 20 per day. $1.2 million was billed, but the District could only collected 73% from Medicare and 8% of from Medicaid. $560,000 was collected. There were 19 new membership enrollments. Write-offs were down 59%. Year-to-date there have been 1,854 transports, 200 enrollments, and $1.6 million collected of billed charges. For the aging report, 83% of receivables sat in the 0-60 day window, which was a healthy sign; most collections happen in month two. Collections agency submissions rose 204% for the month as the old backlog was fully cleared.

Finance Director Sargent reported wildland was winding down and most of the invoices from the previous month were paid. State reimbursements delays persisted (one invoice from July was just paid in late September) due to state processing requirements. Finance acknowledged ongoing process-improvement efforts and thanked the Board for their patience during the system's rebuild.

MOTION by Board Clerk Outlaw to approve and accept the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report as presented.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be November 17, 2026.

11. CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were no public issues presented.

Attorney Aversa announced she would be retiring, but would be available to the District until December 31, 2026.

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12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by Board Member Brady to adjourn the meeting at 10:51 a.m.
MOTION SECONDED by Board Member Shellenberger.
MOTION CARRIED 4/0

_____
Sandra Outlaw, Clerk of the Board
Golder Ranch Fire District

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GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Tom Brandhuber, Fire Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

ITEM #: 7A

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This allows for the fire chief to provide updates to the governing board on the following areas:

- Meetings/Trainings and Events Attended
- Political & Public Safety Interactions
- District Activities
- Personnel
- Commendations/Thank You Cards Received
- Board Services
- Human Resources

Also, under this agenda item the Local 3832 President will present the Union's report to the Governing Board.

- Leadership Team Report – President Jones

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

FIRE CHIEF'S REPORT

Tom Brandhuber

October 2026

Fire Chief's Activities



Chief's Activities for the Month

- Attended GRFD Board meeting
- Held executive leadership team meetings (Deputy Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Directors)
- Meetings with Assistant Chiefs
- Attended multiple Northwest Hospital and Oro Valley Hospital Code Save and Stroke recognition ceremonies at various GRFD stations
- Various meetings with personnel
- Several meetings concerning personnel issues

- Attended the groundbreaking ceremony of Vineyard Park Senior Living
- Attended Splendido' s 20th anniversary reception
- Attended Oro Valley State of the Town
- Presented Captain Bishop his captains helmet at Station 380
- Participated in Drexel Heights Fire District Fire Chief hiring panel
- Labor Leadership meeting
- Held Fire Chief Status update meeting
- Held monthly Arizona Ambulance Association Meeting
- Participated as a board member in the quarterly meeting of the Coyote Crisis Collaboration
- Represented Arizona Ambulance Association in a meeting with State EMS providers and AZ Department of Health Services (AzDHS) concerning infectious disease coordination and transport plan
- Participated in the second 26/27 Benefits Committee meeting
- Met with two new Town of Oro Valley Council members
- Attended Town of Oro Valley Board meeting
- Attended Chiefs Strong check-in
- Attended Captain Cramblit's recognition for Firefighter of the Year at the Elks Lodge
- Attended National Night in Oro Valley
- Opened the GRFD Struggle Well Course
- Participated in the firefighter interview class at the Pima Community College Fire Academy
- Held Tail Board Talks with the Chief
- Presented at the second week of CEOP
- Attended the Love and Wishes Breakfast
- Met with Mayor of Oro Valley for Quarterly reports

Thank You Correspondence and Commendations

- Oro Valley Police Department (OVPD) Chief, Kara Riley, sent a thank you letter for GRFD's participation in OVPD's annual National Night Out. The following employees participated in the event: Chief Tom Brandhuber, Assistant Chief Grant Cesarek, Assistant Chief Chris Grissom, Assistant Chief Eric Perry, Fire Marshal Jenn Akins, Deputy Chief Tony Rutherford, Deputy Chief Adam Jarrold, Captain Renee Sanchez, Board Services Supervisor Shannon Ortiz and her son, Aiden, Battalion Chief Brandon Daily, Captain Jackie Rademacher-Frazier, Engineer Johnny Miller, Paramedic Scott Ellis, Firefighter Edwin Gallego, Media Specialist Sam Henson, and Community Education Supervisor Dan Habinek

Board Services

Board Services Supervisor- Shannon Ortiz

Board Services

The Board Services Division provides administrative oversight for Governing Board Services, front desk reception, and the district's records management program, ensuring transparency, regulatory compliance, and responsive customer service to GRFD staff and the general public.

Records Specialist Wong obtained her Certified Municipal Clerk (CMC) designation through the International Institute of Municipal Clerks (IIMC) on October 8th, 2026. The IIMC is an organization that serves municipal clerks and other government professionals worldwide. Its mission is to promote excellence in municipal government through continuing education, professional development, and certification. IIMC supports its members in strengthening their knowledge, leadership abilities, and professional skills through educational programs such as the Arizona Municipal Clerk Association's Institutes and Academies, conferences, and elections training. Through these efforts, IIMC advances the municipal clerk profession and promotes effective, transparent, and accountable local government.



Board Services recently hired Danielle Rothrock as the new Administrative Assistant for Fire HQ's front desk. She brings a wealth of knowledge with her both from the public and private sectors. She has learned a lot in her first week and was able to do a tour of the district and visit all three administrative offices and all ten stations. We are excited to welcome Danielle to the team!

Board Services had a blast participating in the Trunk or Treat hosted by the University of Arizona (U of A) Veterinary School. It was well attended by U of A Vet School students as well as GRFD personnel and their families.



The GRFD PSPRS Local Pension Board recently held an election for the suppression members. Operations Supervisor, Gabe Bravo was elected as the suppression member for a four-year term. At the October 27, 2026, PSPRS meeting Gabe was elected the Vice-Chair of the board.

Board Services Supervisor Ortiz assisted with the GRFD booth at National Night Out on October 23rd. Thank you to leadership for allowing her son to volunteer at the event as well.

Board Services Supervisor Ortiz had the opportunity to work a mini-muster at Coronado Middle School on Thursday, October 8th. It was a great opportunity to work an event with suppression personnel, see the kids have fun and learn something at the same time!

Captain Cavaletto served as an elected member on the GRFD Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS) Local Pension Board for the past four years. His term recently ended. We would like to take this time to thank Captain Cavaletto for his time and service on the Board.



Operations Support Supervisor, Gabe Bravo was recently elected by membership as the new representative to the GRFD PSPRS Local Pension Board. At the most recent meeting, Supervisor Bravo was selected as the Vice-Chairperson of the Board. Congratulations Supervisor Bravo! We look forward to the great things you will do serving on the Board.



Human Resources

Allison Delong, HR Director

Recruitments:

- Facilities Maintenance Technician
    - Candidate begins employment 11/09/2026
- Systems Specialist
    - Process to conclude in November, start date TBD

HR Project Status & Partnership Metrics

1. **Job Descriptions**
    a. **Status** = In progress
    b. **Partnerships** = HRG Smith, DC Jarrold, & AC Cesarek
    c. **Updates =** HR is partnering with each division to review and update job descriptions, ensuring they accurately reflect current roles and responsibilities. Battalion Chief and Division Chief job descriptions are currently under review.

2. **Policies & Procedures**
    a. **Status** = In progress
    b. **Partnerships** = HRG Smith, BC Hastings, BC Spanarella, & DC Jarrold; IT and Finance
    c. **Updates =** HR is partnering with Special Teams to update their policies and procedures to align with current practices and incorporate them into the Lexipol policy management system. We are also working with IT and Finance to gather information and document the procedure for district mobile devices.

3. **Cross-Training**
    a. **Status** = In progress
    b. **Partnerships** = HRG Glenn, HRG Smith, & HR Supervisor Noland
    c. **Updates =** Michele and Sarah are cross-training in FMLA and workers' compensation administration, strengthening team capacity and coverage while supporting more efficient service to our members.

4. **Recruitment Testing Assessments**
    a. **Status** = Pending review
    b. **Partnerships** = HRG Glenn & HR Supervisor Noland
    c. **Updates =** Sarah is reviewing our current candidate assessment practices and evaluating available options to ensure our recruitment processes remain effective and support informed, consistent hiring decisions. Proposals have been submitted to HR Supervisor for initial review.

5. **HR Continuity Book**
    a. **Status** = Nearing completion
    b. **Partnerships** = HR Team Members

c. **Updates =** This project is almost complete, with only a few remaining procedures to be finalized and documented. Once complete, it will serve as a centralized resource for the team, supporting consistent processes, knowledge sharing, and continuity across HR functions.

6. **Benefits Committee**
    a. **Status:** In progress
    b. **Partnerships:** Captain Ahumada, Captain Cavaletto, Division Chief Goodrich, FC Brandhuber, AC Cesarek, AC Perry, AC Grissom, HR Direction Delong, HR Supervisor Noland, HR Generalist Glenn, Deputy Chief Jarrold, Finance Director Sargent, Deputy Chief Rutherford
    c. **Updates:** The committee has begun meeting and discussing options for next year's enrollment period in conjunction with the District's broker. An email address has been created for employees to express ideas, concerns, and ask questions of the Benefits Committee.

Policies:

- Policies ready for approval by GRFD Governing Board:
    - Open Door Policy (Policy 223)
    - Anti-Retaliation (Policy 1042)
    - Employee Leave – Paid and Unpaid (Policy 1043)
    - Holiday Time Off (Policy 1045)

- Policies/Procedures in review by Executive Leadership Team/Leadership:
    - Corrective Action and Discipline (Policy 224)
    - Corrective Action and Discipline Procedure (Procedure 1002)
    - Grievance Procedure (Procedure 1003)
    - News Media and Community Relations (Policy 318)
    - Personal Communication Devices (Policy 701)
    - Employee Fund (Policy 1047)
    - Employee Leave (Procedure 1013)
    - Adult Abuse (Policy 320)
    - Child Abuse (Policy 323)
    - Promotions (Policy 1002)
    - Demotions (Policy 1015)

Employee Recognitions:

Congratulations on your Golder anniversary, thank you for being such fabulous team members!

Employee Name	Hire Date	Years of Service
SMITH, ANDY	11/11/1993	33
DICOCHEA, EDWARD MARTINEZ	11/18/2002	24
BOONE, NICKOLAS	11/19/2008	18
BRAVO, JUAN GABRIEL	11/19/2008	18
CHILDRESS, CHRISTOPHER DANIEL	11/19/2008	18
CESAREK, GRANT DEREK	11/30/2015	11
TARBILL, DJ	11/06/2023	3
CRISCI, STACIA RENEE	11/11/2024	2

ORO VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT
KARA M. RILEY
CHIEF OF POLICE

October 2026

Greetings Community Partners,

On behalf of the Oro Valley Police Department (OVPD), I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for your generous support and participation in this year's National Night Out event. Your contributions of time, resources, and community spirit were instrumental in making this year's event our most successful yet.

National Night Out is an annual celebration of partnerships that strengthen our community and enhance public safety. It serves as a reminder of what can be accomplished when residents, businesses, community organizations, and public safety professionals come together with a common purpose.

This year's event featured several exciting improvements, including a new layout, expanded venue space, and enhanced opportunities for community engagement. These changes allowed for a more enjoyable experience for attendees, exhibitors, and volunteers alike. The overwhelming response from our community was truly remarkable. The turnout was amazing to say the least, and the energy, enthusiasm, and positive interactions throughout the evening reflected the strength of the relationships we have built together.

The success of National Night Out is a direct result of partners, like you, who continually invest in the well-being of our community. Your willingness to participate and collaborate helped create an event that brought neighbors together, fostered meaningful connections, and strengthened trust between law enforcement and the community we proudly serve.

While National Night Out is a single evening each year, the partnerships it celebrates continue every day. OVPD remains committed to working alongside our community partners to promote safety, engagement, and a shared sense of belonging throughout the year.

On behalf of the men and women of OVPD and the entire Town of Oro Valley, thank you for your partnership, dedication, and unwavering support. We are proud to stand with you in service to our community, and we look forward to building upon this year's success as we prepare for future events together. We hope to see you again next year.

With sincere appreciation,

Kara M. Riley
Chief of Police

11000 North La Cañada Drive, Oro Valley, AZ 85737
Phone 520-229-4900 • Fax 520-229-4979 • www.ovpd.org

Monthly Metrics Report

Reporting Month: October 2026

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Board Services — ADM-BS-001					
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	% board services budget variance	3	30.1	Monthly (YTD total)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# records requests	15	18	Monthly (Current Month)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# of fingerprinting appointments	120	15	Monthly (Current Month)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# of anticipated governing board meetings/PSPRS local pension board meetings supported	16	1	Annually
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# of anticipated records requests	180	15	Annually
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# of anticipated records destroyed	30	30	Annually
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# of records destroyed	30	0	Annually
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# of governing board meetings/PSPRS local pension board meetings supported	1	2	Monthly (Current Month)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# boxes reviewed for destruction	2.5	3	Monthly (Current Month)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# public notices published	1	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	# regular memos and directives published	12	20	Monthly (Current Month)
Board Services	ADM-BS-001	% of governing board meeting packets distributed by the established deadline (GRFD board only, not PSPRS board)	100	0	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Notes: *Late reports due to finance turning documents in late. Amended by Chief Perry.*					
Community Education — CRR-CE-001					
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	% Community education budget variance	3	8.1	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	% surveyed respondents who indicate that the information provided was valuable in recognizing and minimizing potential life safety risks. (Seniors, Adults and High School Participants)	95	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	% surveyed students and teachers who indicate that the information provided was valuable in recognizing and minimizing potential life safety risks. (Middle School and Elementary School Participants)	95	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	% of surveyed respondents are satisfied with the service received from community education	95	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	% decrease in fall responses from 2026 baseline of 8.65% of all incidents	-2	4	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	% cardiac responses where CPR is administered prior to first unit arrival. (Also included in Emergency Medical Response)	80	71.4	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	# community safety education classes/programs delivered	104	36	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	# community education participants served	500	7257	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Education	CRR-CE-001	# fire station tours expected to be requested	2	2	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Engagement — CRR-CENG-001					

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	% community engagement budget variance	3	60.3	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	% surveyed special event organizers (organizations, businesses and/or residents) who report that the Golder Ranch Fire District presence at their event was a positive experience	95	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	% surveyed respondents who indicate that the information provided was valuable in recognizing and minimizing potential life safety risks. (Seniors, Adults and High School Participants)	95	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	# special events attended	5	5	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	# fire station tours provided	2	2	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	# ride-alongs provided	2	4	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	# special events expected to be requested	5	10	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	# fire station tours expected to be requested	2	2	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	# ride-alongs expected to be requested	1	2	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Engagement	CRR-CENG-001	$ program expenditure per total # community safety education classes/programs delivered	2500	285.3	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Resource Technicians — CRR-CRT-001					
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	% CRT budget variance	3	40.1	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	Operationally ready day cost for CRT personnel to staff a utility truck: operationally ready day cost for emergency response personnel to staff a utility truck	50	56.56	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# snake removals by any unit	307	193	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# smoke alarm battery change response expected to be requested of all units	183	307	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# smoke alarm battery change responses by any units	2000	933	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# CRT unit responses expected to be requested	2500	1049	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# CRT unit responses provided	205	328	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# snake removals provided by CRT units	122	164	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# lock box key placements provided by CRT units	30	30	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# snake removals expected to be requested of all units	307	193	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# smoke alarm battery change response expected to be requested of all units	183	307	Monthly (Current Month)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	# lock box key placements expected to be requested	30	30	Monthly (Current Month)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	% CRT unit responses out of all smoke detector battery/reptile removal responses (all hours)	100	40	Monthly (YTD total)
Community Resource Technicians	CRR-CRT-001	% CRT unit response out of all smoke detector battery/reptile removal responses (during CRT scheduled times)	100	62.4	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response — ER-EMS-001					
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% EMS Budget Variance	3	45.9	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% EMS calls for service where the turnout time is 1:15 or less	80	81	Monthly (Current Month)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	# emergency medical responses provided	998	1063	Monthly (Current Month)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	# ambulance transports provided	623	673	Monthly (Current Month)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	# emergency medical responses expected to be requested	992	1017	Monthly (Current Month)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	# ambulance transports expected to be requested	623	602	Monthly (Current Month)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% stemi/heart attack responses where nationally recognized EMS performance measure benchmarks are met.	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *Metrics still being created.*					
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% crashing patients responses where EMS performance benchmarks are met.	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *Metrics still being created.*					

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	Maintain emergent (Code III) responses where the first unit total response time is 13:00 minutes or less for rural areas.	14.9	12.7	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% cardiac arrest responses where nationally recognized ems performance measure benchmarks are met.	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	Maintain emergent (Code III) responses where the first unit total response time is 9:30 or less for urban areas.	11.4	11.5	Monthly (Current Month)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% survival rate for cardiac responses where witness shockable bystander cpr is administered. (utstein measure)	15	48	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% of surveyed respondents are satisfied with the service received from EMS response	95	94	Annually
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% crashing patients responses where EMS performance benchmarks are met.	0	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Metrics still being created.*					
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% stroke responses where nationally recognized EMS performance measure benchmarks are met.	95	98	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	% stemi/heart attack responses where nationally recognized EMS performance measure benchmarks are met.	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	# emergency medical responses provided YTD	3061	4251	Monthly (YTD total)
EMS Response	ER-EMS-001	# ambulance transports provided YTD	1854	2527	Monthly (YTD total)
Facilities — SS-FAC-001					
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	% facilities budget variance	3	44.9	Monthly (YTD total)
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	# service tickets expected to be requested	200	290	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Notes: *Numbers generated YTD*					
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	# service ticket responses provided	200	258	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Numbers generated are YTD, based on closed tickets for the period, may include prior data. All tickets are addressed within 24 hrs., however, completion of a ticket may very depending on the extent of the work being completed.*					
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	% of district facilities that are fire code compliant	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Status continuation: Currently in annual inspection process, discrepancies to be determined. All reports will have repair reports and quotes for reports. Data report to be created.*					
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	% OSHA inspections that meet or exceed standards	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	# of days to address high-priority facilities service requests	1	1	Monthly (YTD total)
Facilities	SS-FAC-001	# of Service tickets completed by technician (not outsourced)			Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *In process of creating a data set.*					
Finance — ADM-FIN-001					
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	# of Invoices/PA's unable to process without follow up	0	7	Monthly (YTD total)
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	# of transport tickets returned to Operations (GRFD)	0	10	Monthly (YTD total)
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	% of transactions paid under 30 days of invoice date	100	91	Monthly (YTD total)
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	# of retro payments	0	1	Monthly (YTD total)
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	# of overpayments	0	3	Monthly (YTD total)
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	% transports billed within 14 days of the date of service (GRFD)	100	99	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	% finance budget variance	3	-186.7	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Miscoded Cigna Payments.*					
Finance	ADM-FIN-001	# of Wildland Fires billed	5	5	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention — CRR-FP-001					
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	% fire prevention budget variance	3	9.9	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# of violations found	1573	556	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	% of violations corrected	83	73	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	% prevention inspections completed	100	35	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	% businesses compliant with International Fire Code and local amendments	83	66	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	$ property save	5000000	2398482	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	$ property loss	2500000	163804	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	$ content save	2500000	1170213	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	$ content loss	1250000	34747	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	% plan reviews completed by the scheduled due date	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# emergency incidents where community member was injured due to a structure fire	4	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# emergency incidents where first responder was injured due to a structure fire	0	1	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# inspections completed	4177	1468	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# plan reviews completed	800	289	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# fire investigations	80	18	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Fire Prevention	CRR-FP-001	# training hours completed	512	346	Monthly (YTD total)
Fire Response — ER-FR-001					
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	% fire responses where there is no injury or loss of life (to the public)	100	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	% fire responses where there is no injury or loss of life to GRFD members	100	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	% of fire calls where turnout time is < 1:30	90	74	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	% rural (<2500 pop density) fire calls for service where the first unit is on scene in 12:20 minutes or less (from time of dispatch)	90	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	# residential fire responses provided (NFIRS 111, Prop type only 419, 429)	0	6	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	# commercial fire responses provided (NFIRS 111, Prop type not 419, 429)	0	1	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	# vehicle fire responses provided (NFIRS series 130)	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	# rubbish fire responses provided (NFIRS series 150)	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	% urban (>2500 pop density) fire calls for service where the first unit is on scene in 9:20 minutes or less (from time of dispatch)	90	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	90th percentile primary PSAP (TOV) transfer time to the City of Tucson	30	39	Monthly (Current Month)
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	90th percentile primary PSAP (PCSO) transfer time to the City of Tucson	30	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *Data not recieved from Pima County by reporting deadline*					

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	90th percentile primary PSAP (Pinal County Sheriff) transfer time to the City of Tucson	30	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *Not recieving data from Pinal County yet*					
Fire Response	ER-FR-001	% fire response budget variance	3	-4.4	Monthly (YTD total)
Fleet — SS-FLEET-001					
Fleet	SS-FLEET-001	% fleet budget variance	3	36.6	Monthly (YTD total)
Fleet	SS-FLEET-001	% of out of service time between scheduled vs. Unscheduled maintenance	60	63	Monthly (YTD total)
Fleet	SS-FLEET-001	% of NFPA and State required annual testing complete	40	34	Monthly (YTD total)
Fleet	SS-FLEET-001	# fleet maintenance work orders closed	640	520	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Benchmark will likely change with the new Fleet Module update in OpIQ*					
Fleet	SS-FLEET-001	Cost of maintenance per mile driven	3.5	3.45	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety — SS-HS-001					
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% Health and Safety budget variance	3	-3	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% employees who do not experience documented injuries	85	99	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	# of reported near-miss incidents	0	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Working on reporting mechanism*					
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% of root cause analyses completed for all ICA claims	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	# of motor vehicle collisions (any property damage to district or resident	0	2	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	# peer fitness training sessions conducted	0	0	Quarterly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	# peer support sessions conducted	0	5	Quarterly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	# of ICA Injuries	0	5	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% suppression employees who complete their annual physical	95	87	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% of non-suppression employees who complete their annual physicals	95	70	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% of members that have completed StruggleWell	80	43.5	Monthly (YTD total)
Health and Safety	SS-HS-001	% of root cause analyses completed on motor vehicle accident with district vehicle involved (any damage)	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources — ADM-HR-001					
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	Employee retention rate	87	97.5	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of internal and external recruitments conducted	10	7	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of candidate applications reviewed	750	450	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of workers comp cases in process/processed	38	23	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of Personnel Action Forms processed	431	241	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of qualifying events administered	35	19	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of new hires oriented	21	8	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of spark hire video interviews reviewed	397	170	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of employee benefit plans administered	27	27	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of policies reviewed and/or updated	100	84	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of job descriptions reviewed and/or updated	40	18	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of pre-employment steps coordinated	375	54	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# hours spent conducting in-person interviews	55	17.5	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	HR Inquiry Response Time (# of hours)	24		Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Still working to determine methodology*					
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	Time to Fill (# of days)	60	41.5	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	% completed exit interviews	100	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	% HR Budget Variance	3	63.3	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *a cigna payment was miscoded to finance*					

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of ICA light duty assignments coordinated	12	9	Monthly (YTD total)
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	# of non-ICA light duty assignments coordinated	0	2	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *benchmark TBD*					
Human Resources	ADM-HR-001	% of light duty assignments due to non-ICA injury	0	18	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Benchmark number TBD*					
Office of the Chief Program — ADM-OC-001					
Office of the Chief Program	ADM-OC-001	# of monthly tailboard talk events completed	9	4	Monthly (YTD total)
Office of the Chief Program	ADM-OC-001	% office of the chief budget variance	3	10.6	Monthly (YTD total)
Office of the Chief Program	ADM-OC-001	% District budget variance	3	23.1	Monthly (YTD total)
Procurement — SS-PROC-001					
Procurement	SS-PROC-001	% supply budget variance	3	49.1	Monthly (YTD total)
Procurement	SS-PROC-001	# service ticket responses provided	200	240	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Numbers provided are updated to YTD, based upon CLOSED ticket status. In addition to service ticket requests, there were 276 Station/ Facility supply orders. Need to adjust metric to include both statistics.*					
Procurement	SS-PROC-001	# of business days to fill supply requests	2	2	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *This is the standard delivery time for items requested with the Monday due date, and delivery by Wednesday.*					
Professional Development — ER-PD-001					

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Professional Development	ER-PD-001	% completion rate on all required ISO training.	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Professional Development	ER-PD-001	% completion rate on all district-required annual training.	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Professional Development	ER-PD-001	% professional development budget variance.	3	31.1	Monthly (YTD total)
Professional Development	ER-PD-001	% of surveyed respondents are satisfied with the service received from professional development.	95	96	Annually
Project Management — ADM-PM-001					
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% projects completed within the initial timeline	100	90	Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Sound Masking had prolonged configuration issues. A tech will be onsite to address issues.*					
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% projects completed within budget	100	100	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% projects utilizing grant funding	0	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% of surveyed respondents are satisfied with the service received from project management	0	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	# projects supported per quarter	3	3	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	# project consultation sessions engaged	3	3	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	# accreditation improvement projects supported (all accreditations)	1	1	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	# hours applied per month to support projects	120	100	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	# conceptual projects in discussion	3	3	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	$ program expenditure per employee	0	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	$ program expenditure: total cost or value of projects supported	0	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% projects completed without rework	90	90	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% grant success rate (grants awarded/grants submitted)	50	0	Monthly (YTD total)
Project Management	ADM-PM-001	% Project Management Budget Variance	3	10.9	Monthly (YTD total)
Special Operations — ER-SO-001					
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	% special operations budget variance	3	84.6	Monthly (YTD total)
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	% in district responses that do not result in injury or loss of life	100	84	Monthly (YTD total)
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	% in district responses that do not result in injury or loss of life to GRFD special operations personnel	100	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	% special operations responses where the time for the specialty units to go enroute is 2:30 minutes or less from the time of dispatch (current baseline 2:36)	100	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	% HAZMAT responses where the affected area is mitigated in 6 hours or less	100	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	# hazardous materials responses provided	0	18	Monthly (Current Month)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Special Operations	ER-SO-001	# technical rescue responses provided	0	2	Monthly (Current Month)
Strategic Communications — ADM-SC-001					
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	% Strategic Communications Budget Variance	3	16.4	Monthly (YTD total)
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# Public Information updates	12	7	Monthly (YTD total)
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# Press releases	12	1	Monthly (YTD total)
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# Public service announcements (PSAs)	100	6	Monthly (YTD total)
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# Employee spotlights	200	21	Monthly (YTD total)
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	% surveyed community respondents who report that they have a good understanding of the district’s public safety operations, events, and initiatives.	75	62	Annually
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	$ program expenditure per capita	2	2	Annually
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	$ Program expenditure per GRFD Member	1000	885.73	Annually
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# Public service announcements (PSAs) expected to be demanded	100	85	Annually
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# Employee spotlights expected to be demanded	200	91	Annually
Strategic Communications	ADM-SC-001	# of total views on GRFD social media communications	500000	346000	Monthly (YTD total)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Technology — ADM-TECH-001					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% low-priority help-desk responses that are addressed within two business days according to the service level agreement	85	97.8	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *181 of 185 tickets*					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% medium-priority help-desk responses that are addressed within 1-2 business days according to the service level agreement	90	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *5 of 5 tickets*					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% high-priority help-desk responses that are addressed within 8 hours according to the service level agreement	95	33.3	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *1 of 3 tickets. The remaining two tickets were addressed within SLA guidlines. They were coded incorrectly in the Helpdesk program which lead to this discrepancy and lower than expected score.*					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	# tier 1 help-desk responses provided	100	98	Monthly (Current Month)
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	# tier 2 help-desk responses provided	100	58	Monthly (Current Month)
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	# tier 3 help-desk responses provided	100	49	Monthly (Current Month)
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	# GIS projects completed	15	15	Monthly (Current Month)
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% of required information technology maintenance tasks completed	100	95.3	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *This number will likely go down in future months. The number of required is a work in progress and additional items will likely be added.*					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% of IT support requests not submitted through proper channels	95	89.3	Monthly (Current Month)

Program	Program ID	Metric Name	Benchmark Value	Actual Value	Reporting Frequency
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% of GIS requests not submitted through proper channels	15	66	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *The new GIPS request system when live this month, only partial month data available.*					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% variance of IGA hours per hours utilized	100	110	Monthly (Current Month)
Notes: *High priority issues at Avra Valley lead to higher than expected hour utilization this month.*					
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	% information technology budget variance	3	31.2	Monthly (YTD total)
Technology	ADM-TECH-001	# GIS Projects unable to be addressed by end of month	10	14	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland — ER-WL-001					
Wildland	ER-WL-001	% wildland budget variance	3	84.3	Monthly (YTD total)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	% wildland fire responses within the district that do not result in injury or death to grfd personnel	100	100	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	% wildland fires that impact district infrastructure	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	# structures lost due to wildland fires within the district	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	Value of structures lost within the district	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	# wildland fire responses provided (in-district)	0	2	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	# wildland fire responses provided (out-of-district)	0	0	Monthly (Current Month)
Wildland	ER-WL-001	% wildland reimbursement versus expenditure	100		Monthly (YTD total)
Notes: *Working with Finance to create this report*					

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Eric Perry, Assistant Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION REPORT

ITEM #: 7B

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☐ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This allows for the Support Services Assistant Chief to provide updates to the Governing Board on the following areas:

- Community Education, Engagement, and Risk Reduction
- Finance
- Fire Prevention

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION DIVISION REPORT

Assistant Chief Eric Perry

October 2026

Assistant Chief's Activities

- Becky and I have been selected to present at the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) conference in March. We will be discussing our implementation of GIS. We are extremely excited for the opportunity!
- Our new Temp Dionna Douros has settled in and is learning all things payroll for GRFD!
- Attended a StruggleWell graduation, OVPD night out, Center Pointe Vista HOA Wildfire Safety presentation, as well as a TOV Planning and Zoning meeting and council meeting related to regulations for Data Centers within the town.
- As this is my last board report for Community Risk Reduction, I want to say thank you to all fire prevention and community education personnel. I am so proud of all your work! In particular, as it was a new division, I am so proud of how far our community education team has come! Thank you all!

Deputy Chief Report

Deputy Chief of Community Risk Reduction-Mark Wilson

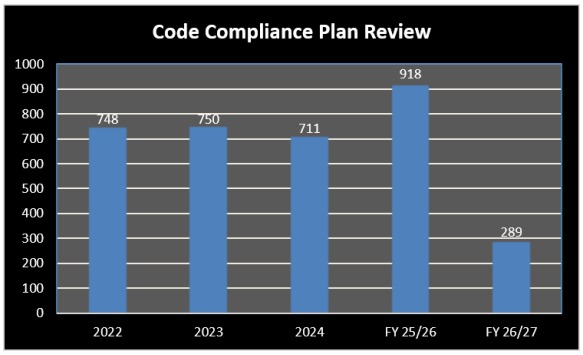
- Community Educators attended the Oro Valley Police Department Night Out at the Oro Valley Marketplace. With over 6000 in attendance, they did a great job spreading educating our residents on fall prevention and several other areas. Great job by the station 375 crew for their help.
- Our Community Educators, along with several crews and administrative personnel hosted 4 mini muster events in the month of October. 263 kids went through the 5 stations.
- Community Educators also attended the Resurrection Lutheran Church Festival where they discussed various injury prevention topics.

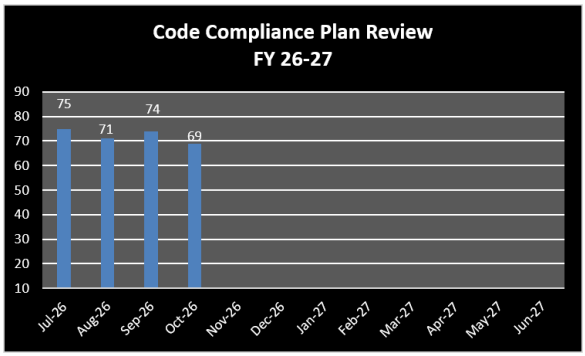
Finance Division

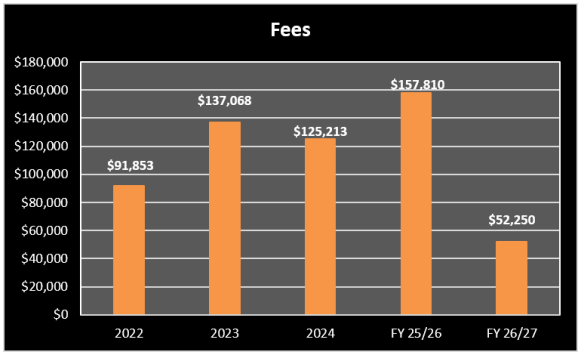
Acting Finance Director – Jeff Sargent

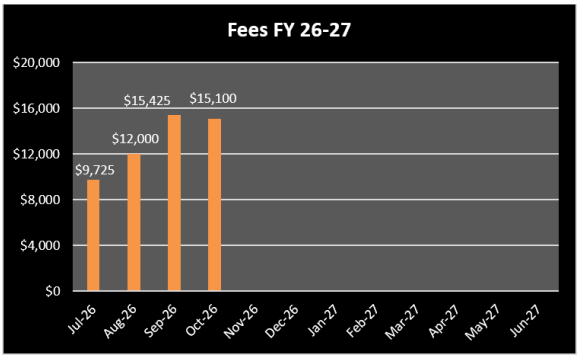
- We have had Dionna Douros join the team as a temp. She has settled in and has been learning the ropes quickly.
- We continue to work with our contractors to build out expense management and other enhancements in Paycom as well as MIP.
- We are preparing for upcoming uniform payouts as well as PTO payouts.

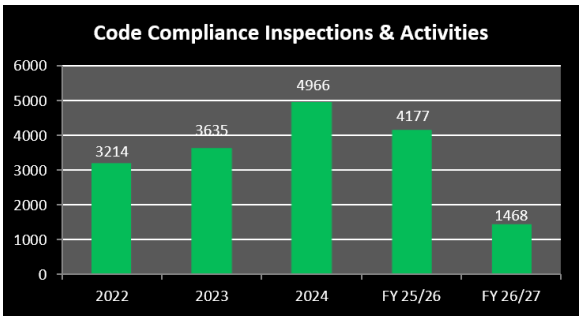
Performance Measures:

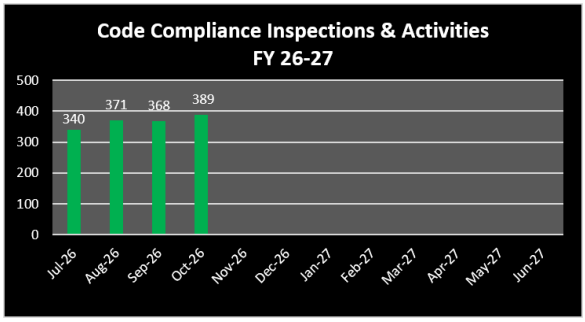


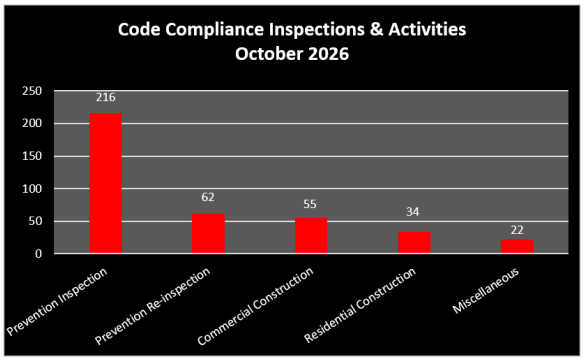


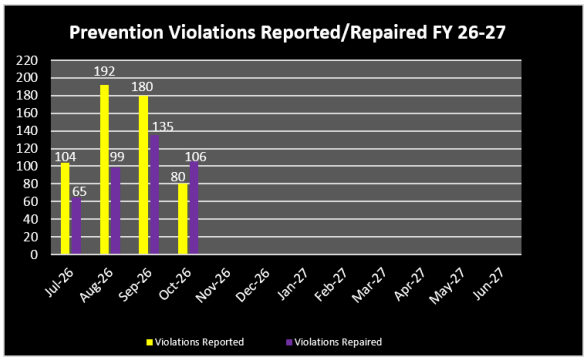












- % fire prevention inspections completed FY 26-27= 35%
- % businesses compliant with the International Fire Code = 66%
    - <64% needs improvement, 64%-68% good, 69%-73% great, >73% outstanding
        - Fire inspectors are actively working on approximately 17% of businesses
- % plan review completed by scheduled due date FY 26-27 = 100%
- # of fire investigations completed FY 26-27 = 18
- # of training hours completed FY 26-27 = 346 (for nine people)
- # Emergency incidents with injuries or casualties due to a structure fire FY 26-27 = 0

Civilan		Fire Service	
Injury	Casualty	Injury	Casualty
0	0	1	0

Commercial Projects Summary - New projects for this month = Green

ZONE 1 Stations 378, 372, 373, 370, 374	ZONE 2 Stations 375, 376	ZONE 3 Station 377	ZONE 4 Station 379	ZONE 5 Station 380
Classic Cabinetry T.I. 16229 N. Oracle	Copper Creek - Hood 11620 N. Copper Springs	Mattress Firm F.A. 10875 N. Oracle	America 1st Credit Union 2210 W. Magee	Sweat House T.I. 7330 N. Oracle #200
McDonald's - Hood 15885 N. Oracle	Extra Space Storage 1410 W. Tangerine	Target T.I. 10555 N. Oracle	Tavira at Twin Peaks Gate 5181 N. Camino De Manana	Big Brand Tire - Suppression System 8085 N. Oracle
Vista De La Montana - Cell Dialer 3001 E. Mira Vista	Shell Building T.I. 12490 N. Rancho Vistoso	MCDonalds T.I. 10795 Oracle	Hope Church 3130 W. Overton	Skechers T.I. 7745 N. Oracle
Sonoran Cataract & Retina T.I. 2506 E. Vistoso Commerce #100	OV Assisted Living Main 12380 N. Vistoso Park	QT Solar Fuel Island 11045 N. Oracle	St. Mark's Hood System 2727 W. Tangerine	Walmart T.I. 7951 N. Oracle
Longely Tax T.I. 13005 N. Oracle #125	Gateway @ Vistoso Apts. 945/955 W. Vistoso Highlands	Life Storage T.I. 11061 N. Oracle	GRFD Procurement T.I. 3701 W. Quasar	European Adult Care Home 8652 N. Morning View
Dollar General F.A. 16355 N. Oracle	Naranja Prof. Park Bldgs 1,2,3 1440 W. Naranja	Barro's Pizza T.I. 11121 N. Oracle	St. Mark's Chapel/Preschool 2727 W Tangerine	Spa Daze 7330 N. Oracle T.I.
SBHOA1 - New Arts and Crafts 64445 E. Saddelbrooke	OV Assisted Living Casitas 12380 N. Vistoso Park	UPS Store T.I. 10645 N. Oracle	Circle K T.I. 3712 W. Cortaro	Area 51 T.I. 8050 N. Oracle
First Baptist Church F.A. 3505 E. Wilds	Above Ground Tank 13450 N. Piper Dr.	Loma Premium Meats T.I. 10785 N. Oracle #191		CDO Baseball Clubhouse 25 W. Calle Concordia
Autozone 16403 N. Oracle		Walmart T.I. 2150 E. Tangerine		Guardian Pharmacy T.I. 8500 N. Oracle Rd
Stone Canyon Blasting Phase 7 & 8		Public Storage - Solar 11274 N. Oracle		Presidio Dental T.I. 7493 N. Oracle #105
Shell Building 16229 N. Oracle		Holiday Inn Express T.I. 11075 W Oracle Rd		Sunny Spa T.I. 7923 N. Oracle
GRFD Professional Development 3845 E. Golder Ranch		Encantada at OV Apts. 1730 E. Tangerine		OV Facilities Maintenance Abv Grnd Tank
Received Final Inspection		Pain Institute of AZ Surgery 365 E. Linda Vista #A		Hand and Stone T.I. 7918 N. Oracle
Boot Barn T.I. 10805 N. Oracle	La Hacienda T.I. 11931 N. 1st #104	Life Storage - Solar Panels 11061 N. Oracle		CDO High School F.A. & Dialer 25 W. Calle Concordia
Lumen F.A. 16649 N. Avenida del Oro	Safeway T.I. 12122 N. Rancho Vistoso	Sigma Technologies F.A. 10960 N. Stallard		Extra Space Storage and Gate 8710 N. Oracle
Vistoso Dental T.I. 2512 E. Vistoso Commerce Loop	Pain Institute of AZ Clinic 365 E. Linda Vista #B, shell			
Chipotle T.I. 7248 N. Oracle				

Fire Marshal Akins

- Attended the Arizona Wildfire Summit at Scottsdale Fire Department
- Met with Vesper Energy regarding a proposed energy storage project
- Attended re-occurring meetings to include Arizona Fire District Association, Oro Valley Pre-construction, Development Review Committee, Traffic Safety, Town Council, Joint Fire Investigations, Fire Chief Status,

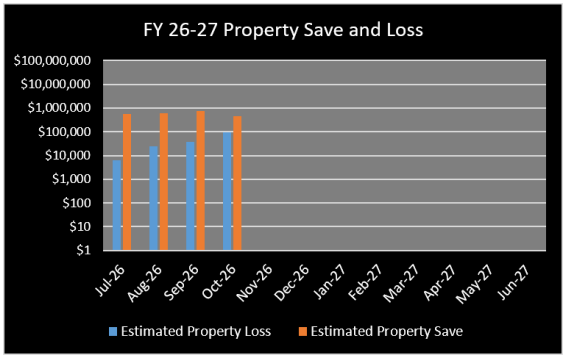
Executive Leadership, Southern Arizona Fire Marshal Association, Arizona Fire Marshal Association, and Fire Prevention Staff

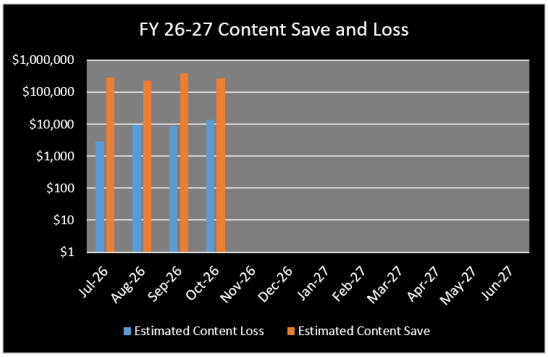
Education/Committees/Training Activities

- DFMs/Inspectors attended the Joint Fire Investigation meeting with NWFD, OVPD, MPD, PCSD, and PCAO
- Permit Tech Chavez attended a two-day permit tch class in Mesa
- DFM White attended the Fire Investigation Report Writing class at National Fire Academy
- DFM Druke Quarterly attended the quarterly ICC Fire Services Exam committee meeting
- DFM White and Inspector Helvig attend the annual Fire Prevention Seminar in Mesa

GRFD Fire Investigations

Estimated Property Loss	Estimated Property Save	FY 26-27	Estimated Content Loss	Estimated Content Save
$163,804	$2,398,482		$34,747	$1,170,213





- On October 16, 2026, a structure fire was reported in the Northwest Fire District
  - GRFD assisted with the origin and cause investigation
- On October 24, 2026, a structure fire was reported in the Northwest Fire District
  - GRFD assisted with the origin and cause investigation
- On October 24, 2026, a structure fire was reported in the Golder Ranch Fire District
  - The origin of the fire was in the attic space
  - The fire classification is undetermined
- On October 31, 2026, a structure fire was reported in the Golder Ranch Fire District
  - The origin of the fire was in a bedroom next to the master suite
  - The fire classification is undetermined

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Grant Cesarek, Assistant Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: SUPPORT SERVICES REPORT

ITEM #: 7C

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This allows for the Support Services Assistant Chief to provide updates to the Governing Board on the following areas:

- Assistant Chief's Activities
- Community and Media Relations
- Logistics
- Facilities Maintenance
- Fleet
- Health & Safety
- Technology
- Planning
- Supply

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION REPORT

Assistant Chief Grant Cesarek

October 2026

Assistant Chief's Activities

- Great month for the Support Services team, efforts focused on the continued rebuild of Operative IQ, structuring the asset management, naming conventions for supplies and storerooms for inventory management
- We completed a hiring process for the vacant facilities technician position, thank you to all involved
- Worked closely with the Assistant Chiefs and Fire Chief to complete the rotation of Assistant Chiefs
- Assisted our Health and Safety team with several items, scheduling upgrades completed for the annual physicals and 1582, better tracking of injuries and the return-to-work process in place
- Attended the weekly construction meetings for the fleet and training project, good progress, rainy weather gave us a delay on getting concrete completed, scheduled for the first week of November
- Assisted with policy reviews in our weekly meetings to keep those updates flowing
- Assisted the IT team with developing questions for their open system specialist position, that is being filled early November
- Labor Leadership meeting was completed late in the month, good interaction and coordination on several items
- Started planning meetings to assist with the AC's rotation, making sure our key vendors are introduced to Chief Grissom to make the transition smooth
- Several discussions on program metrics and making sure they provide the correct measures to show progress and performance
- Assisted Santa Rita, Rincon Valley, Drexel and Corona de Tucson Fire Districts with a captain hiring process, was grateful to be invited to help as an evaluator
- Attended Town of Oro Valley council meetings, State of the Town (OV), the National Night Out, and the closing of StruggleWell as part of the after-hours work this month

Facilities Maintenance Activities

Facility Maintenance Team

- New Facilities tech process complete, scheduled first day will be November 9th.
- Fleet sand/oil separator inspection scheduled, all facilities scheduled for pumping
- Work orders through Facilities module continuing to expand capabilities. Service and warranty details recorded for new assets. Improved tracking for labor hours and associated expenses, including funding for outsourced repairs, as well as proper coding for Finance processing.
- Continued input on Facilities Module asset assignment by facility in collaboration between Techs and LD staff.

- Quasar building construction: Cabinets, countertops, soffit correction complete. Finish plumbing, water heater installation and bay sink basin to be completed upon delivery of product.
- Scheduling installation of 373 extractor, to be coordinated with plumber for proper connections
- Annual tree service for all facilities complete.
- Hiller completed all annual inspections, processing repair requests for all fire alarm systems in our buildings. Awaiting reports, repair requests and invoices for service.
- Surplus processing to be assigned to LD staff. PD Classroom 2, Oracle Junction storage and HR room at 3885 in the system. Working on processing items to surplus site.
- Continued progress on implementing full capacity of OpIQ for tracking, recording and forecasting all maintenance and repair on all GRFD assets.

Fleet Maintenance Activities

Fleet Maintenance Team

- On October 13th operative IQ (OPIQ) released a fleet module update that overhauled our work order process.
- This month the fleet teams focus has been learning the intricacies of the new fleet module and getting new processes in place to make sure we are still providing the same level of record keeping prior to the update.
- This update has also changed how some of our reports are generated, which will affect the accuracy of the following monthly metrics for October:
    - Closed work orders
    - Billable hours
    - % of downtime dedicated to scheduled maintenance
    - Cost Per Mile
- Fleet should have the kinks work out by December's board meeting.
- Aerial ladder update.
    - Expected delivery of GRFD's new 107' quint ladder should be around the week of thanksgiving.
    - Inservice training for fleet, operations, and professional development staff is scheduled for the week of Dec. 15-18th.

Health and Safety

Health & Safety Team

- Hosted Struggle Well course the week of October 26 with 10 GRFD members successfully completing.
- Analyzing Turnouts from Lion Redzone vs Globe Xtreme 3.0.
- Continued work with 1582 to streamline the scheduling platform
- Completed drafts for Peer Support Notifications
- Attending Science to the Station conference beginning of November
- Completed NFPA 1500 worksheet ensuring GRFD is compliant with everything we do in Health and Safety.
- Working with HR on updating our return-to-work process for injured employees.
- Investigating new recruit physical test requirements, specifically the CPAT.

- Working with ImageTrend to include Rehab Vitals Worksheet for fire and hazmat scenes.
- Attended Benefits Committee meeting, attended update meeting with Crest and Cigna.

Procurement/Fire Supply

Procurement/Fire Supply Team

- OpIQ integration with assets, supply room assignment by Division.
- Continued collaboration with Facilities staff for OpIQ assistance in asset verification and assignment.
- Continued improvements to supply order process to include pictures with products for reference.
- PPE recording, tracking and deployment improvements. Working with Health and Safety to explore future options for PPE provider.
- Supply Requests: New procurement and distribution process is operational, with continued improvements to OpIQ updates.
- Discussion and preparation for transition to Quasar. Floorplan layout and organization.
- Created a shared document relating to the division budget and cost projections.

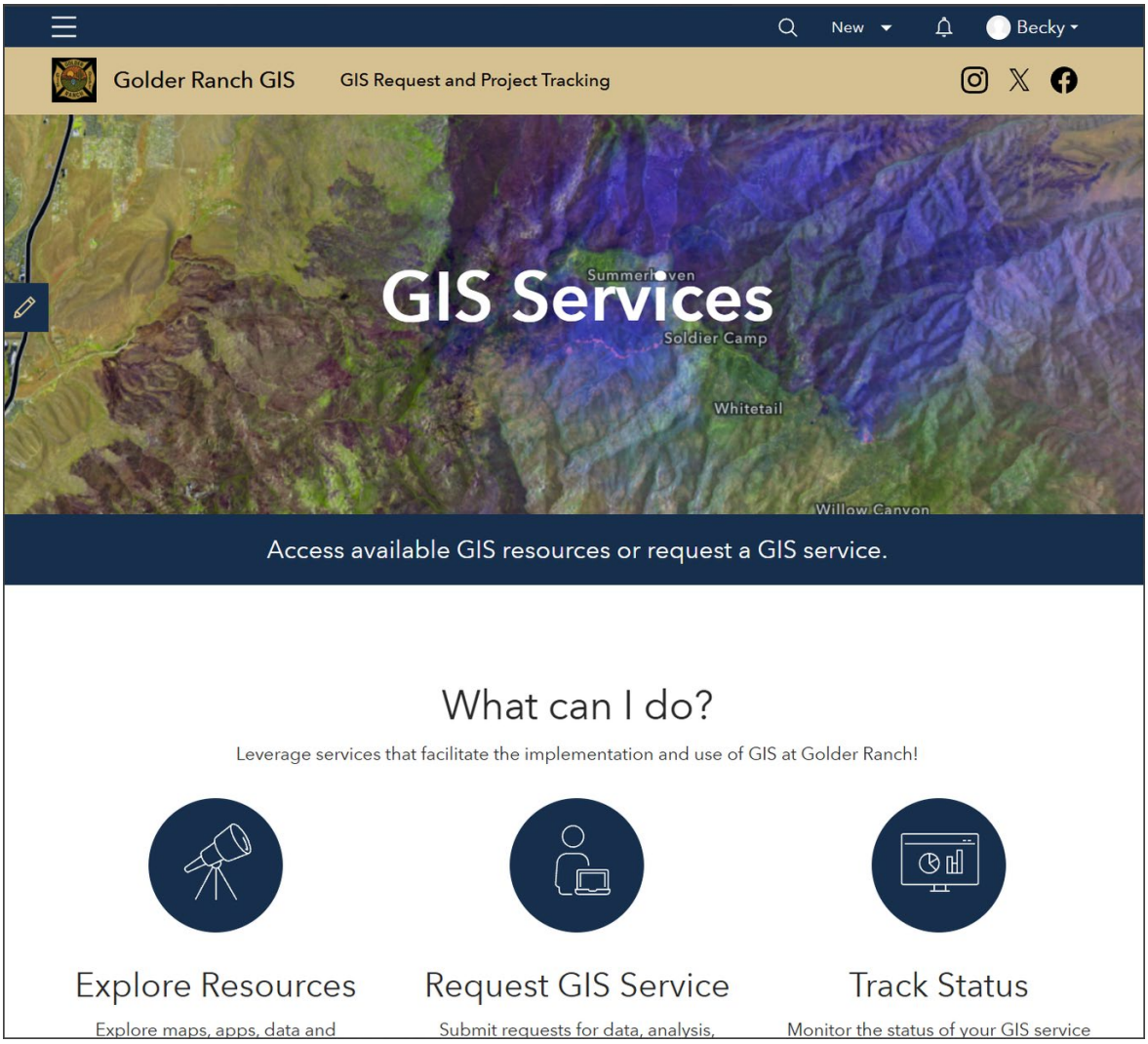
Information Technology

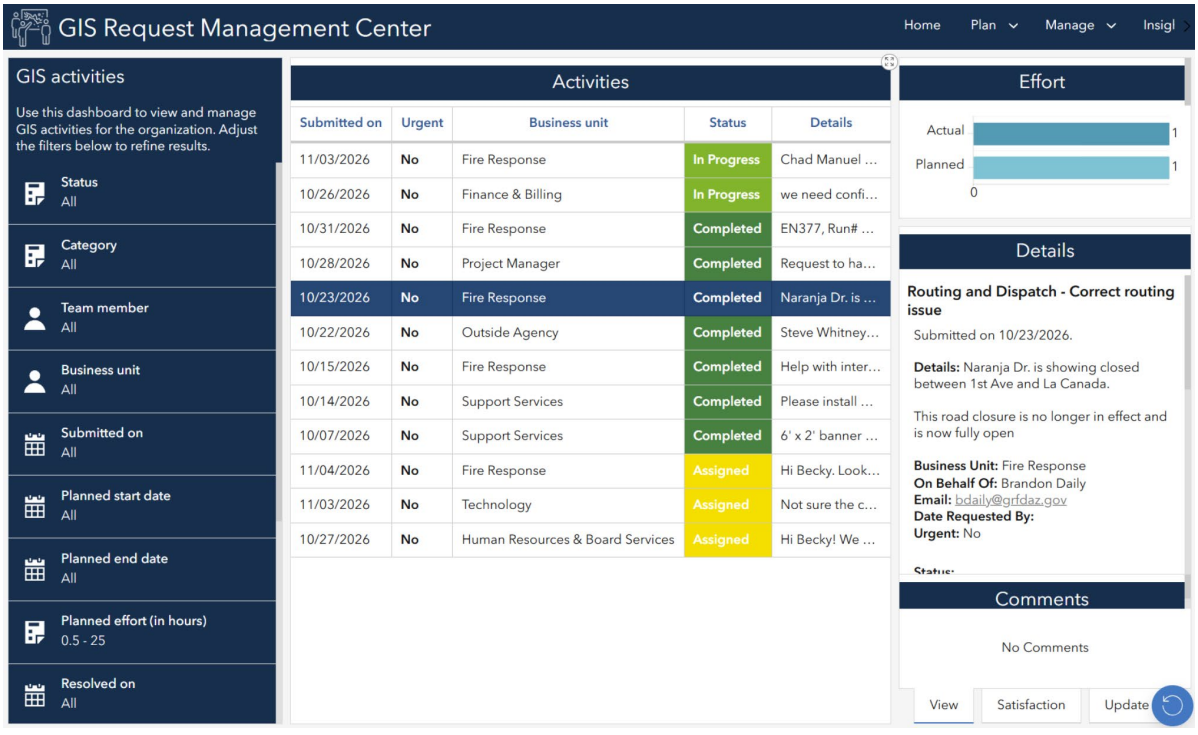
Information Technology Director – Danny Martinez

- Update – Cyber Readiness Program – We have received a response to our application from Arizona Department of Homeland Security (AZ DOHS). Our application to the Cyber Readiness Program has been received, reviewed and accepted! We have requested licenses for five software applications. They are unable to guarantee a hard timeline when the software licenses will be awarded and there is a waitlist for some of the applications. They will notify us when licenses are available to us. We will of course continue keep the Board up to date as additional information becomes available.

IT GIS Activities/Projects

- GIS Analyst Becky Steinnecker is pleased to announce the release of the new GIS requisition Management solution! This was a great learning opportunity, and Becky has put in a huge amount of work to develop an application where users can submit and track their GIS request. Similar to a ticketing system this will help Becky to better track requests, workflow and provide data for GIS and GIS request related metrics. See images below.
- Attended and participated in the Motorola Premier One business provisioning meetings hosted by the City of Tucson and Motorola related to the new CAD dispatch system.
- Updates to the vehicle MDT (mobile data terminal) including updates to energy storage systems data, adding and updating routing connections and testing of the October map roll out.
- Assisted Pima County Information Technology department with a GIS data request for fire districts in Pinal County.


New
Becky
Golder Ranch GIS
GIS Request and Project Tracking
GIS Services
Summerhaven
Soldier Camp
Whitetail
Willow Canyon
Access available GIS resources or request a GIS service.
What can I do?
Leverage services that facilitate the implementation and use of GIS at Golder Ranch!
Explore Resources
Explore maps, apps, data and
Request GIS Service
Submit requests for data, analysis,
Track Status
Monitor the status of your GIS service


GIS Request Management Center
Home
Plan
Manage
Insigl
GIS activities
Use this dashboard to view and manage GIS activities for the organization. Adjust the filters below to refine results.
Status
All
Category
All
Team member
All
Business unit
All
Submitted on
All
Planned start date
All
Planned end date
All
Planned effort (in hours)
0.5 - 25
Resolved on
All
Activities
Submitted on
Urgent
Business unit
Status
Details
11/03/2026 No Fire Response In Progress Chad Manuel ...
10/26/2026 No Finance & Billing In Progress we need confi...
10/31/2026 No Fire Response Completed EN377, Run# ...
10/28/2026 No Project Manager Completed Request to ha...
10/23/2026 No Fire Response Completed Naranja Dr. is ...
10/22/2026 No Outside Agency Completed Steve Whitney...
10/15/2026 No Fire Response Completed Help with inter...
10/14/2026 No Support Services Completed Please install ...
10/07/2026 No Support Services Completed 6' x 2' banner ...
11/04/2026 No Fire Response Assigned Hi Becky. Look...
11/03/2026 No Technology Assigned Not sure the c...
10/27/2026 No Human Resources & Board Services Assigned Hi Becky! We ...
Effort
Actual
Planned
1
1
0
Details
Routing and Dispatch - Correct routing issue
Submitted on 10/23/2026.
Details: Naranja Dr. is showing closed between 1st Ave and La Canada.
This road closure is no longer in effect and is now fully open
Business Unit: Fire Response
On Behalf Of: Brandon Daily
Email: bdaily@grfdaz.gov
Date Requested By:
Urgent: No
Status:
Comments
No Comments
View
Satisfaction
Update

IT Team Activities/Projects

- A major project this month was an internet upgrade project. The main internet circuit for the district was upgraded to a higher capacity of 1Gbps, a 5x increase in speed or bandwidth over the previous service. A part of this transition required a change to our external IP addresses. This required a team effort and coordination from several vendors and partner agencies to ensure services and connections to other agencies were migrated with minimal interruption.
- A new line of fiber service was procured and installed for the new Quasar location. In addition, the networking components and wireless access points have been deployed.
- At the request of several departments, performed a discovery and evaluation process for an AI (Artificial Intelligence) powered tool to assist with audio transcription for meetings.
- Assisted Avra Valley Fire District with wireless microwave link issues causing network outages at their administration building and stations.
- There were two server hardware issues this month. The issues were reported by our monitoring tools and remediated by the IT staff. The first was a rare occurrence where one of the memory modules failed requiring replacement. The second issue, a hard disk drive failed, which is a more common type of event. The servers have redundancy built it for this type of issue, the failed hard drive was replaced.

Strategic Communications

Community and Media Relations Supervisor – Lydia Camarillo



District Visibility & Community Presence

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- National Fire Prevention Month and Week
- Continued Annual Report development, including content review, editing, and final revisions
- Participated in professional and community partner meetings, including:
    - Oro Valley Chamber Executive Team
    - Oro Valley Chamber Directors Board Meeting
    - Oro Valley Women in Leadership
    - Red Cross Meeting on blood drives
    - Project Fire Buddies Meeting with Tucson Fire and Rural Metro
    - Executive Leadership meeting
    - Fire Chief Status meeting
- Supported internal communications through updated Dashboard messaging

Public Relations

- Managed media response and public information for:
    - October 14, 2026-Hiker rescue at Catalina State Park
    - October 26, 2026- KOLD inquiry on major collision off Oracle near Golder Ranch Dr.
    - October 31, 2026-House fire near Tangerine and 1st

  District social media content was referenced or showcased across multiple digital news platforms.

Social Media

- Lithium-ion safety video with Fire Prevention
- Fire Prevention Month and Week safety campaign
- Station Tour video series continued with Station 373
- IAFF Firefighter Memorial
- Roche Fire Extinguisher Training
- Project Fire Buddies event with buddy
- National First Responders Day
- Halloween safety video
- National Night Out event
- Trunk or Treat event with University of Arizona College of Veterinary Medicine

Ongoing Communications

- Maintained consistent public safety messaging focused on fall prevention, Halloween safety, and community risk reduction.
- Assisted with recruitment communications to reach more potential applicants for Systems Specialist.

- Shared employee spotlights, Code Saves, stroke recognitions, and emergency response incidents.
- Shared employee recognitions and District accomplishments from monthly Governing Board meetings on social media.

Social Media By The Numbers

Facebook

- Views: 216,400
- Posts: 35
- Top Post: Captain Bishop promotion (16,200 views)

Instagram

- Views: 128,000
- Posts: 29
- Top Post: Hiker Rescue (28,800)

X

- Posts: 6
- Impressions: 1,600
    - (Times post was seen on X)
- Top Post: Elks Lodge recognition for Captain Cramblit (225 views)

Metrics

7 Public Information updates
1 Press Release
6 Public Service Announcements
21 Employee Spotlights

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Chris Grissom, Assistant Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: EMS & FIRE RESPONSE REPORT

ITEM #: 7D

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This allows for the operations Assistant Chief to provide updates to the Governing Board on the following areas:

- Emergency Medical Services
- Honor Guard/Pipes and Drums
- Operations
- Professional Development
- Project Management
- Special Operations
- Wildland

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

EMS & FIRE RESPONSE DIVISION REPORT

Assistant Chief Chris Grissom

October 2026

Assistant Chief's Activities

- Continued oversight and coordination of EMS, Fire Operations, Special Operations, and Wildland programs, supporting operational readiness, service delivery, and ongoing organizational priorities.
- Recognized and supported crews for exceptional performance in cardiac arrest saves and stroke patient care, highlighting the district's commitment to clinical excellence and positive patient outcomes.
- Participated in EMS and regional leadership collaboration, supporting improvements in clinical care, training, quality improvement, and operational efficiencies.
- Supported continued development of Special Operations capabilities through regional training initiatives, equipment improvements, grant funding, and planning for future technical rescue and hazardous materials needs.
- Attended community and District events, including National Night Out, the Veterans Event honoring Ryan Schobel, and Rockin' 4 Heroes, representing GRFD and supporting community engagement.
- Attended the Chief Executive Officer Program (CEOP) Graduation through the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association, recognizing the completion of this leadership development program.
- Continued engagement with regional fire service partners and District leadership to strengthen interagency relationships, support future operational needs, and advance organizational goals.

EMS

Recognition

- 375 B Shift and Oro Valley Police Department (OVPD) were recognized for a code save they achieved on August 13th, 2026. Outstanding work Captain Kassulke, Engineer Pettit, Paramedic House, Paramedic Madden, Firefighter Schultz, Firefighter Raney, and OVPD officers Keena and Kidd!



- 370 B Shift were recognized for a code save they achieved in July 2026. Outstanding work Captain Rhein, Engineer Burks, Paramedic Ringston, Paramedic Trowbridge, Paramedic Savage, and Firefighter Morgan!



- 377 B Shift were recognized for a code save they achieved on September 18th, 2026. Outstanding work Captain Kassulke, Captain R. Sanchez, Engineer Buda, Paramedic Baron, Paramedic Ketterer, Paramedic Miller, and Firefighter Garcia!



- EN381 A Shift were recognized for a code save they achieved on September 9th, 2026. Outstanding job Captain Lundeberg, Engineer Gamez, Paramedic Kane, and Firefighter Landreville!



- Oro Valley Hospital recognized 375 B Shift for their great clinical care and notifications on a patient presenting stroke symptoms. Their efforts resulted in a door to TNK of 28 minutes! Great work Captain Ryan, Engineer Pettit, Paramedics House and Garcia, and Firefighters Schultz and Raney!



- Oro Valley Hospital recognized EN372 and PM373 B Shift for their great clinical care and notifications on a patient presenting stroke symptoms. Their efforts resulted in a door to TNK of 27 minutes! Great work Captain Erickson, Engineer Gary, Paramedics Roberts and Cameron, and Firefighters Brandon and Tarbill!

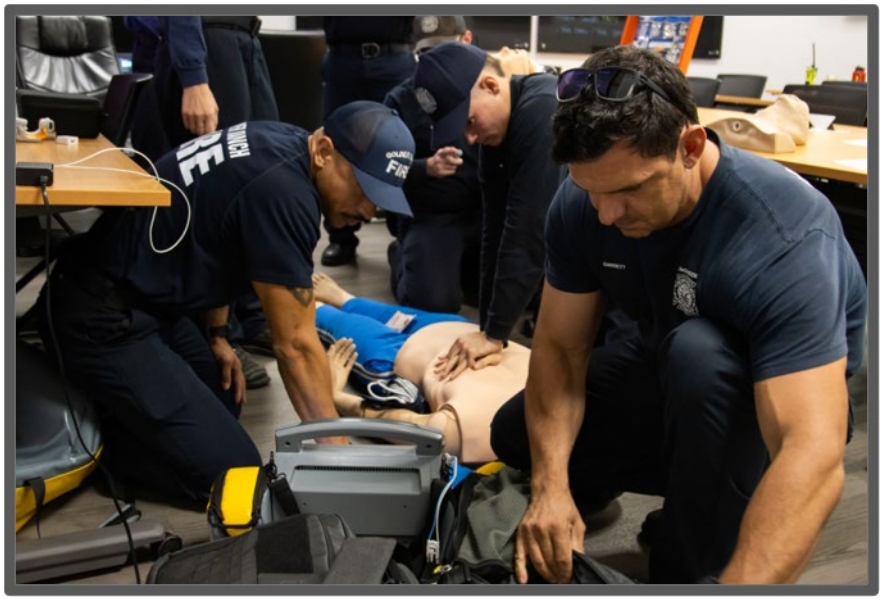


- The EMS Division recognizes Captain Dean Sanchez for his service in the betterment of GRFD EMS education, training, and delivery. Captain Sanchez's term as EMS Captain-Administrative concluded on October 22nd. Dean has helped make improvements in our PCR form, clinical care through focused quality improvement, and in our EMS supply procurement and delivery process. Captain Sanchez spearheaded transitioning EMS supply ordering from thirteen addresses to two. This created greater efficiency and accountability as well as significantly reducing the logistics responsibilities from our shift ECs. Thank you, Dean, for your time, expertise, and hard work!



EMS Training

- Crews rotated through for October Skills Labs. This quarter education and training was completed on our Bradycardia, Cardiac Arrest, and Crashing Patient guidelines, skills practiced on intubation and vagal maneuvers, and scenarios were performed on treating patients with cardiac arrythmias.





- Congratulations to 377 A Shift for demonstrating their exceptional knowledge and skills and winning this quarter’s Skills Lab Cup!



EMS Team

- Staff continued collaborative work with Logistics to build improvements and efficiencies into OpIQ.
- Staff met with NWFD EMS Division to discuss several topics affecting our organizations.
- Staff participated in the following regular meetings:
    - GRFD EMS and CQI
    - GRFD leadership meetings.
    - SAEMS meetings.
    - EMS ROC
- Staff participated in a regional meeting to review and determine changes to Administrative Guidelines taking effect January 2027.
- DV Taylor completed the second and final week of Chief Executive Officer Program through the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association.

EMS Performance

Emergency Medical Response Program

The purpose of the Emergency Medical Response program is to provide emergency response, evidenced-based medical care, and ambulance transport services to residents and visitors of the community so they can receive a timely response and experience the best possible health outcomes.

Results:

% EMS calls for service where the turnout time is 1:15 or less. 81%, FYTD 80%

Maintain emergent (Code III) responses where the first unit total response time is 9:30 minutes or less for urban areas and 13:00 minutes for rural areas. Urban = 11.5; Rural = 12.7.

% cardiac arrest responses where nationally recognized EMS performance measure benchmarks are met: ETCO2 documented with advanced airway (goal 90%) = 100% Appropriate termination documentation (Goal 95%) = 97.5%

% survival rate for cardiac arrest (Utstein Formula of Survival) 48%

% STEMI responses where EMS performance benchmarks are met. Administrative medical direction is building this report

% stroke responses where EMS performance benchmarks are met. 98%

% TBI responses where EMS performance benchmarks are met. Administrative medical direction is building this report.

% of surveyed respondents are satisfied with the service received from EMS response. 94%

Outputs:

The number of EMS responses provided.1063, FYTD - 4251

The number of ambulance transports provided. 673, FYTD - 2527

Demands:

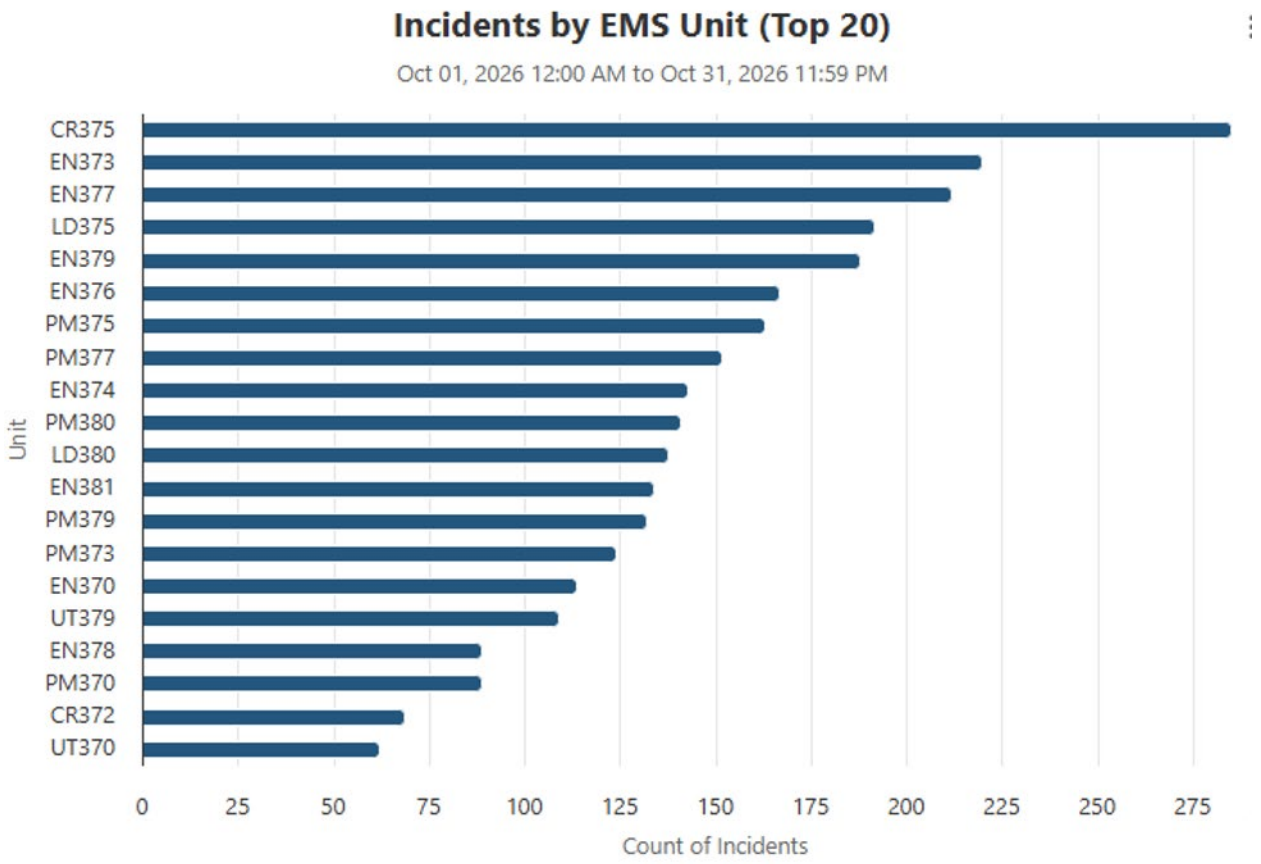
The number of EMS responses expected to be requested. 1017, FYTD - 3987

The number of ambulance transports to be requested. 602, FYTD - 2323

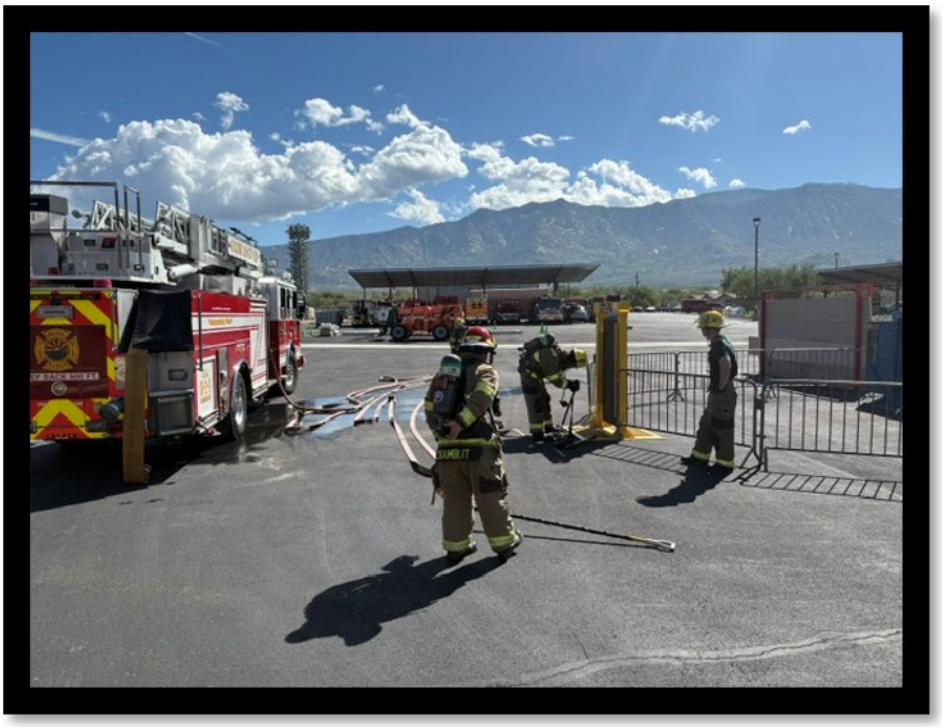
Efficiencies:

EMS program expenditure per total number of EMS responses. $540

EMS program expenditure per capita. $63



Professional Development



Professional Development Program

- The purpose of the Professional Development Program is to provide professional development services to Golder Ranch Fire District team members so they can be highly trained and prepared for advancement in their career.



Courses/Training:

Company Readiness Drill (CRD):

- Professional Development staff In-Service from Pierce scheduled for Dec 17, 2026
- CRD scheduled for January 2027
- Aerial apparatus and ladder operations for suppression personnel
- In service and continuing education of new Pierce Ladder truck
- Emphasis:
    - Operators: Apparatus inspection, driving, staging, ladder operation
    - Suppression: Fundamental skills - ground ladders, ventilation, saws
    - Introduction to smoke machines and new “Strip mall” prop

Professional Development (PD) Campus:

- Continued General clean up and maintenance of props
- **Hazardous Material area:** Creating a HAZMAT training area behind the PD Training Apparatus Awning
    - Year-round access to HAZMAT scenarios
    - Small storage area for fixed facilities with a beacon, 704 diamond, various shut off valves
    - Southwest Gas completed simulated gas line breaks for various scenarios:
        - Gas Meter
        - Trench

        - Southwest Gas is donating an Air Compressor to GRFD for the simulated gas line break prop.
    - Propane cylinder prop
    - Diking, damming, retention ponds area
    - Overflow and under flow dams

2027 Driver Operator Class:

- Preparation beginning for upcoming class: Feb/March 2027
- Pima CC: FSC125 Hydraulics, FSC 163 Apparatus, FSC180 Driver Training
- Anticipate (2)-15 person classes

Electric Vehicle Program:

- Reviewing / updating current electrical vehicle fire policies and procedures.

Output

- % completion rate on all required ISO training: 80%
- % completion rate on all district-required annual training: 100%
- % of surveyed respondents are satisfied with the service received from Professional Development: 96%

Honor Guard and Pipes & Drums

Honor Guard had 3 events for the month of October:

- Team meeting: October 23rd - Team
- TOV State of The Town: October 16th- Rhein, Hoffman
- TOV National Night Out: October 23rd- Miller, Hoffman, Thomas, Glover

We are starting to move into more of our busy season and have quite a few events planned for the upcoming months.

Special Operations

Monthly Response Highlights

- The Special Operations HAZMAT Team responded to a “Gas Cylinder Leak”. EN377 arrived at a home residence where they had a propane tank that had leaked its entire contents. The crew air monitored the exterior porch, the interior of the occupancy, and the exposure occupancies to ensure the occupants and surrounding community were safe.
- The Special Operations Team responded to a hiker rescue on Sutherland Trail within the Catalina State Park. The injured hiker was located approximately 0.50-0.75 miles up the trail from the main parking lot. The team used their UTV to access the patient and worked collaboratively with the Park Service to extract the patient off the trail. The patient was transported to a hospital for medical evaluation.

- The Special Operations Team responded to a hiker rescue at Catalina State Park. The Pima County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team, along with a DPS helicopter, located and air lifted the patient from Romero Pools to the Landing Zone at the base of the park. The patient was then transferred to the GRFD Special Operations Team, who provided a medical evaluation of the patient.
- The Special Operations Team worked with Engine 373 personnel to rescue an individual who had fallen 20-30 feet into a concrete ravine. The personnel were able to extract the patient utilizing low angle rope rescue techniques and then transported the patient to a hospital for medical care.

Monthly Training

Regional Hazardous Materials Continuing Education:

- Golder Ranch Fire District is in charge of hosting the end-of-year Hazardous Materials drill in December. This drill is meant to encompass everything we have learned regionally through the year and pack it into one large drill. The team has met with Roche and is going to utilize the ammonia chiller plant in Roche building B7 to conduct this drill.
- Tucson Fire Department hosted the October Regional HAZMAT Drill. It was held at the PSA and reviewed product transfer, grounding/ bonding, and leak mitigation techniques. Crews that attended the regional drill also reviewed the command structure for a HAZMAT call.

Regional Technical Rescue Continuing Education:

- The team was administered a Trench Rescue assignment electronically via Vector Solutions. This training was created by Tucson Fire and Golder Ranch Fire and consisted of a video that reviewed the drill that will be held in November on Trench Rescue. There was also a PowerPoint created by GRFD that reviewed the command checklist for Trench Rescue along with equipment familiarization/ setup of a Trench Rescue.

Regional Initial Training:

- Two members on the Special Operations Team attended a two-day Animal Rescue Technician course at the University of Arizona Agricultural campus. Various agencies around the region sent personnel to this course to expand specific rescue capabilities.
- Four Special Operations Team Trainees started their Hazardous Materials Technician Course on October 19 and will finish on November 19.
- A 200-hour technical rescue course is set to begin tentatively January of 2027. The region is projecting to have 3 total 200-hr courses in 2027 which should fully certify all the trainees on the GRFD Team. Golder Ranch Fire was selected by the region to teach Swift Water Rescue during the 200-hour courses. This is a great course to teach since it is very applicable to the Southern AZ regional teams for our monsoon season.
- The region will be sending one individual from GRFD, NWFD, and TFD to Rhode Island in January to attend a three-day advanced elevator rescue technician course in.

In-District Continuing Education:

- A member from the Special Operations Team completed monthly air calibration on suppression four-gas monitors.
- The Special Operations Team is in the preliminary phases of planning out a Rope Rescue refresher day coordinated with the WL team prior to next year's fire season. This refresher will include mountain rescue techniques as it pertains to REMS.

- The Team has administered the annual FRO HAZMAT District Refresher didactic assignment. All of suppression had the month of October to complete this assignment to prepare for the practical drill in November.
- The Special Operations Team has been recertifying members in the VFIS Emergency Trailer Operator driver's course. This requirement is on a 2-year recertification cycle and consists of all Team members, including members not assigned to 377, to complete a driver's course while towing the Special Operations trailer.
- The Special Operations Team gave a short class to Fire Prevention personnel on October 29. This course was taught to GRFD and NWFD personnel and was focused on Hazardous Materials Awareness Level material. This is an annual requirement for Fire Prevention to complete their CE requirements.

In-District Initial Training:

- The Team certified/recertified several members on ROHVA UTV training. This allows many of our team members to safely operate district UTV's. The remaining team members will be certified in November and December.
- The Special Operations Team planned a January Rope Rescue Technician course for our Wildland Team. Many of the Wildland Team members that are interested in Rope Rescue could not attend the course this year during the fire season. This course will increase the number of individuals qualified for REMS assignments.

Other

- A grant was submitted by Captain Sam Garcia to the AZ Department of Environmental Quality earlier in the year and was recently awarded to GRFD. This grant will provide multiple hazardous materials related items to the Special Operations Team.
- The team is currently replacing our level A HAZMAT suits through the region. These are very expensive, fully encapsulated suits that have a 10-year shelf life. Fortunately, through regional grants, we were able to gain replacement suits for three of our suits that expired this past month. Thank you to Todd Davis from Tucson Fire Department (TFD) for helping us through this suit replacement process. We have three more suits that are due for replacement in December of 2026.
- The Special Operations Team is implementing a new gear tracking system to identify a better way to track equipment replacement of expiring gear. All gear within Station 377, REMS and suppression apparatus that have a service life are now tracked, and the team can project when replacement will be needed for each apparatus to better formulate budgeting items.
- Swift Water Rescue equipment and Trench Rescue equipment have been submitted to logistics for surplus. This equipment was replaced as part of the standard replacement plan to ensure up-to-date and compliant equipment is on our trucks.
- Three air monitors are currently out-of-service, with Todd Davis from TFD completing the required maintenance. During this maintenance, the region has provided us with loaner monitors.
- The Special Operations trailer that is housed out of station 377 had its annual weigh-in at GRFD Fleet. The weigh-in ensures the trailer is below gross vehicle weight rating and is safe to tow on the roadway for our responders and the public in which we serve. The trailer is underweight and safe to tow with the equipment on it.
- Due to an uptick in elevator rescue responses, the Special Operations Team has been working with Fire Prevention to identify all elevators in the GRFD service area and work on preplanning these elevators better to make these responses more efficient.

Wildland

There were no Wildland Team deployments out of District for the month of October.

Projects

- Wildland Team members enrolled for upcoming 2027 Arizona Wildfire and Incident Management Academy March 14-19.
- 2027 Annual Wildland Refresher (Didactic) assigned to all suppression personnel through Vector Solutions.
- Captain Hoffman met with Pima County, TFD, and NWFD to plan a regional wildland supply trailer stocked with hose packs, water pumpkins, pumps, sprinkler kits, loose hose, and appliances, available for any Pima County fire department to request for wildfire suppression operations.

Fire Response

Significant Incidents:

- On October 24th, GRFD crews responded for a reported house fire in SaddleBrooke Ranch. First crews on scene found smoke coming from the attic. Crews worked quickly to pull ceiling and extinguish the fire throughout the attic of the entry way/living room area. No injuries were reported and fire cause was undetermined.
- On October 26th, GRFD crews responded for an MVA at Oracle/Wilds. First crews on scene found a significant collision involving two vehicles. Two patients were transported with critical injuries. Sadly, two patients were pronounced dead at the scene. The crews worked quickly and professionally under difficult circumstances to provide the best possible outcome for the two transported patients.
- On October 31st, GRFD crews responded for a fire nature unknown incident near Tangerine/1st. Information from dispatch was that a homeowner who was not at home, was alerted via a camera in the house that there was smoke and smoke alarms sounding. First crews on scene found smoke throughout the house and upgraded the assignment to a working structure fire. Crew worked quickly to contain the fire to the room of origin. Cause of the fire was undetermined.

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO:	Governing Board
FROM:	Michele Smith, HR Generalist
MTG. DATE:	November 17, 2026
SUBJECT:	DISCUSSION & POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING POLICIES: 223 OPEN DOOR POLICY; 1042 ANTI-RETALIATION; 1043 EMPLOYEE LEAVE - PAID AND UNPAID; AND 1045 HOLIDAY TIME OFF
ITEM #:	8A

REQUIRED ACTION:	☐ Discussion Only	☑ Formal Motion	☐ Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	☑ Approve	☐ Conditional Approval	☐ Deny
SUPPORTED BY:	☑ Staff	☑ Fire Chief	☑ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

The policies below include both routine updates for clarity and consistency and substantive changes. The summaries highlight the major revisions for the Board's review.

223 Open Door Policy - This policy replaces Policy 1203 Open Door Policy (last revised 2/2013) and is being transitioned to the Lexipol system. It has been updated to simplify the language and clarify its purpose in supporting open communication between members and leadership. The revisions outline leadership responsibilities and clarify that the open-door process does not replace established complaint, grievance, or other District processes.

1042 Anti-Retaliation – This new policy has been developed for inclusion in the Lexipol system to establish clear expectations for preventing and addressing retaliation. It outlines prohibited conduct, reporting options, and supervisor responsibilities when retaliation concerns are raised.

1043 Employee Leave – Paid and Unpaid – This policy has been updated to improve clarity and incorporate additional provisions negotiated with labor. Major revisions include: increase retirement PTO payout limits from 672 hours to 896 hours for uniformed members and from 480 hours to 640 hours for non-uniformed members; expand paid parental leave to up to four shifts; and allow separating members with at least 10 years of service to donate PTO to the District Emergency PTO Fund. The revisions also increase scheduled PTO cancellation notice from 48 hours to seven days and update UPTO and compensatory time provisions.

A new Administrative Leave section has been added to 1043 Employee Leave, which replaces the existing standalone policy (last revised 7/2018).

1045 Holiday Time Off - This policy has been updated in response to regulatory changes affecting compensatory time payments, removing the option to convert holiday time to compensatory time. Fire Prevention members will now receive and use holiday time in the same manner as administrative members. To minimize disruption, suppression members may choose between receiving holiday pay for each recognized holiday or receiving an annual holiday bank to use during the fiscal year and holiday payout was added at the end of each fiscal year.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

Motion to approve policies 223 Open Door Policy; 1042 Anti-Retaliation; 1043 Employee Leave - Paid and Unpaid; and 1045 Holiday Time Off

Open Door Policy

223.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage open communication between all District members and leadership to provide members with opportunities to raise work-related questions, ideas, concerns, or problems.

223.2 POLICY

The District supports open, respectful communication between members and leadership and encourages members to raise workplace matters so they can be understood and appropriately addressed.

223.3 OPEN DOOR COMMUNICATION

Members should raise work-related questions, ideas, concerns, or problems with their immediate supervisor when appropriate. Members may also communicate with other leadership, Human Resources, or another appropriate District representative when circumstances warrant. Leadership should listen to concerns, provide available information when appropriate, address matters within their authority, and assist in directing matters requiring further review to the appropriate person or process.

Information shared through the open-door process will be handled as discreetly as reasonably possible. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when disclosure is necessary to appropriately address the matter or is otherwise required by law or District policy. Members who raise workplace concerns in good faith shall not be subjected to retaliation for doing so.

223.4 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DISTRICT PROCESSES

The Open Door Policy is intended to facilitate communication and informal problem-solving and does not replace established reporting, complaint, grievance, investigation, disciplinary, or appeal processes.

Matters raised through the open-door process that are governed by another District policy or procedure shall be referred to the appropriate process or otherwise handled in accordance with the applicable requirements.

Use of the open-door process does not extend or modify any time limit, reporting requirement, or other obligation established by law, MOU, or District policy or procedure.

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1203 OPEN DOOR POLICY: SOLVING EMPLOYEE CONCERNS

A. PURPOSE

TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND MANAGEMENT SO AS TO PROVIDE SOLID WORKING RELATIONSHIPS AND EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT OPERATIONS

B. SCOPE

1. This policy applies to all employees of the GRFD.

C. POLICY

1. It is the policy of GRFD to provide a means for an employee to seek answers to questions, to communicate ideas or to bring problems or concerns about work to the attention of management.

D. GUIDELINES

1. Employees are encouraged to bring forth ideas, questions or concerns to the attention of management.

2. All supervisors and managers are encouraged to listen to employees' work-related concerns or ideas, provide information, and whenever possible, resolve problem situations.

3. When appropriate and if possible, information concerning an employee's concerns shall be kept confidential. In some cases, however, members of the management staff may need to be informed for appropriate resolution of the problem.

E. PROCEDURE FOR SOLVING CONCERNS

1. If an employee has a work-related concern, the employee shall first discuss it with the immediate supervisor to allow the supervisor the opportunity to resolve the matter.

2. If the matter is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, or if the employee is uncomfortable discussing the particular issue with the immediate supervisor, the employee is encouraged to bring the matter to the next level of management.

3. If resolution is not achieved through these informal means, the employee may opt to use the procedures as outlined in the policy entitled *"Grievance Rights."*

Open Door Policy

223.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to encourage open communication between all District members and leadership to provide members with opportunities to raise work-related questions, ideas, concerns, or problems.

~~To facilitate communications between employees and management so as to provide solid working relationships and effective and efficient operations. This policy applies to all employees of the GRF D .~~

223.2 POLICY

The District supports open, respectful communication between members and leadership and encourages members to raise workplace matters so they can be understood and appropriately addressed.

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Leadership should listen to concerns, provide available information when appropriate, address matters within their authority, and assist in directing matters requiring further review to the appropriate person or process.

Information shared through the open-door process will be handled as discreetly as reasonably possible. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed when disclosure is necessary to appropriately address the matter or is otherwise required by law or District policy.

Members who raise workplace concerns in good faith shall not be subjected to retaliation for doing so.

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The Open Door Policy is intended to facilitate communication and informal problem-solving and does not replace established reporting, complaint, grievance, investigation, disciplinary, or appeal processes.

Matters raised through the open-door process that are governed by another District policy or procedure shall be referred to the appropriate process or otherwise handled in accordance with the applicable requirements.

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Open Door Policy

Use of the open-door process does not extend or modify any time limit, reporting requirement, or other obligation established by law, MOU, or District policy or procedure.

~~1. Employees are encouraged to bring forth ideas, questions or concerns to the attention of management.~~

~~2. All supervisors and managers are encouraged to listen to employees' work-related concerns or ideas, provide information, and whenever possible, resolve problem situations.~~

~~3. When appropriate and if possible, information concerning an employee's concerns shall be kept confidential. In some cases, however, members of the management staff may need to be informed for appropriate resolution of the problem.~~

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Anti-Retaliation

1042.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy prohibits retaliation against members who identify workplace issues, such as fraud, waste, abuse of authority, gross mismanagement, or any inappropriate conduct or practices, including violations that may pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of members.

This policy does not prohibit actions taken for nondiscriminatory or non-retaliatory reasons, such as discipline for cause.

These guidelines are intended to supplement and not limit members' access to other applicable remedies. Nothing in this policy shall diminish the rights or remedies of a member pursuant to any applicable law, provision of the U.S. Constitution, ordinance, or MOU.

1042.2 POLICY

The Golder Ranch Fire District (the District) has zero tolerance for retaliation and is committed to taking reasonable steps to protect members from retaliation when they, in good faith, engage in protected activity. All complaints of retaliation will be taken seriously and investigated promptly and appropriately.

1042.3 RETALIATION PROHIBITED

No member shall retaliate against any person because the person, in good faith:

- Reports a workplace concern or suspected violation of law, District policy, procedure, rule, or standard of conduct.
- Makes or participates in a complaint or grievance.
- Reports or opposes conduct the person reasonably believes to be unlawful, unethical, discriminatory, harassing, retaliatory, or otherwise contrary to District policy.
- Participates in an investigation, inquiry, complaint, grievance, or disciplinary or administrative process.
- Provides information, testimony, or evidence concerning reported or suspected misconduct.
- Exercises a right or participates in an activity protected by law, District policy or procedure, or MOU.
- Retaliation includes adverse action, intimidation, interference, or other conduct taken because a person engaged in protected activity. Retaliation may include, but is not limited to:
    - Refusing to hire or denying a promotion.
    - Extending the probationary period for retaliatory reasons.

- Unjustified reassignment of duties or change of work schedule.
- Real or implied threats or other forms of intimidation to dissuade the reporting of wrongdoing or filing of a complaint, or as a consequence of having reported or participated in protected activity.
- Taking unwarranted corrective or disciplinary action.
- Spreading rumors about the person filing the complaint or about the alleged wrongdoing.
- Shunning, isolating, or unreasonably avoiding a person because they engaged in protected activity.

1042.4 COMPLAINTS OF RETALIATION

Any member who believes retaliation has occurred should promptly report the matter to any supervisor, Human Resources, a command staff member, the Fire Chief, or other reporting avenue established by District policy. A member is not required to report retaliation through a person who is involved in the alleged conduct.

Reports made in good faith are protected under this policy, even when an investigation does not substantiate the allegation.

Knowingly making a false report, intentionally providing false or misleading information, or making a report with willful or reckless disregard for the truth is not protected activity and shall result in corrective or disciplinary action. A report is not considered to have been made in bad faith solely because it is unsubstantiated or determined to be incorrect.

Investigations are generally more effective when the identity of the reporting member is known, thereby allowing investigators to obtain additional information from the reporting member. However, complaints may be made anonymously. The District will make reasonable efforts to protect the reporting member's identity and maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable. Information may be disclosed as required by law or as reasonably necessary to review and conduct an adequate investigation.

1042.5 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Supervisors who receive or become aware of a complaint of retaliation are responsible for:

A. Not interfering with or denying a member’s right to make any complaint.
B. Ensuring complaints of retaliation are appropriately referred for investigation.
C. Receiving complaints in a fair and impartial manner.
D. Documenting complaints and any actions taken.
E. Taking appropriate and reasonable steps to mitigate any further retaliation.
F. Taking reasonable steps to ensure that a member who makes a complaint or participates in the complaint process is not subjected to retaliation.
G. Following up with the complainant, as appropriate, to determine whether retaliation is continuing or has occurred following the complaint.
H. Considering reasonable requests for assignment or schedule changes when such changes may mitigate the potential for further retaliation.

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Anti-Retaliation

1042.6 WHISTLEBLOWING

Arizona law protects members from retaliation for disclosing information to the appropriate person or entity when the member has a reasonable belief that the District is violating or will violate the state Constitution or state law, or is engaging in abuse of authority or gross waste of monies (ARS § 23-1501; ARS § 38-532).

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Employee Leave - Paid and Unpaid

1043.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide general guidance for managing paid and unpaid leave for eligible members for rest, relaxation, family, personal obligations, or district processes. This policy aims to establish the guidelines for the appropriate use of each type of leave and define the leave benefits provided to District members. Leaves not covered by this policy are FMLA and Military Leave.

Corresponding Procedures:

- Employee Leave

1043.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

The definitions below can be found in Policy Manual Policy:

- Exempt
- Non-Exempt
- Good Standing

Dated documentation - Receipts, invoices, or other dated documentation that supports the need for unscheduled PTO for the date requested.

Emergency - An urgent, sudden, and serious event, or an unforeseen change in circumstances, that necessitates immediate action to remedy harm or avert imminent danger to life, health, or property; an exigency.

Family member - A child of any age biological, adopted, foster, stepchild, child of a domestic partner, a legal ward, or any child to whom the member is in loco parentis, or was when the person was a minor. A parent is a biological, stepparent, adoptive parent, foster parent, the legal guardian of the member or the member's spouse/domestic partner, or a person who stood in loco parentis when the member or the member's spouse/domestic partner was a minor child. A spouse or domestic partner. A grandparent, grandchild, or sibling (biological, foster, adoptive, or step-relationship of the member or the member's spouse/domestic partner). Any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the member is equivalent to a family relationship.

Healthcare Provider - Any healthcare provider from whom the employer or the employer's group health plan's benefits manager will accept a medical certification to substantiate a claim for benefits.

Immediate Family Member - A child of any age biological, adopted, foster, stepchild, child of a domestic partner, a legal ward, or any child to whom the member is in loco parentis, or was when the person was a minor. A spouse or domestic partner.

PTO - Paid time off

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Personal Emergency - Any unforeseen incident that requires the immediate attention of the member to mitigate the situation. (i.e. broken water pipe, dead air conditioning unit, roof leak, etc...)

Separation Leave - Period of time authorized to utilize PTO to extend employment prior to separation from the District.

UPTO - Unscheduled Paid Time Off

1043.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Golder Ranch Fire District (the District) to manage paid and unpaid leave for eligible members in compliance with federal and state law.

1043.3 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of supervisors include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure the District's operational needs are met, including minimum staffing levels.
- Review direct subordinates' timesheet requests.
- Monitor and regularly review the attendance of those under their supervision to ensure PTO and leave use complies with District policy.
- Address absences and PTO use in the member's performance evaluation when excessive or unusual use has negatively affected the member's performance or the District's operations.
- Counsel members regarding excessive absences or inappropriate use of PTO.
- Refer eligible members to an available Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

1043.4 PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

Paid Time Off is provided for eligible members rest, relaxation, and other family, personal obligations, or district processes. Specific types of PTO usage are defined and discussed in the following sections. PTO hours shall be included in computing the number of hours worked for purposes of the computation of OT pay.

1043.4.1 SCHEDULED PTO

Scheduled PTO is paid time off requested no later than 24 hours before a scheduled shift and no more than 365 days in advance. Requests will be granted based on the order the requests were submitted, beginning at midnight, first to the last request, up to the maximum amount of personnel permitted to be on paid time off per shift. The following guidelines for submissions shall apply:

- Members on a 56-hour suppression work schedule will use PTO in 12 or 24-hour blocks (e.g., front half, back half, or the entire shift).
- Members on a 40-hour work schedule may use PTO in as small as 30-minute increments.

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- Members may not exceed 10 consecutive scheduled work days of leave, of any type, without prior approval of the Fire Chief, or designee. Request shall be submitted on the appropriate form to Human Resources who will submit to the Fire Chief, or designee.
- The maximum number of suppression members permitted to be off on scheduled PTO per shift will be calculated as ten percent (10%) of shift strength, rounded up to the nearest whole number, with the exception of operational need dictating maximum staffing. Battalion Chiefs, EMS Captains and uniformed members working a 40-hour schedule are excluded from the calculation of maximum number of members off on scheduled PTO.
- Scheduled PTO shall be canceled no later than 168 hours/7 days before the members scheduled shift by following the cancellation procedure.

1043.4.2 UNSCHEDULED PTO (UPTO)

Members utilizing UPTO shall not engage in other employment, or self-employment, or participate in sports, hobbies, recreational activities, or other activities. Unacceptable UPTO patterns, misuse, or misrepresentation place a burden on fellow members, and the District, and will be grounds for disciplinary action. More than one (1) occurrence of UPTO, with no documentation, in a rolling quarter may be considered an unacceptable pattern.

The second use of UPTO, in a rolling quarter, will be charged at double time. (i.e. 24 hours of UPTO will deduct 48 hours of PTO from the member's PTO bank) If the member provides documentation from a medical provider of a confirmed physical or mental illness/injury for themselves or their immediate family member, or dated documentation of a confirmed personal emergency within three (3) business days of the UPTO, half the deduction will be returned to their PTO bank. (i.e. 48 hours deducted for the use of 24 hours of UPTO, member will receive 24 hours credited back)

Upon receipt of appropriate documentation, the Battalion Chief or Supervisor responsible for the member shall edit the UPTO coding to reflect the hours charged at straight time for the hours used in the scheduling program, and shall forward the documentation to Human Resources for filing.

For FMLA qualifying events and information, see the Family and Medical Leave Policy.

UPTO requests shall occur no less than 1.5 hours before starting their scheduled shift.

On any UPTO occurrence without documentation, members who work hours in the same pay period containing UPTO that would otherwise qualify for unscheduled overtime shall receive base pay for those hours worked and shall have the UPTO hours returned to their PTO bank, equal to the unscheduled hours worked .

Unscheduled PTO utilized the day before, during, or the day after a District recognized holiday, PTO, or at any time during the two weeks before voluntary separation from employment, shall require a member to provide written documentation from their healthcare provider attesting to the need for the UPTO. Failure to provide written documentation from a healthcare provider will result in the member leaving not in good standing.

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1043.4.3 EDUCATION PTO

Education PTO covers classes, workshops, or certification courses that will benefit the member and the District's operations.

Education PTO requests are not restricted to ten (10), twelve (12), or twenty-four (24) hour blocks and may be utilized in increments as small as fifteen (15) minutes. Education PTO will be included in calculating the maximum number of suppression personnel permitted to be off per shift.

If the District did not use overtime to cover a member's absence for Education PTO, their PTO balance would be credited, and the hours will count as hours worked. If multiple members attend the same district-approved class or course, the total amount of hours that the District did not use for overtime coverage will be credited to the members' PTO balances equally.

1043.4.4 UNION PTO

Members may request Union PTO to attend union events that the Fire Chief, or designee, has approved. A maximum of two (2) members may be permitted to be off per shift utilizing Union PTO. Union PTO does not count towards the maximum number of members permitted to be off per shift.

Request for use of Union PTO must be submitted through the District scheduling program and the District approved Union PTO request form must be filled out and signed.

See attachment: UNION PTO REQUEST ELECTION FORM

1043.4.5 DONATED PTO

Donated PTO are hours donated by members to assist during complex medical situations or other circumstances that create severe financial hardships on fellow district members. Members who have exhausted their PTO banks may be eligible for donated PTO.

The member's donated hours shall be issued from PTO or comp time banks, and donors must submit their request through the approved procedure to the Finance Department. Donors must retain a minimum of 48 hours of PTO for personal use. The hours donated will be computed at the donor's base rate and added to the recipient's hour bank based on the recipient's base rate. For example, if the donor has a base rate of $16 and the recipient has a base rate of $8, the one hour donated would be worth two hours.

Once the receiving member of donated hours returns to work, they are no longer eligible to receive additional hour donations for that particular situation. Recipients shall use only the hours needed for a pay period. Any excess hours donated shall be returned to the donors in proportion to their contribution. Donors will not receive more hours in return than were initially contributed.

Donated hours will not count as hours worked for the recipient. Members receiving donated hours will not accrue PTO or holiday pay for any pay period they utilize donated hours.

If a member is receiving donated PTO they are not eligible for extra duty or overtime.

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1043.4.6 PTO ACCRUAL RATES

UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

YEARS OF SERVICE	ANNUAL ACCRUAL	PER PAY PERIOD
0 - 5	338	13
5 - 10	390	15
10 - 15	416	16
15 - 20	442	17
> 20	468	18

NON-UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

YEARS OF SERVICE	ANNUAL ACCRUAL	PER PAY PERIOD
0 - 5	260	10
5 - 10	312	12
10 - 15	364	14
15 - 20	416	16
> 20	442	17

1043.4.7 PTO BALANCE MANAGEMENT

A. Uniformed members who have accrued over 672 hours of PTO and non-uniformed members who have accrued over 480 hours of PTO as of the first payday in December have the options to:

1. Administrative (40-hour) personnel shall receive a payout at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 480 hours.

2. Suppression personnel (excluding Special Operations) assigned to a suppression schedule shall receive a payout at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 672 hours. Additional Special Assignment pay, stipends, or specialty pays shall not be included when calculating the payout rate.

3. Suppression personnel temporarily assigned to a 40-hour Special Assignment shall receive a payout at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule, for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 672 hours.

   (a) Additional Special Assignment pay, stipends, or specialty pays shall not be included when calculating the payout rate.

4. Special Teams personnel permanently assigned to the Special Operations or the Wildland stations will be paid out at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule, combined with their wage differential (Compensation Administration), for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 672.

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5. Members may choose not to receive a payout and may continue to accrue PTO up to the maximum allowable limits of:
   (a) 1,140 hours for uniformed personnel, and
   (b) 1,078 hours for non-uniformed personnel.

B. To elect your PTO balance option, members must complete and submit the PTO Balance Election Form to payroll. Elections will remain in effect from year to year unless changed by submitting a new form.

See attachment: PTO-BALANCE-ELECTION-FORM.pdf

Under extenuating circumstances, the Fire Chief or designee may allow members to exceed PTO hours above the maximum amounts. These additional amounts will not be eligible for District payouts.

1043.4.8 PTO PAYOUT UPON EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION
Upon separation of employment, PTO hours shall be compensated if the member is in good standing.

A. The member shall be paid as follows:
   1. Uniformed Members:
      (a) In the event of retirement under a District-qualified plan, accrued PTO hours up to 896 hours shall be compensated at the member's current base rate. Accrued hours in excess of 896 hours, up to a maximum of 1,140, shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.
      (b) To be eligible for a PTO payout upon voluntary separation, other than a District-qualified retirement plan, the member must have worked for the District for at least 10 years.
         - If eligible, the member will be compensated at their current base rate up to 300 hours. Accrued hours in excess of 300 up to a maximum of 1,140, shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.
   2. Non-uniformed Members:
      (a) In the event of retirement under a District-qualified plan, accrued PTO hours up to 640 hours shall be compensated at the member's current base rate. Accrued PTO hours in excess of 640 hours up to a maximum of 1078 shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.
      (b) In the event of any voluntary separation, other than a District-qualified retirement plan, the first 300 accrued PTO hours shall be compensated at the member's current base rate. Accrued hours in excess of 300, up to 1078, shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.

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B. The District shall be presented validated proof of application of retirement through Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS), or Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) in order to receive compensation for accrued PTO hours.

1. PSPRS retirement shall be validated upon the PSPRS Local Pension Board's ruling and the District's submission to PSPRS. Validation must occur no later than 30 days of the member's separation of employment date, unless extended by the Fire Chief due to extenuating circumstances.

2. ASRS retirement shall be validated upon receipt of the Ending Payroll Verification (EPV) notification. Validation must be received by the District's Finance Department no later than 90 days of the member's separation of employment date, unless extended by the Fire Chief due to extenuating circumstances.

C. Payment for accrued PTO hours shall be paid to the qualifying member on the District's next regularly scheduled payroll following confirmation of retirement through the respective system. Due to the required validation of the retirement system, payment for accrued PTO hours may occur following the member's final paycheck for regular wages and other accrued compensable leave time.

D. In the event of any non-voluntary separation, no PTO balances will be paid out to the member (non-voluntary separation is defined as termination, or resignation in lieu of termination).

E. In the event of the death of a member, the beneficiary designated by the member to receive retirement benefits shall be paid the deceased member's PTO leave balance at the same rate as noted in 1043.4.8.1

F. Members may elect to transfer PTO bank payouts directly to eligible District sponsored plans upon separation from employment.

G. Upon resignation members will be subject to the payout of PTO based upon current policy. Members shall not extend their employment by utilizing their PTO balance as time worked. Members shall work their two week notice unless otherwise determined by the Fire Chief, or designee.

H. Upon separation from District employment, members with at least 10 years of continuous District service may elect to donate to the District Emergency PTO Fund. The donation is voluntary and shall be made in accordance with District procedures.

1043.5 SHIFT TRADES

Shift trades are defined as members being permitted to request one or more of their suitably qualified colleagues (rank, qualifications, certifications, and specialty station assignments) to work one of their scheduled shifts and, in exchange, work one of their colleagues future scheduled shifts.

The hours worked on a shift trade shall be excluded from calculating the hours for which the substituting member would otherwise be entitled to overtime. Shift trades must be approved by the member’s direct supervisor and recorded on the scheduling program at least 24 hours in advance. Trades must be voluntary and reciprocated within a rolling year, and attendance is the responsibility of the member who accepts the shift trade.

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Members that request Unscheduled PTO on a shift trade shall have their PTO deducted manually by the scheduler, and the District will pay no compensation.

Circumventing the shift bid system with shift trades shall not be permitted.

1043.6 COMPENSATORY TIME

Compensatory time or comp time is an arrangement wherein members can accumulate time-off in place of receiving overtime compensation. For suppression members, only unscheduled OT can be converted to comp time. Members may use comp time instead of Scheduled PTO hours for their time off requests. The maximum accrual of comp time is 144 hours. Comp time placed on a future date is counted towards your maximum accrual of comp time. Any overtime hours worked beyond the maximum allowance will be compensated at the member's overtime rate. The District will reimburse all comp time hours at 100 percent upon any separation from employment and when transitioning from a non-exempt role to an exempt role.

- **Exception – Battalion Chief Transition:**
  When a Battalion Chief transitions to a Division Chief position, they will be notified three (3) months prior, or as soon as possible, to the transition to utilize any accrued comp time. If comp time is not used within that period, it will be paid out on the final paycheck prior to the transition.

1043.7 FLEXIBLE TIME

Flexible time or flex time is an arrangement that permits members to choose their times for starting and finishing work within a broad range of available hours at the discretion of their supervisor. Members may use flextime instead of Scheduled PTO or request to flex their schedule within the workweek to avoid working over 40 hours. Supervisors have the discretion to require a member to flex their schedule within the same workweek to avoid overtime as long as the member has not surpassed the overtime threshold.

Exempt members on 40-hour non-suppression schedules are permitted to request to flex their time. Non-exempt members on 40-hour non-suppression schedules can ask to flex their time within the same work week. Members on any suppression schedule may not utilize flex time.

Flextime shall expire if members return to a suppression schedule. Flex time will not be paid upon separation from employment.

1043.8 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Leave without pay or LWOP is a temporary non-pay status and absence from duty, issued at the discretion of the Fire Chief, or designee. Requests shall be submitted through the chain of command to Human Resources for approval and processing. Members placed on LWOP shall be required to exhaust all PTO accruals and available comp time, after which the remainder of the leave will become unpaid. Any pay period while on LWOP is incomplete and will not accrue PTO, and members are not eligible to work overtime. For information regarding how the periods

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of LWOP may affect health and retirement benefits, future pay adjustments, and PTO accrual, contact Human Resources.

1043.9 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Administrative Leave is a temporary, non-disciplinary leave status authorized by the Fire Chief, or designee, when it is determined that a member should be relieved from active duty pending a fitness-for-duty evaluation, investigation, or other circumstance affecting the interests of the District.

Members may be placed on Administrative Leave when:

A. There is reasonable suspicion that the member is unable to safely perform the essential functions of their position due to illness, injury, impairment, or behavioral concerns.

B. A fitness-for-duty evaluation has been ordered.

C. An investigation is being conducted into allegations of misconduct or circumstances that may affect the member's employment.

D. The Fire Chief, or designee, determines that temporary removal from active duty is in the best interests of the District, its members, or the public.

Administrative Leave may be paid or unpaid depending on the circumstances.

A. **Paid Administrative Leave -** Administrative Leave shall be paid when the District directs a member who is otherwise ready, willing, and able to work. Members on paid Administrative Leave shall continue to accrue PTO in accordance with this policy.

B. **Unpaid Administrative Leave -** Administrative Leave may be unpaid when a member is unable or unavailable to report for or perform assigned duties and the absence is not covered by another approved or legally protected leave status. Unpaid Administrative Leave shall be administered in accordance with the Leave Without Pay section of this policy.

Members placed on Administrative Leave shall comply with all directions and conditions established by the Fire Chief, or designee, including requirements regarding availability, evaluations, investigations, and return-to-work procedures.

Members shall not engage in outside employment while on Administrative Leave.

Members placed on Administrative Leave are not eligible to work overtime during the pay period in which they are placed on Administrative Leave.

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1043.10 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Bereavement leave is available for members to attend the funeral or assist with personal matters related to the death of a family member. Leave includes up to 72 hours for members on a suppression schedule and 40 hours for members on a non-suppression schedule.

Bereavement leave shall be requested through the member's chain of command. Chief Officers requesting bereavement leave shall have the leave approved by the next level Chief Officer in the chain of command. Additional leave may be granted as paid time off through the scheduling program, where a member has PTO available to them.

In the event of a coworker's death, bereavement leave may be granted to allow coworkers to attend the memorial/funeral services.

1043.11 CATASTROPHIC LEAVE

Catastrophic leave is provided to members if they, or an immediate family member is, diagnosed with a terminal illness. The District will provide a 50 percent match of donated PTO to provide the member with wages for up to one year. Members will be required to provide the medical information necessary to confirm the medical status to Human Resources. All information shall be kept confidential per state and federal requirements.

Members may work a light-duty administrative assignment if available, if they are physically able to do so, and receive a written release to light-duty from their healthcare provider(s). Any hours worked will offset the 50 percent match benefit of donated hours. The Fire Chief, or designee, may extend the leave at their discretion.

Members on catastrophic leave for an immediate family member shall have the right to retain donated PTO hours up to one (1) pay period at their point of returning to work. This allows for PTO to support any unforeseen circumstances upon return.

1043.12 EXTENDED LEAVE

Extended leave is defined as members being absent from duty for more than three consecutive shifts. Members may be required to furnish a statement from their healthcare provider(s) supporting their absence and ability to return to work.

Members on an extended absence shall contact their supervisor and Human Resources at specified intervals, not to exceed 30 days, to update their status and expected return date.

At the discretion of the Fire Chief, or designee, members may be required to undergo a return to work or a fitness for duty examination through a district-appointed physician and Human Resources/Health and Safety dependent on position. In such an event, the cost of such examination shall be covered by the District.

See attachment: LEAVE APPLICATION

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1043.13 SEPARATION LEAVE

Members in good standing may request Fire Chief approval to utilize PTO to extend their employment for no more than two consecutive pay periods.

Suppression members may not have any outstanding shift trades.

Requests for separation leave shall be submitted in writing to Human Resources, after providing Human Resources with a written resignation which must include the last day the member intends to work. If approved, the member shall not accrue PTO and their resignation is final and shall not be withdrawn. Written requests must be received two (2) pay periods prior to the first day of the requested separation leave.

If approved, the member shall not accrue PTO during separation leave, and the member's resignation is final and may not be withdrawn.

Separation leave will be included in calculating the maximum number of suppression personnel permitted to be off per shift.

1043.14 PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Members who have become parents through birth, adoption, or foster placement may request paid parental leave within 90 days of becoming a parent. Paid parental leave may be granted for up to four of the member’s currently assigned scheduled shifts. This leave is granted by the District to provide bonding time with the new family member.

Parental leave runs concurrent with any Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave for which the member is eligible (see FMLA policy or contact HR for guidance).

1043.15 TIER ONE PHYSICAL INCENTIVE

Members who score a Tier 1 on their annual physical will receive, from the District, eight (8) hours of PTO.

PTO adjustments will be made once the District is notified of tier status, which may be different from when the member is notified.

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Employee Leave - Paid and Unpaid

1043.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to provide general guidance for managing paid and unpaid leave for eligible members for rest, relaxation, family, personal obligations, or district processes. This policy aims to establish the guidelines for the appropriate use of each type of leave and define the leave benefits provided to District members. Leaves not covered by this policy are FMLA and Military Leave.

Corresponding Procedures:

- Employee Leave

1043.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

The definitions below can be found in Policy Manual Policy~~102~~:

- Exempt
- Non-Exempt
- Good Standing

Dated documentation - Receipts, invoices, or other dated documentation that supports the need for unscheduled PTO for the date requested.

Emergency - An urgent, sudden, and serious event, or an unforeseen change in circumstances, that necessitates immediate action to remedy harm or avert imminent danger to life, health, or property; an exigency.

Family member - A child of any age biological, adopted, foster, stepchild, child of a domestic partner, a legal ward, or any child to whom the member is in loco parentis, or was when the person was a minor. A parent is a biological, stepparent, adoptive parent, foster parent, the legal guardian of the member or the member's spouse/domestic partner, or a person who stood in loco parentis when the member or the member's spouse/domestic partner was a minor child. A spouse or domestic partner. A grandparent, grandchild, or sibling (biological, foster, adoptive, or step-relationship of the member or the member's spouse/domestic partner). Any other individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the member is equivalent to a family relationship.

Healthcare Provider - Any healthcare provider from whom the employer or the employer's group health plan's benefits manager will accept a medical certification to substantiate a claim for benefits.

Immediate Family Member - A child of any age biological, adopted, foster, stepchild, child of a domestic partner, a legal ward, or any child to whom the member is in loco parentis, or was when the person was a minor. A spouse or domestic partner.

PTO - Paid time off

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Personal Emergency - Any unforeseen incident that requires the immediate attention of the member to mitigate the situation. (i.e. broken water pipe, dead air conditioning unit, roof leak, etc...)

Separation Leave - Period of time authorized to utilize PTO to extend employment prior to separation from the District.

UPTO - Unscheduled Paid Time Off

1043.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Golder Ranch Fire District (the District) to manage paid and unpaid leave for eligible ~~employee~~member<u>s</u> in compliance with federal and state law.

1043.3 SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of supervisors include, but are not limited to:

- Ensure the District's operational needs are met, including minimum staffing levels.
- Review direct subordinates' timesheet requests.
- Monitor and regularly review the attendance of those under their supervision to ensure PTO and leave use complies with District policy.
- Address absences and PTO use in the member's performance evaluation when excessive or unusual use has negatively affected the member's performance or the District's operations.
- Counsel members regarding excessive absences or inappropriate use of PTO.
- Refer eligible members to an available Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

1043.4 PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

Paid Time Off is provided for eligible members rest, relaxation, and other family, personal obligations, or district processes. Specific types of PTO usage are defined and discussed in the following sections. PTO hours shall be included in computing the number of hours worked for purposes of the computation of OT pay.

1043.4.1 SCHEDULED PTO

Scheduled PTO is paid time off requested no later than 24 hours before a scheduled shift and no more than 365 days in advance. ~~Members utilizing UPTO shall not engage in other employment or self-employment.~~ Requests will be granted based on the order the requests were submitted, beginning at midnight, first to the last request, up to the maximum amount of personnel permitted to be on paid time off per shift. The following guidelines for submissions shall apply:

- Members on a 56-hour suppression work schedule will use PTO in 12 or 24-hour blocks (e.g., front half, back half, or the entire shift).
- Members on a 40-hour work schedule may use PTO in as small as 30-minute increments.

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- Members may not exceed 10 consecutive scheduled work days of leave, of any type, without prior approval of the Fire Chief, or designee. Request shall be submitted on the appropriate form to Human Resources who will submit to the Fire Chief, or designee.
- The maximum number of suppression members permitted to be off on scheduled PTO per shift will be calculated as ten percent (10%) of shift strength, rounded up to the nearest whole number, with the exception of operational need dictating maximum staffing. Battalion Chiefs, EMS Captains and uniformed members working a 40-hour schedule are excluded from the calculation of maximum number of members off on scheduled PTO.
- Scheduled PTO shall be canceled no later than 168 hours/7 days ~~48 hours~~ before the members scheduled shift by following the cancellation procedure.

1043.4.2 UNSCHEDULED PTO (UPTO)

Members utilizing UPTO shall not engage in other employment, or self-employment, or participate in sports, hobbies, recreational activities, or other activities. Unacceptable UPTO patterns, misuse, or misrepresentation place a burden on fellow members, and the District, and will be grounds for disciplinary action. More than one (1) occurrence of UPTO, with no documentation, in a rolling quarter may be considered an unacceptable pattern.

The second use of UPTO, in a rolling quarter, will be charged at double time. (i.e. 24 hours of UPTO will deduct 48 hours of PTO from the member's PTO bank) If the member provides documentation from a medical provider of a confirmed physical or mental illness/injury for themselves or their immediate family member, or dated documentation of a confirmed personal emergency within three (3) business days of the UPTO, half the deduction will be returned to their PTO bank. (i.e. 48 hours deducted for the use of 24 hours of UPTO, member will receive 24 hours credited back)

Upon receipt of appropriate documentation, the Battalion Chief or Supervisor responsible for the member shall edit the UPTO coding to reflect the hours charged at straight time for the hours used in the scheduling program, and shall forward the documentation to Human Resources for filing.

For FMLA qualifying events and information, see the Family and Medical Leave Policy.

UPTO requests shall occur no less than 1.5 hours before starting their scheduled shift.

On any UPTO occurrence without documentation, members who work hours in the same pay period containing UPTO that would otherwise qualify for unscheduled overtime shall receive base pay for those hours worked ~~working extra duty in the same pay period containing UPTO shall receive straight time for extra duty worked~~ and shall have the UPTO hours returned to their PTO bank, equal to the unscheduled hours worked ~~hours of extra duty worked~~.

Unscheduled PTO utilized the day before, during, or the day after a District recognized holiday, ~~vacation~~PTO, or at any time during the two weeks before voluntary separation from employment, shall require a member to provide written documentation from their healthcare provider attesting to the need for the UPTO. Failure to provide written documentation from a healthcare provider will result in the member leaving not in good standing.

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1043.4.3 EDUCATION PTO

Education PTO covers classes, workshops, or certification courses that will benefit the member and the District's operations.

Education PTO requests are not restricted to ten (10), twelve (12), or twenty-four (24) hour blocks and may be utilized in increments as small as fifteen (15) minutes. Education PTO will be included in calculating the maximum number of suppression personnel permitted to be off per shift.

If the District did not use overtime to cover a member's absence for Education PTO, their PTO balance would be credited, and the hours will count as hours worked. If multiple members attend the same district-approved class or course, the total amount of hours that the District did not use for overtime coverage will be credited to the members' PTO balances equally.

1043.4.4 UNION PTO

Members may request Union PTO to attend union events that the Fire Chief, or designee, has approved. A maximum of two (2) members may be permitted to be off per shift utilizing Union PTO. Union PTO does not count towards the maximum number of members permitted to be off per shift.

Request for use of Union PTO must be submitted through the District scheduling program and the District approved Union PTO request form must be filled out and signed.

See attachment: UNION PTO REQUEST ELECTION FORM

1043.4.5 DONATED PTO

Donated PTO are hours donated by members to assist during complex medical situations or other circumstances that create severe financial hardships on fellow district members. Members who have exhausted their PTO banks may be eligible for donated PTO.

The member's donated hours shall be issued from PTO or comp time banks, and donors must submit their request through the approved procedure to the Finance Department. Donors must retain a minimum of 48 hours of PTO for personal use. The hours donated will be computed at the donor's base rate and added to the recipient's hour bank based on the recipient's base rate. For example, if the donor has a base rate of $16 and the recipient has a base rate of $8, the one hour donated would be worth two hours.

Once the receiving member of donated hours returns to work, they are no longer eligible to receive additional hour donations for that particular situation. Recipients shall use only the hours needed for a pay period. Any excess hours donated shall be returned to the donors in proportion to their contribution. Donors will not receive more hours in return than were initially contributed.

Donated hours will not count as hours worked for the recipient. Members receiving donated hours will not accrue PTO or holiday pay for any pay period they utilize donated hours.

If a member is receiving donated PTO they are not eligible for extra duty or overtime.

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1043.4.6 PTO ACCRUAL RATES

UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

YEARS OF SERVICE	ANNUAL ACCRUAL	PER PAY PERIOD
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NON-UNIFORMED PERSONNEL

YEARS OF SERVICE	ANNUAL ACCRUAL	PER PAY PERIOD
0 - 5	260	10
5 - 10	312	12
10 - 15	364	14
15 - 20	416	16
> 20	442	17

1043.4.7 PTO BALANCE MANAGEMENT

A. Uniformed members who have accrued over 672 hours of PTO and non-uniformed members who have accrued over 480 hours of PTO as of the first payday in December have the options to:

1. Administrative (40-hour) personnel shall receive a payout at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 480 hours.

2. Suppression personnel (excluding Special Operations) assigned to a suppression schedule shall receive a payout at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 672 hours. Additional Special Assignment pay, stipends, or specialty pays shall not be included when calculating the payout rate.

3. Suppression personnel temporarily assigned to a 40-hour Special Assignment shall receive a payout at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule, for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 672 hours.

   (a) Additional Special Assignment pay, stipends, or specialty pays shall not be included when calculating the payout rate.

4. Special Teams personnel permanently assigned to the Special Operations or the Wildland stations will be paid out at 50% of their base rate, grade, and step, as listed on the District compensation schedule, combined with their wage differential (Compensation Administration), for all PTO hours accrued in excess of 672.

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5. Members may choose not to receive a payout and may continue to accrue PTO up to the maximum allowable limits of:
   (a) 1,140 hours for uniformed personnel, and
   (b) 1,078 hours for non-uniformed personnel.

B. To elect your PTO balance option, members must complete and submit the PTO Balance Election Form to payroll. Elections will remain in effect from year to year unless changed by submitting a new form.

See attachment: PTO-BALANCE-ELECTION-FORM.pdf

Under extenuating circumstances, the Fire Chief or designee may allow members to exceed PTO hours above the maximum amounts. These additional amounts will not be eligible for District payouts.

1043.4.8 PTO PAYOUT UPON EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

Upon separation of employment, PTO hours shall be compensated if the member is in good standing. ~~(i.e. a member who has not received corrective discipline, at the level of suspension or above within the last twelve (12) months).~~

A. The member shall be paid as follows:
   1. Uniformed Members:
      (a) In the event of retirement under a District-qualified plan, accrued PTO hours up to 896 ~~between 0 and 672~~ shall be compensated at the member's current base rate. Accrued hours in excess of 896 ~~672~~, up to a maximum of 1,140, shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.
      (b) To be eligible for a PTO payout upon voluntary separation, other than a District-qualified retirement plan, the member must have worked for the District for at least 10 years.
         • If eligible, the member will be compensated at their current base rate up to 300 hours. Accrued hours in excess of 300 up to a maximum of 1,140, shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.
   2. Non-uniformed Members:
      (a) In the event of retirement under a District-qualified plan, accrued PTO hours up to 640~~between 0 and 480~~ shall be compensated at the member's current base rate. Accrued PTO hours in excess of 640 ~~480~~ up to a maximum of 1078 shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.
      (b) In the event of any voluntary separation, other than a District-qualified retirement plan, the first 300 accrued PTO hours shall be compensated at the member's current base rate. Accrued hours in excess of 300, up to

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1078, shall be compensated at 50% of the member's current base rate.

B. The District shall be presented validated proof of application of retirement through Public Safety Personnel Retirement System (PSPRS), or Arizona State Retirement System (ASRS) in order to receive compensation for accrued PTO hours.

1. PSPRS retirement shall be validated upon the PSPRS Local Pension Board's ruling and the District's submission to PSPRS. Validation must occur no later than 30 days of the member's separation of employment date, unless extended by the Fire Chief due to extenuating circumstances.

2. ASRS retirement shall be validated upon receipt of the Ending Payroll Verification (EPV) notification. Validation must be received by the District's Finance Department no later than 90 days of the member's separation of employment date, unless extended by the Fire Chief due to extenuating circumstances.

C. Payment for accrued PTO hours shall be paid to the qualifying member on the District's next regularly scheduled payroll following confirmation of retirement through the respective system. Due to the required validation of the retirement system, payment for accrued PTO hours may occur following the member's final paycheck for regular wages and other accrued compensable leave time.

D. In the event of any non-voluntary separation, no PTO balances will be paid out to the member (non-voluntary separation is defined as termination, or resignation in lieu of termination).

E. In the event of the death of a member, the beneficiary designated by the member to receive retirement benefits shall be paid the deceased member's PTO leave balance at the same rate as noted in 1043.4.8.1

F. Members may elect to transfer PTO bank payouts directly to eligible District sponsored plans upon separation from employment.

G. Upon resignation members will be subject to the payout of PTO based upon current policy. Members shall not extend their employment by utilizing their PTO balance as time worked. Members shall work their two week notice unless otherwise determined by the Fire Chief, or designee.

H. Upon separation from District employment, members with at least 10 years of continuous District service may elect to donate to the District Emergency PTO Fund. The donation is voluntary and shall be made in accordance with District procedures.

1043.5 SHIFT TRADES

Shift trades are defined as members being permitted to request one or more of their suitably qualified colleagues (rank, qualifications, certifications, and specialty station assignments) to work one of their scheduled shifts and, in exchange, work one of their colleagues future scheduled shifts.

The hours worked on a shift trade shall be excluded from calculating the hours for which the substituting member would otherwise be entitled to overtime. Shift trades must be approved by the member's direct supervisor and recorded on the scheduling program at least 24 hours in advance. Trades must be voluntary and reciprocated within a rolling year, and attendance is the responsibility of the member who accepts the shift trade.

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Members that request Unscheduled PTO on a shift trade shall have their PTO deducted manually by the scheduler, and the District will pay no compensation.

Circumventing the shift bid system with shift trades shall not be permitted.

1043.6 COMPENSATORY TIME

Compensatory time or comp time is an arrangement wherein members can accumulate time-off in place of receiving overtime compensation. For suppression members, only unscheduled OT can be converted to comp time. Members may use comp time instead of Scheduled PTO hours for their time off requests. The maximum accrual of comp time is 144 hours. Comp time placed on a future date is counted towards your maximum accrual of comp time. Any overtime hours worked beyond the maximum allowance will be compensated at the member's overtime rate. The District will reimburse all comp time hours at 100 percent upon any separation from employment and when transitioning from a non-exempt role to an exempt role.

- **Exception – Battalion Chief Transition:**
  When a Battalion Chief transitions to a Division Chief position, they will be notified three (3) months prior, or as soon as possible, to the transition to utilize any accrued comp time. If comp time is not used within that period, it will be paid out on the final paycheck prior to the transition.

~~Members shall not use comp time for FMLA qualifying events.~~

1043.7 FLEXIBLE TIME

Flexible time or flex time is an arrangement that permits members to choose their times for starting and finishing work within a broad range of available hours at the discretion of their supervisor. Members may use flextime instead of Scheduled PTO or request to flex their schedule within the workweek to avoid working over 40 hours. Supervisors have the discretion to require a member to flex their schedule within the same workweek to avoid overtime as long as the member has not surpassed the overtime threshold.

Exempt members on 40-hour non-suppression schedules are permitted to request to flex their time. Non-exempt members on 40-hour non-suppression schedules can ask to flex their time within the same work week. Members on any suppression schedule may not utilize flex time.

Flextime shall expire if members return to a suppression schedule. Flex time will not be paid upon separation from employment.

1043.8 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Leave without pay or LWOP is a temporary non-pay status and absence from duty, issued at the discretion of the Fire Chief, or designee. Requests shall be submitted through the chain of command to Human Resources for approval and processing. Members placed on LWOP shall be required to exhaust all PTO accruals and available comp time, after which the remainder of the leave will become unpaid. Any pay period while on LWOP is incomplete and will not accrue PTO, and members are not eligible to work overtime. For information regarding how the periods

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of LWOP may affect health and retirement benefits, future pay adjustments, and PTO accrual, contact Human Resources.

1043.9 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

Administrative Leave is a temporary, non-disciplinary leave status authorized by the Fire Chief, or designee, when it is determined that a member should be relieved from active duty pending a fitness-for-duty evaluation, investigation, or other circumstance affecting the interests of the District.

Members may be placed on Administrative Leave when:

A. There is reasonable suspicion that the member is unable to safely perform the essential functions of their position due to illness, injury, impairment, or behavioral concerns.

B. A fitness-for-duty evaluation has been ordered.

C. An investigation is being conducted into allegations of misconduct or circumstances that may affect the member's employment.

D. The Fire Chief, or designee, determines that temporary removal from active duty is in the best interests of the District, its members, or the public.

Administrative Leave may be paid or unpaid depending on the circumstances.

A. **Paid Administrative Leave -** Administrative Leave shall be paid when the District directs a member who is otherwise ready, willing, and able to work. Members on paid Administrative Leave shall continue to accrue PTO in accordance with this policy.

B. **Unpaid Administrative Leave -** Administrative Leave may be unpaid when a member is unable or unavailable to report for or perform assigned duties and the absence is not covered by another approved or legally protected leave status. Unpaid Administrative Leave shall be administered in accordance with the Leave Without Pay section of this policy.

Members placed on Administrative Leave shall comply with all directions and conditions established by the Fire Chief, or designee, including requirements regarding availability, evaluations, investigations, and return-to-work procedures.

Members shall not engage in outside employment while on Administrative Leave.

Members placed on Administrative Leave are not eligible to work overtime during the pay period in which they are placed on Administrative Leave.

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1043.10 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Bereavement leave is available for members to attend the funeral or assist with personal matters related to the death of a family member. Leave includes up to 72 hours for members on a suppression schedule and 40 hours for members on a non-suppression schedule.

Bereavement leave shall be requested through the member's chain of command. Chief Officers requesting bereavement leave shall have the leave approved by the next level Chief Officer in the chain of command. Additional leave may be granted as paid time off through the scheduling program, where a member has PTO available to them.

In the event of a coworker's death, bereavement leave may be granted to allow coworkers to attend the memorial/funeral services.

1043.11 CATASTROPHIC LEAVE

Catastrophic leave is provided to members if they, or an immediate family member is, diagnosed with a terminal illness. The District will provide a 50 percent match of donated PTO to provide the member with wages for up to one year. Members will be required to provide the medical information necessary to confirm the medical status to Human Resources. All information shall be kept confidential per state and federal requirements.

Members may work a light-duty administrative assignment if available, if they are physically able to do so, and receive a written release to light-duty from their healthcare provider(s). Any hours worked will offset the 50 percent match benefit of donated hours. The Fire Chief, or designee, may extend the leave at their discretion.

Members on catastrophic leave for an immediate family member shall have the right to retain donated PTO hours up to one (1) pay period at their point of returning to work. This allows for PTO to support any unforeseen circumstances upon return.

1043.12 EXTENDED LEAVE ~~ABSENCE~~

Extended ~~absence~~ leave is defined as members being absent from duty for more than three consecutive shifts. Members may be required to furnish a statement from their healthcare provider(s) supporting their absence and ability to return to work.

Members on an extended absence shall contact their supervisor and Human Resources at specified intervals, not to exceed 30 days, to update their status and expected return date.

At the discretion of the Fire Chief, or designee, members may be required to undergo a return to work or a fitness for duty examination through a district-appointed physician and Human Resources/Health and Safety dependent on position. In such an event, the cost of such examination shall be covered by the District.

See attachment: LEAVE APPLICATION

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1043.13 SEPARATION LEAVE

Members in good standing may request Fire Chief approval to utilize PTO to extend their employment for no more than two consecutive pay periods.

Suppression members may not have any outstanding shift trades.

Requests for separation leave shall be submitted in writing to Human Resources, after providing Human Resources with a written resignation which must include the last day the member intends to work. If approved, the member shall not accrue PTO and their resignation is final and shall not be withdrawn. Written requests must be received two (2) pay periods prior to the first day of the requested separation leave.

If approved, the member shall not accrue PTO during separation leave, and the member's resignation is final and may not be withdrawn.

Separation leave will be included in calculating the maximum number of suppression personnel permitted to be off per shift.

1043.14 PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Members who have become parents ~~within 90 days (birth, adoption, foster) may request paid parental leave, up to 24 hours for members on a suppression schedule and 10 hours for members on a non- suppression schedule.~~ through birth, adoption, or foster placement may request paid parental leave within 90 days of becoming a parent. Paid parental leave may be granted for up to four of the member's currently assigned scheduled shifts. This leave is granted by the District to provide bonding time with the new family member.

Parental leave runs concurrent with ~~the members~~ any Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) ~~leave granted under the FMLA~~for which the member is eligible~~.~~ (see FMLA policy or contact HR for guidance).

1043.15 TIER ONE PHYSICAL INCENTIVE

Members who score a Tier 1 on their annual physical will receive, from the District, eight (8) hours of PTO.

PTO adjustments will be made once the District is notified of tier status, which may be different from when the member is notified.

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1618 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A. PURPOSE

TO PROVIDE A MEANS FOR THE FIRE CHIEF TO EXERCISE DISCRETION IN DETERMINING INSTANCES IN WHICH IT IS NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE DISTRICT TO ALLOW AN EMPLOYEE TO BE ON ACTIVE DUTY STATUS

B. SCOPE

1. This policy applies to all employees of the District.

C. POLICY

1. It is the policy of GRFD to provide Administrative Leave of Absence to an employee whom the Fire Chief believes should not be on active duty for reasons outlined in the Guidelines below.

D. GUIDELINES

1. In the event an employee appears to be unable to perform the job duties due to illness or injury, the Fire Chief may place the employee on Administrative Leave of Absence pending submission to a medical or psychological fitness-for-duty evaluation by the District-designated physician. Pending the outcome of the fitness-for-duty evaluation, the employee shall continue to receive normal compensation and benefits. Once the determination is made as to whether or not the employee is fit for duty, the employee shall either be returned to duty or be subject to use of accrued sick leave.

2. In the event that an employee has been formally charged with the commission of a felony or a misdemeanor that may have bearing on one's employment, the Fire Chief may place the employee on Administrative Leave of Absence with or without pay. If the Administrative Leave is to be without pay, the employee shall first be granted a pre-determination hearing in order to allow the employee to explain the situation and provide any additional facts and/or mitigating circumstances. The Fire Chief shall consider any information provided during the hearing prior to making a final determination of placement on Administrative Leave without pay. Such a leave shall not be limited to the same time frames as disciplinary suspensions.

3. Additionally, the Fire Chief has the discretion to place an employee on Administrative Leave in the event of any circumstances the Fire Chief deems appropriate. Such a leave shall entitle the employee to continuation of all normal compensation and benefits.

4. If at any time during the Administrative Leave the Fire Chief deems it appropriate, he may elect to conduct an investigation of the matter and make a determination as to any violations of workplace policy. The Fire Chief may place one or more employees on paid administrative leave to protect the best interests of the District including to preserve the integrity of any investigation into personnel matters or employee conduct of any kind. Based upon his findings, he may opt to take disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, regardless of the status of any criminal charges.
    a. Unless otherwise ordered, an employee on paid administrative leave shall have no unauthorized contact with another employee and is prohibited from entering GRFD premises unless approved by the Fire Chief or his designee. Authorized contact shall be established at the time the employee is placed on paid administrative leave and may subject to change from time to time by order of the Fire Chief.
    b. Administrative leave will be for a duration as determined by the Fire Chief on a case by case basis.
    c. Employees placed on administrative leave shall be temporarily assigned to their home address on record with the District during all of the employee's scheduled work hours which shall be subject to verification by supervisory staff as designated by the Fire Chief.
    d. For the duration of Administrative Leave, the employee's scheduled work hours shall be designated as Monday – Friday 0800-1700 hours. An employee on paid administrative leave must follow all procedures, obtain approvals, and use accrued leave (where applicable) for time off as if the employee were on his or her regular assignment.
    e. The employee shall be subject to recall to respond to a request from the District at any time during scheduled work hours while on the paid administrative leave.

5. If an employee has not yet been disciplined for the matter which resulted in Administrative Leave, upon exoneration of an employee covered under Guideline "2" above, the employee may be returned to the position with reinstatement of benefits and retroactive pay to the commencement of the Administrative Leave. However, exoneration by the court system does not preclude the District from taking disciplinary action based upon any associated violation of workplace policy.

6. If an employee has not yet been disciplined for the matter which resulted in Administrative Leave, upon determination of guilt or a plea of no contest, the Fire Chief shall determine appropriate action to be taken. Such action may be the return of the employee to the position, with all or reduced salary and benefits, and/or appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

7. All paid leave benefits (vacation leave, sick leave, holidays) shall cease to accrue during the *unpaid* Administrative Leave.

8. Group health and dental insurance benefits provided by the District shall continue during the Administrative Leave of Absence.

9. In order to return to work, the employee shall prove that all certifications and skills are still satisfactory for the position.

10. PSPRS will accept authorized leave without pay as "service" but not as "credited service" (i.e., the anticipated retirement date may be extended).

11. The time spent on an unpaid Administrative Leave of Absence shall not be counted toward credited service for purposes of determination of seniority within the District, unless the employee is exonerated as set forth in Guideline "5" above.

Holiday Time Off

1045.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that full-time members of the District are provided with a competitive paid-time-off benefit for the recognition of District-designated holidays.

1045.2 POLICY

On the following traditionally recognized Federal holidays, the administrative offices will be closed, and no in-person or remote work shall be authorized unless approved by the Fire Chief or designee:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

The District recognizes the additional Federal holidays, in-person or remote work is allowed only with a supervisor's prior approval:

- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- Indigenous Peoples’ Day (second Monday in October)
- Veterans Day (November 11)
- Civil Rights Day (third Monday in January)
- Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Juneteenth (June 19)

Additional District-designated holiday:

- Member's birthday

Non-uniformed and Fire Prevention members shall have all District-designated holidays prepopulated in the timekeeping system on July 1 of each year (the first day of the fiscal year), and birthday holiday hours shall be credited to the member's holiday time-off bank.

The 40 hours of holiday time-off reflected in the first 4 holidays listed above must be utilized on the days the District administrative offices are closed. The 80 hours may be utilized by the member on dates they choose, after approval from their supervisor, and following all applicable time-off policies.

Holiday Time Off

According to the guidelines below, full-time uniformed members (excluding Fire Prevention) shall receive holiday compensation in accordance with Section 1045.3.3. Members electing the Holiday Bank option shall receive 96 hours in their holiday time-off bank on July 1 of each fiscal year.

1045.3 GUIDELINES

1045.3.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

The District views holiday time-off as important for the member and their family and encourages the use of all holiday hours within the fiscal year in which they are provided.

A. District holidays that fall on a Friday or Saturday will be observed on the preceding Thursday. District holidays that fall on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Exceptions shall be made at the discretion of the Fire Chief or designee.
B. If a member is receiving workers' compensation benefits due to an illness or injury, they shall continue to receive holiday pay for those holidays that occur while on workers' compensation leave.
C. Holiday pay shall be counted as "hours worked" to calculate overtime for non-uniformed and uniformed members assigned to a recognized administrative uniformed position.
D. Holiday pay is based upon the completion of the pay period. A completed pay period is one that does not include donated leave, personal leave of absence, suspension, or other leave without pay.
E. Members shall not transfer holiday time-off into their comp time bank.
F. Suppression members who have unused holiday hours remaining in their holiday bank shall be paid out at 100% at the end of the fiscal year.
G. Administrative personnel, including Fire Prevention, will forfeit any unused holiday time-off remaining in their bank at the end of each fiscal year (June 30).
H. At the end of employment, holiday time-off is not eligible for pay-out for Administrative personnel, including Fire Prevention.

1045.3.2 FULL-TIME MEMBERS ON A 40-HOUR SCHEDULE

A. Members shall receive 10 holiday hours in lieu of working a full day on a holiday.
B. Members may not work a holiday and be paid holiday time.
C. Members are responsible for removing their holiday time-off from the District's timekeeping system, if they received approval to work the holiday.
D. Members shall use no more than 2 holidays per month, with the exception of the birthday holiday.
E. Suppression members who have exhausted their holiday bank at the time of assignment to a 40-hour schedule will be required to take PTO for the remaining holidays in the fiscal year.

1045.3.3 FULL-TIME MEMBERS ON A SUPPRESSION SCHEDULE

Full-time, uniformed members assigned to a suppression schedule shall receive holiday compensation at their base rate in one of the following manners:

- **Option 1 – Holiday Pay (Default):** Members may elect to receive 8 hours of holiday pay

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at the member's base rate for each recognized holiday, regardless of whether the member is scheduled to work. No holiday bank shall be established under this option.

- **Option 2 – Holiday Bank:** Members may elect to receive all holiday hours for the fiscal year in a holiday bank on July 1. Holiday bank hours may be used at any time during the fiscal year ending June 30. Members utilizing the holiday bank shall be responsible for accurately recording all holiday time taken in the District's timekeeping system. Members who use holiday bank hours before an observed holiday and subsequently separate from the District shall not be required to reimburse the District for those hours.

Each eligible member shall make an annual election of either Option 1 or Option 2. Members who fail to make an election by the established deadline of June 30 shall automatically be enrolled in Option 1 – Holiday Pay as the default option. The member's election, whether elected or assigned by default, shall remain in effect for the entire fiscal year and may not be changed until the next fiscal year, unless circumstances beyond the member's control prevent the member from making the election and they have approval from the Fire Chief or designee.

New members shall make an election upon hire. If no election is made, the member shall be enrolled in Option 1 – Holiday Pay as the default option. Members who elect Option 2 – Holiday Bank shall receive a prorated holiday time-off bank based on the number of recognized holidays remaining in the fiscal year.

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Holiday Time Off

1045.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that full-time members of the District are provided with a competitive paid-time-off benefit for the recognition of District-designated holidays.

1045.2 POLICY

On the following traditionally recognized Federal holidays, the administrative offices will be closed, and no in-person or remote work shall be authorized unless approved by the Fire Chief or designee:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Thanksgiving Day (fourth Thursday in November)
- Christmas Day (December 25)

The District recognizes the additional Federal holidays, in-person or remote work is allowed only with a supervisor's prior approval:

- Labor Day (first Monday in September)
- ~~Columbus~~Indigenous Peoples' Day (second Monday in October)
- Veterans Day (November 11)
- Civil Rights Day (third Monday in January)
- Presidents' Day (third Monday in February)
- Memorial Day (last Monday in May)
- Juneteenth (June 19)

Additional District-designated holiday:

- Member's birthday

Non-uniformed and Fire Prevention members ~~will receive 80 hours in their holiday time-off bank, in the timekeeping system, on July 1 of each year (the first day of the fiscal year).~~

shall have all District-designated holidays prepopulated in the timekeeping system on July 1 of each year (the first day of the fiscal year), and birthday holiday hours shall be credited to the member's holiday time-off bank.

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The ~~additional~~ 40 hours of holiday time-off reflected in the first 4 holidays listed above must be utilized on the days the District administrative offices are closed.~~; these hours will not be included in the holiday time-off bank.~~

The 80 hours may be utilized by the member on dates they choose, after approval from their supervisor, and following all applicable time-off policies.

According to the guidelines below, full-time uniformed members (excluding Fire Prevention) shall receive holiday compensation in accordance with Section 1045.3.3. Members electing the Holiday Bank option shall receive 96 hours in their holiday time-off bank on July 1 of each fiscal year.

~~Fire Prevention uniformed members work a 40-hour work week and will receive a bank of 120 hours due to the requirement that the on-call fire investigator works on mandatory holidays. Holiday time for non-uniform members, scheduled for a 40-hour work week, counts as part of their regularly scheduled hours. Members on a suppression schedule receive 8-hours of holiday pay above and beyond their regularly scheduled hours.~~

1045.3 GUIDELINES

1045.3.1 GENERAL GUIDELINES

The District views holiday time-off as important for the member and their family and encourages the use of all holiday hours within the fiscal year in which they are provided.

A. District holidays that fall on a Friday or Saturday will be observed on the preceding Thursday. District holidays that fall on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday. Exceptions shall be made at the discretion of the Fire Chief or designee.

B. If a member is receiving workers' compensation benefits due to an illness or injury, they shall continue to receive holiday pay for those holidays that occur while on workers' compensation leave.

C. Holiday pay shall be counted as "hours worked" to calculate overtime for non-uniformed and uniformed members assigned to a recognized administrative uniformed position.

D. Holiday pay is based upon the completion of the pay period. A completed pay period is one that does not include donated leave, personal leave of absence, suspension, or other leave without pay.

E. Members shall not transfer holiday time-off into their comp time bank.

F. Suppression members who have unused holiday hours remaining in their holiday bank shall be paid out at 100% at the end of the fiscal year.

G. Administrative personnel, including Fire Prevention, will forfeit any unused holiday time-off remaining in their bank at the end of each fiscal year (June 30).

H. At the end of employment, holiday time-off is not eligible for pay-out for Administrative personnel, including Fire Prevention.

I. ~~Any unused holiday hours shall be paid out at 100% at the end of the fiscal year.~~

J. ~~Unused holiday time-off remaining in a member's bank will be forfeited at the end of each fiscal year (June 30).~~

K. ~~At the end of employment, holiday time-off is not eligible for pay-out.~~

~~(a)~~ 1045.3.2 FULL-TIME MEMBERS ON A 40-HOUR SCHEDULE

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A. ~~Full-time, non-uniformed employee~~Members shall receive 10 ~~hours of~~ holiday ~~pay~~ hours in lieu of working a full day on a holiday. ~~Full-time, non-uniformed~~

~~(b)~~ B. ~~employee~~Members may not work a holiday and be paid holiday time.

~~(c)~~ C. ~~**Non-uniformed employee**~~Members are responsible for removing their holiday timeoff from the District's timekeeping system, if they received approval to work the holiday.

D. ~~**Non-uniformed employee**~~Members shall use no more than 2 holidays per month, with the exception of the birthday holiday.

~~A.~~E. Suppression members who have exhausted their holiday bank at the time of assignment to a 40-hour schedule will be required to take PTO for the remaining holidays in the fiscal year.

~~(d) The District views holiday time-off as important, for the employee and their family, and encourages the use of all holiday hours within the fiscal year in which it is provided. Unused holiday time-off remaining in a non-uniformed employee's bank will be forfeited at the end of each fiscal year (June 30).~~

~~Non-uniformed employees shall not transfer holiday time-off into their comp time bank.~~

~~FLS **members who are full-time, uniformed employees**, shall have the choice of either receiving ten hours of holiday pay or ten hours of comp time, paid at the employee's adjusted base rate, regardless of whether or not they are scheduled to work. However, the employee's comp time bank is capped at 144 hours~~1045.3.3 FULL-TIME UNIFORMED MEMBERS ON A SUPPRESSION SCHEDULE~~(EXCLUDING FIRE PREVENTION) (e)~~

Full-time, uniformed ~~employee~~members assigned to a suppression schedule shall ~~have the choice of either~~ receive holiday compensation at their base rate in one of the following manners: ~~ing eight hours of holiday pay or eight hours of comp time, paid at the employee's adjusted base rate, regardless of whether or not they are scheduled to work. However, the employee's comp time bank is capped at 144 hours.~~

- **Option 1 – Holiday Pay (Default):** Members may elect to receive 8 hours of holiday pay at the member's base rate for each recognized holiday, regardless of whether the member is scheduled to work. No holiday bank shall be established under this option.

- **Option 2 – Holiday Bank:** Members may elect to receive all holiday hours for the fiscal year in a holiday bank on July 1. Holiday bank hours may be used at any time during the fiscal year ending June 30. Members utilizing the holiday bank shall be responsible for accurately recording all holiday time taken in the District's timekeeping system. Members who use holiday bank hours before an observed holiday and subsequently separate from the District shall not be required to reimburse the District for those hours.

- Each eligible member shall make an annual election of either Option 1 or Option 2. Members who fail to make an election by the established deadline of June 30 shall automatically be enrolled in Option 1 – Holiday Pay as the default option. The member's election, whether elected or assigned by default, shall remain in effect for the entire fiscal year and may not be changed until the next fiscal year, unless circumstances beyond the member's control

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prevent the member from making the election and they have approval from the Fire Chief or designee.~~.~~

New members shall make an election upon hire. If no election is made, the member shall be enrolled in Option 1 – Holiday Pay as the default option. Members who elect Option 2 – Holiday Bank shall receive a prorated holiday time-off bank based on the number of recognized holidays remaining in the fiscal year.

~~(f) At the end of employment, holiday time-off is not eligible for pay-out.~~

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GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Tom Brandhuber, Fire Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN PIMA COUNTY AND PARTICIPATING FIRE DEPARTMENTS/ DISTRICTS IN PIMA COUNTY FOR REGIONAL WILDFIRE EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCE SHARING

ITEM #: 8B

REQUIRED ACTION:	☐ Discussion Only	☑ Formal Motion	☐ Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	☑ Approve	☐ Conditional Approval	☐ Deny
SUPPORTED BY:	☑ Staff	☑ Fire Chief	☑ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

Intergovernmental agreement to ensure there are adequate resources to respond to a Wildfire within Pima County.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

Approval of the intergovernmental agreement between Pima County and participating fire departments and fire districts in Pima County for regional wildfire equipment and resource sharing.

Intergovernmental Agreement
between
Pima County and Participating Fire Departments and Fire Districts in Pima County
for
Regional Wildfire Equipment and Resource Sharing

This Intergovernmental Agreement ("**IGA**") is entered into by and between Pima County, a body politic and corporate of the State of Arizona ("**County**") and each participating fire department, fire district, or other eligible governmental fire agency executing this IGA (individually a "**Participating Agency**"; collectively, the "**Participating Agencies**").

1. **Background**.

1.1. County and Participating Agencies may contract for services and enter into agreements with one another for joint or cooperative action pursuant to A.R.S. § 11-951, et seq.

1.2. County has the legal authority pursuant to A.R.S. § 26-308 to appropriate and expend funds for emergency management purposes.

1.3. County is responsible for emergency preparation for wildfires, fuel reduction mitigation, land use planning, infrastructure maintenance in owned right of way, public education and prevention, and enforcement of evacuations under A.R.S. §§ 11-251, 26-301, 26-308, 28-6701, 28-6705, and 40-283.

1.4. Participating Agencies are responsible for providing fire suppression and emergency services within their jurisdictions, including wildfire response.

1.5. Wildfire incidents in the Pima County region have increasingly crossed jurisdictional boundaries, demonstrating the interconnected nature of wildfire risk.

1.6. County has developed and continues to implement a regional Wildfire Mitigation Plan that emphasizes prevention, mitigation, response, recovery and regional collaboration.

1.7. County maintains the Wildfire Mitigation Plan as directed by the Pima County Board of Supervisors. Under this plan, Participating Agencies, land managers, nonprofit organizations, and other eligible entities may submit project proposals for consideration. The Wildfire Executive Group, comprised of County Administration and directors of County departments with responsibilities or impacts related to wildland fire and one annual rotating Pima Fire Chiefs' Association appointee, reviews proposed projects to determine which should be approved and supported based on need and wildfire risk.

1.8. During County's implementation of the first year of the Wildfire Mitigation Plan, multiple fire agencies within Pima County identified operational gaps in wildland firefighting equipment and personal protection equipment needed to support emergency responses to wildfires.

1.9. Because County seeks to maximize the effectiveness, efficiency, and regional benefit of available resources, County has elected to pilot a regional resource sharing model

through the acquisition of a Regional Wildland Fire Equipment Trailer and Unmanned Aircraft Systems ("UAS").

1.10. County desires to maximize the public benefit of these investments by making certain regional wildfire resources available to Participating Agencies for wildfire suppression, emergency response, hazardous fuels reduction, prescribed fire operations, emergency preparedness training and disaster response.

1.11. County intends to evaluate utilization, demand, unmet demand, operational benefit, and effectiveness of these initial investments in emergency preparation to inform future wildfire mitigation investments, subject to available funding and applicable approval requirements.

2. **Purpose**. The purpose of the IGA is to establish the duties and responsibilities of the County and Participating Agencies relating to the distribution, management, deployment, accountability, and cooperative use of regional wildfire response resources. County and Participating Agencies intend this IGA to improve wildfire preparedness, increase interoperability among fire agencies, and improve regional response capability.

2.1. County commits no specific level of funding or resource acquisition under this Agreement. All purchases, support activities, and resource development are subject to appropriations, availability of funds, and approval through the Plan and the Executive Group.

2.2. Participating Agencies understand that participation in this IGA does not guarantee availability, allocation or deployment of any specific resource covered by the IGA. The equipment provided under this IGA must remain within the boundaries of Pima County for the duration of its use.

3. **Governmental Purposes.** County purchased regional wildfire equipment may be made available to Participating Agencies for the following official governmental purposes including, but not limited to:

3.1. Wildfire suppression.

3.2. Initial response operations.

3.3. Extended response incidents.

3.4. Prescribed fire operations.

3.5. Hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire mitigation projects.

3.6. Emergency and disaster response and recovery.

3.7. Training and public safety preparedness activities.

4. **Equipment Program Resources.** Through this IGA County may make available to Participating Agencies regional wildfire response resources including, but not limited to, the following:

4.1. Unmanned Aircraft Systems ("UAS"), including drones, batteries, and assorted equipment.

4.2. Regional Wildland Fire Equipment Trailer ("Trailer"), equipped with wildland hose, hose packs, pumps, portable water storage equipment, hose fittings, nozzles, and emergency sprinkler kits (Exhibit B).

4.3. Wildland firefighter Personal Protective Equipment ("PPE"), consisting of helmet, flame resistant shirt, flame resistant pants, neck shroud, fire pack, fire shelter, and wildland gloves.

5. **County Responsibilities**. County will:

5.1. Use wildfire risk mapping tools as data to identify where there are higher ignition risks, to guide prioritization of mitigation activities, resource acquisition, and operational support. The mapping tools may be updated periodically to reflect emerging conditions, scientific guidance, or operational needs.

5.2. Coordinate the initial inventory management of County purchased wildfire response resources and equipment and make list available to Participating Agencies, including ensuring host locations have the information needed to maintain availability for regional use.

5.3. Evaluate this IGA, at least twice annually. In this evaluation, County may consider measuring requests received, successful deployments, requesting agencies, unfilled requests, incident types, deployment duration, equipment utilized, equipment lost/damaged, maintenance repair cost, agency feedback, remaining gaps or opportunity to scale.

5.4. Conduct an annual maintenance inspection of the Trailer to assess ordinary wear and tear and to perform routine maintenance.

6. **Participating Agencies' Responsibilities.** Participating Agencies will:

6.1. Designate one primary and one alternate representative authorized to coordinate requests, receipts, and accountability of County purchased equipment.

6.2. Ensure the Participating Agencies personnel using County purchased equipment possess the training, certifications, licenses, and qualifications required by federal, state, and agency standards.

6.3. Maintain reasonable accountability for County purchased equipment while in its possession and promptly report any loss, theft, damage, malfunction, or misuse.

6.4. Maintain all firefighting PPE and equipment transferred under this IGA in accordance with applicable National Fire Protection Association ("NFPA") standards, manufacturer recommendations, Occupational Safety and Health Administration ("OSHA") regulations and agency policy.

6.5. Ensure that permanently transferred PPE is used for official governmental purposes by trained personnel.

6.6. Participate when practical, in regional wildfire training exercises, emergency preparedness activities, and after-action reviews.

6.7. Make the Trailer available for annual maintenance inspections upon reasonable prior notice from the County.

6.8. Make itself available to meet with County at least twice per year to support County's evaluation of IGA.

7. **Requests for Equipment Deployments and Documentation.** A master inventory of all County purchased regional wildfire equipment will be created upon purchase and prior to deployment. County may make purchased equipment available through procedures established by this IGA.

7.1. **Requests.** The deployment of the UAS ("Drones") or Trailer shall be initiated by the Participating Agency's designee or alternate, through the designated regional emergency communications center ("Regional Dispatch") in accordance with established regional dispatch procedures. Once the County designates a Regional Equipment Host Agency and transfers operational responsibility, the Host Agency shall be responsible for establishing Trailer use training, coordinating, storing, maintaining operational readiness, and deploying these regional resources as needed.

7.2. **Deployment.** Upon designation by the County, the Regional Equipment Host Agency shall maintain operational control of the UAS and Trailer. The Host Agency shall determine deployment based on:

7.2.1. Availability of resources

7.2.2. Operational readiness

7.2.3. Incident priority

7.2.4. Regional resource availability

7.3. **Documentation.** For each deployment, the Regional Equipment Host Agency shall maintain deployment records including:

7.3.1. Date and time of deployment

7.3.2. Type of incident and incident number

7.3.3. Requesting agency

7.3.4. Dispatch information

7.3.5. Equipment utilized

7.3.6. Missing or damaged equipment

7.3.7. Date and time of equipment return to service

8. **Ownership and Damage of County Property.**

   8.1. Participating Agencies do not acquire an ownership interest in County purchased UAS or the Trailer by virtue of possessing, storing, maintaining, or utilizing such equipment.

   8.2. Participating Agencies must not sell, transfer, lease, modify, assign, or otherwise dispose of County purchased equipment without prior written authorization from the County.

   8.3. County may designate one or more Participating Agencies to serve as Regional Equipment Host Agency for specified County purchased regional equipment. Designation as a Regional Equipment Host Agency does not transfer ownership of County purchased equipment without prior written authorization from the County unless expressly provided otherwise in this IGA.

   8.4. The Participating Agency shall be solely responsible, at its own expense, for any substantial damage to the Trailer occurring while the Trailer is in its possession or control. "Substantial damage" means any damage, loss, or destruction, excluding ordinary wear and tear. The Participating Agency shall promptly repair or, at County's election, reimburse the full repair or replacement cost.

9. **Duties of the Regional Equipment Host Agency.** County may assign County purchased regional wildfire equipment to one or more Regional Equipment Host Agencies based upon operational considerations, geographic location, staffing, specialized capabilities, response times, equipment storage requirement, or other factors. A Regional Equipment Host Agency must

   9.1. Provide secure storage for assigned County purchased equipment.

   9.2. Maintain assigned County purchased equipment in an operationally ready condition.

   9.3. Conduct routine inspections and preventative maintenance in accordance with manufacturer recommendations.

   9.4. Maintain inventory and maintenance records for assigned equipment.

   9.5. Assist in coordinating deployment of assigned equipment in accordance with regional response protocols.

   9.6. Promptly notify County of damage, loss, or theft.

   9.7. Make reasonable efforts to ensure assigned equipment remains available for regional emergency response.

   9.8. Store the assigned equipment at a secure location that allows for timely regional response.

10. **UAS Program.** The County may designate a Participating Agency possessing qualified personnel, appropriate facilities, and operational capability to serve as the Regional Equipment Host Agency for County-purchased UAS. The designation Host Agency must maintain the UAS in operationally ready condition, ensure that operations comply with all applicable Federal Aviation Administration (“FAA”) regulations, and make the UAS and all

associated equipment available for deployment throughout Pima County by Participating Agencies in accordance with procedures and this IGA.

10.1. UAS operations shall comply with FAA regulations, Arizona state law, Incident Command System, County, jurisdictional, and applicable agency operating procedures.

10.2. Only personnel possessing all required FAA certifications, agency authorizations may operate County purchased UAS.

10.3. During active incidents involving aviation resources, UAS operations shall be coordinated through the Incident Commander and regional emergency dispatch centers and Regional Host Agency.

10.4. County purchased UAS must be utilized only for official governmental purposes. During deployment, operational control of County purchased equipment shall rest with Incident Commander in accordance with the Incident Command System ("ICS").

10.5. At County's sole discretion, County reserves the right to reassign County-purchased equipment or designate a different Regional Equipment Host Agency at any time upon written notice to the affected Participating Agency.

11. **Regional Wildland Fire Equipment Trailer.** County may designate a Participating Agency as the Regional Wildland Fire Equipment Trailer ("Trailer") Host Agency. Upon designation, the Host agency shall be responsible for establishing Trailer use training, secure storage, inventory, operational readiness, and deployment of the Trailer and its contents. The purpose of the Trailer is to support wildfire suppression, prescribed fire operations, hazardous fuels reduction, emergency response, and other wildfire mitigation activities throughout Pima County.

11.1. The Trailer may contain County purchased equipment including wildland hose, hose fittings and adapters, nozzles, portable water tanks, portable pumps, sprinkler kits and other wildfire suppression equipment found in Exhibit B. The Trailer towing vehicle must have a towing capacity of at least 14,000lbs.

11.2. Requests for deployment of the Trailer shall be initiated by a Participating Agency designee or alternate, through the designated regional dispatch center, and Regional Host Agency in accordance with established regional dispatch procedures as mentioned in Section 7.

12. **Permanent Transfer of Wildland Firefighter Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).** At County's sole discretion, County may permanently distribute wildland firefighter PPE to Participating Agencies in support of regional wildfire preparedness, firefighter safety, and operational readiness and recognizes that these are consumable materials.

12.1. PPE eligible for transfer may include, but is not limited to, wildland helmets, flame-resistant shirt, flame-resistant pants, neck shroud, fire shelter, wildland fire pack, wildland gloves, and other protective tools or equipment purchased by the County.

12.2. County may determine the quantity of PPE distributed to the requesting Participating Agency based on Participating Agency's demonstrated operational need, regional wildfire risk data, and other criteria established by County.

12.3. Ownership of PPE transfers to the Participating Agency upon delivery by County and written acknowledgment of receipt by Participating Agency.

12.4. Upon transfer of ownership, the Participating Agency becomes solely responsible for inventory management, inspection, cleaning, maintenance, repair, proper storage, record keeping, compliance with applicable NFPA, OSHA, and agency safety standards.

12.5. County will have no obligation to replace, repair, maintain, or provide future funding for PPE transferred to the Participating Agency pursuant to this IGA.

12.6. Nothing contained herein guarantees that any Participating Agency will receive a specific quantity of PPE from County.

13. **Financing.** Funding for Regional Wildfire Equipment Resources is provided through the Pima County Wildfire Mitigation Plan using funds appropriated by the Pima County Board of Supervisors for wildfire mitigation, preparedness, and response initiatives. The County may use such funds to acquire, maintain, and distribute regional wildfire response equipment, including firefighter PPE, UAS, water delivery equipment, trailers, and other wildfire suppression resources. The IGA does not obligate the County to make future appropriations, and any renewal or expansion of the program shall remain subject to the availability of funding and project approval.

14. **Term**. This IGA will become effective on the date it is first fully executed by County and at least one Participating Agency, with the attorney determinations described in Section 32 completed (the "Effective Date"). This IGA will remain in effect for an initial term of one (1) year commencing on the Effective Date (the "Initial Term"), unless terminated earlier by agreement of the Parties before expiration of the Initial Term. The Initial Term is a single, common term for the entire IGA and does not restart, extend, or run separately for any Party that signs after the Effective Date. A Participating Agency that executes this IGA after the Effective Date becomes a Party for the remainder of the then-current term only, and its participation expires on the same date as that of every other Party, regardless of when it signed. Upon agreement of the County and all then-current Parties, this IGA may be renewed for up to two (2) additional one-year terms (each a "Renewal Term," and together with the Initial Term, the "Term"), provided that each renewal is approved by the governing body of each Party in the manner required for approval of the Initial Term. No single Renewal Term shall exceed one (1) year, and the total Term, including the Initial Term and all Renewal Terms, shall not exceed three (3) years from the Effective Date.

15. **Disposal of Property**. Upon termination of this IGA, all property identified within this IGA (apart from non-deployable PPE) shall be returned to the County. Termination will not relieve any party from liabilities or costs already incurred under this IGA, nor affect any ownership of property pursuant to this IGA.

16. **Indemnification.** Each party (as Indemnitor) agrees to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the other party (as Indemnitee) from and against any and all claims, losses, liability, costs or expenses (including reasonable attorney’s fees) (hereinafter collectively referred to as “claims”) for bodily injury of any person (including death) or property damage, but only to the extent that such injury or damage is caused or alleged to be caused by a negligent or intentionally wrongful act or omission of the Indemnitor, or of any of its officers, officials, agents, employees, or volunteers.

17. **Insurance.** Each party will obtain and maintain at its own expense, during the entire term of this IGA the following type(s) and amounts of insurance:

    17.1. Commercial General Liability (CGL) – Occurrence Form with limits of $2,000,000 Each Occurrence and $2,000,000 General Aggregate. Policy shall include bodily injury, property damage, broad form contractual liability coverage, personal and advertising injury and products – completed operations.

    17.2. Commercial or Business Automobile Liability – Bodily Injury and Property Damage for any owned, hired, and/or non-owned automobiles used in the performance of this Contract with a Combined Single Limit (CSL) of $1,000,000 each accident.

    17.3. Workers' Compensation (WC) and Employers' Liability - Statutory requirements and benefits for Workers' Compensation. In Arizona, WC coverage is compulsory for employers of one or more employees. Employer's Liability coverage- $1,000,000 each accident and each person.

    17.4. Each party will provide ten (10) days written notice to the other party of cancellation, non-renewal or material change of coverage.

    17.5. The above requirement may be alternatively met through a self-insurance program, at no less than the minimum coverage levels set forth in this Section.

18. **Compliance with Laws**. The parties will comply with all federal, state and local laws, rules, regulations, standards and Executive Orders. The laws and regulations of the State of Arizona will govern the rights of the parties, the performance of this IGA and any disputes. Any action relating to this IGA will be brought in a court in Pima County.

19. **Non-Discrimination**. The parties will comply with all provisions and requirements of Arizona Executive Order 2009-09, which is hereby incorporated into this IGA, including flow-down of all provisions and requirements to any subcontractors. During the term of this IGA, the parties will not discriminate against any employee, client or any other individual in any way because of that person's age, race, creed, color, religion, sex, disability or national origin.

20. **ADA**. The parties will comply with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Public Law 101-336, 42 U.S.C. 12101-12213) and all applicable federal regulations under the Act, including 28 CFR Parts 35 and 36.

21. **Conflict of Interest**. This IGA is subject to cancellation for conflict of interest pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-511, the pertinent provisions of which are incorporated herein by reference.

22. **Non-Appropriation.** Notwithstanding any other provision in this IGA, this IGA may be terminated if for any reason the Pima County Board of Supervisors does not appropriate sufficient monies for the purpose of maintaining this IGA. In the event of such cancellation, the parties will have no further obligations under this IGA other than for payment for services rendered prior to cancellation.

23. **Worker's Compensation.** Each party will comply with the notice of A.R.S. § 23-1022(E). For purposes of A.R.S. § 23-1022, irrespective of the operations protocol in place, each party is solely responsible for the payment of Worker's Compensation benefits for its employees.

24. **No Joint Venture**. It is not intended by this IGA to, and nothing contained in this IGA will be construed to, create any partnership, joint venture or employment relationship between the parties or create any employer-employee relationship between a party and the employees of the other party. Neither party will be liable for any debts, accounts, obligations or other liabilities whatsoever of the other, including (without limitation) the other party's obligation to withhold Social Security and income taxes for itself or any of its employees.

25. **No Third-Party Beneficiaries**. Nothing in this IGA is intended to create duties or obligations to or rights in third parties not parties to this IGA or affect the legal liability of either party to the IGA by imposing any standard of care with respect to the maintenance of public facilities different from the standard of care imposed by law.

26. **Notice**. Any notice required or permitted to be given under this IGA must be in writing and served by delivery or by certified mail upon the other party as follows (or at such other address as may be identified by a party in writing to the other party as shown in Exhibit A):

County:	**Name of Fire Agency:**
County Administrator 115 N Church Ave 2nd Floor Ste 231 Tucson, AZ 85701	Golder Ranch Fire District: Attn: Fire Chief 1600 E. Hanley Boulevard Tucson, AZ 85737

27. **Amendment**. This IGA may only be modified, amended, altered or changed by written agreement signed by the parties.

28. **Severability**. If any provision of this IGA, or any application of a provision to the parties or any person or circumstance, is found by a court to be invalid, that invalidity will not affect other provisions or applications of this IGA that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application.

29. **Legal Authority.** Neither party warrants to the other its legal authority to enter into this IGA. If a court, at the request of a third person, should declare that either party lacks authority to enter into this IGA, or any part of it, then the IGA, or parts of it affected by such order, will be null and void, and no recovery may be had by either party against the other for lack of performance or otherwise.

30. **Counterparts.** This IGA may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original but all of which together shall constitute one and the same IGA.

31. **Entire Agreement**. This document, and any exhibits attached to it, constitutes the entire agreement between the parties pertaining to the subject matter addressed, and all prior or contemporaneous agreements and understandings, oral or written, are superseded and merged into this IGA. This IGA may not be modified, amended, altered or extended except through a written amendment signed by the parties.

32. **Effective Date**. This IGA will become effective on the Effective Date, which is the date on which County and at least one Participating Agency have both signed it and the attorney for each has completed the Intergovernmental Agreement Determination required by A.R.S. § 11-952. The Effective Date establishes the single, common term of this IGA under Section 14 and is fixed as of that date for all Parties. For each Participating Agency that signs after the Effective Date, this IGA becomes effective as to that agency on the later of (a) the date that

agency signs and its attorney completes the Intergovernmental Agreement Determination required by A.R.S. § 11-952, and (b) the date that agency's governing body has taken the action required by A.R.S. § 11-952(F) to approve this IGA. In no event does a Party's later effective date change, restart, or extend the Initial Term or the Term as defined in Section 14.

SIGNATURE BLOCKS ON FOLLOWING PAGE

PIMA COUNTY

_____
Jen Allen, Chair
Board of Supervisors

_____
Date

ATTEST

_____
Melissa Manriquez, Clerk of the Board

Approval
The foregoing Intergovernmental Agreement between Pima County and the Participating Agency has been reviewed by the undersigned and is hereby approved as to content.

_____
Chad Kasmar, Deputy County Administrator

Intergovernmental Agreement Determination

The foregoing Intergovernmental Agreement between Pima County, and the Participating Agency has been reviewed by the undersigned, whom has determined that it is in proper form and is within the powers and authority granted under the laws of the State of Arizona to the party he or she represents.

PIMA COUNTY:

_____
Bobby Yu, Deputy County Attorney

Golder Ranch Fire District

_____
Vicki Cox Golder, GRFD Chairperson

November 17, 2026
Date

ATTEST

_____
Sandra Outlaw, Board Clerk

Intergovernmental Agreement Determination

The foregoing Intergovernmental Agreement between Pima County and the Participating Agencies has been reviewed by the undersigned attorney for Golder Ranch Fire District, who has determined that it is in proper form and is within the powers and authority granted under the laws of the State of Arizona to Golder Ranch Fire District.

_____
Donna Aversa, GRFD Attorney

Exhibit A
Party Addresses for Providing Notice

Ajo Gibson Volunteer Fire Department Attn: Fire Chief 400 N Taladro St. Ajo, AZ 85321
Arivaca Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 16091 Universal Ranch Rd. Arivaca, AZ 85601
Avra Valley Attn: Fire Chief 15790 W Silverbell Road Marana, AZ 85653
Corona de Tucson Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 99 E Tallahassee Dr. Corona, AZ 85641
Drexel Heights Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 5030 S. Camino Verde Tucson, AZ 85735
Golder Ranch Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 1600 E Hanley Blvd., Oro Valley, AZ 85737 Tucson, AZ 85739
Helmet Peak Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 15490 S. Mission Rd Sahuarita, AZ 85629
Mescal J-6 Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 98 N Oak Dr. Benson, AZ 85602
Mt. Lemmon Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 13170N Control Rd., Mt Lemmon, AZ 85619
Northwest Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 13535 N Marana Main Tucson, AZ 85653
Pascua Yaqui Fire Department Attn: Fire Chief 4631 W Calle Torim Tucson, AZ 85757
Rincon Valley Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 14550 E. Sands Ranch Rd. Vail, AZ 85641
Santa Rita Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 1285 W Camino Encanto Green Valley, AZ 85622
Sonoita-Elgin Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 3173 AZ-83 Sonoita, AZ 85637
Three Points Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 10351 S Sasabe Rd. Tucson, AZ 85736
Tohono O'odham Fire Department Attn: Fire Chief P.O. Box 837 Sells, AZ 85634
Tucson Fire Department Attn: Fire Chief 300 S Fire Central Place Tucson, AZ 85701
Why Fire District Attn: Fire Chief 301 S. Sonoita Way Why, AZ 85321

Exhibit B
Wildland Fire Equipment Trailer Resources

Item Description	Quantity
1” Forestry Nozzle Dual Range (NPSH)	40
1 ½” x 100’ Yellow Forestry (NH) Hose	40
1” x 100’ Yellow Forestry (NPSH) Hose	24
1 1/2” Female NH to 1” Male NPSH Reducer	40
1 ½” NH Gated Wye Water Distribution Valve	40
FSS Hose Bags	40
Metal Fuel Tank 5 gallon	2
Complete Pump Fuel Tank w/Built-in Male Fitting	2
Hydro-wick® Hand Primer 1.5” (38 mm) NH (NST)	2
Extruded Quick-Connect Hose Adaptor 1.5 Male x 1.5 Female	2
Tandem Adaptor 2” NPSH Female Swivel 1 1/2” NST Tandem Adaptor	2
WICK 375 Fire Pump	2
5,000 Gallon Self Supporting Water Tank	1
3,000 Gallon Self Supporting Water Tank	1
WASP Wildfire Sprinkler Home Protection Full Kit	5

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Tom Brandhuber, Fire Chief

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND/OR POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE ADOPTION OF THE PIMA COUNTY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

ITEM #: 8C

REQUIRED ACTION:	☐ Discussion Only	☑ Formal Motion	☐ Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	☑ Approve	☐ Conditional Approval	☐ Deny
SUPPORTED BY:	☑ Staff	☑ Fire Chief	☑ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

The Pima County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) serves as an important tool for educating the public, identifying priority areas for mitigation, and guiding local wildfire preparedness efforts. It also helps Pima County (the County) secure funding for wildfire risk reduction projects. However, it is not a static plan.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move to approve the Pima County Wildfire Protection Plan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to formally thank the Core Team and all stakeholders for contributing their time and expertise throughout the planning process. Your participation has contributed to creating resilient landscapes, implementing public education, reducing structural ignitability, and ensuring safe and effective wildfire response.

For additional information, questions, or concerns regarding this project, please contact Emergency Management Planner Jennifer McDowell at Jennifer.McDowell@pima.gov or Project Manager Cody Stropki at cstropki@swca.com
For all your planning and implementation needs, please visit www.swca.com.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

DISCLAIMER

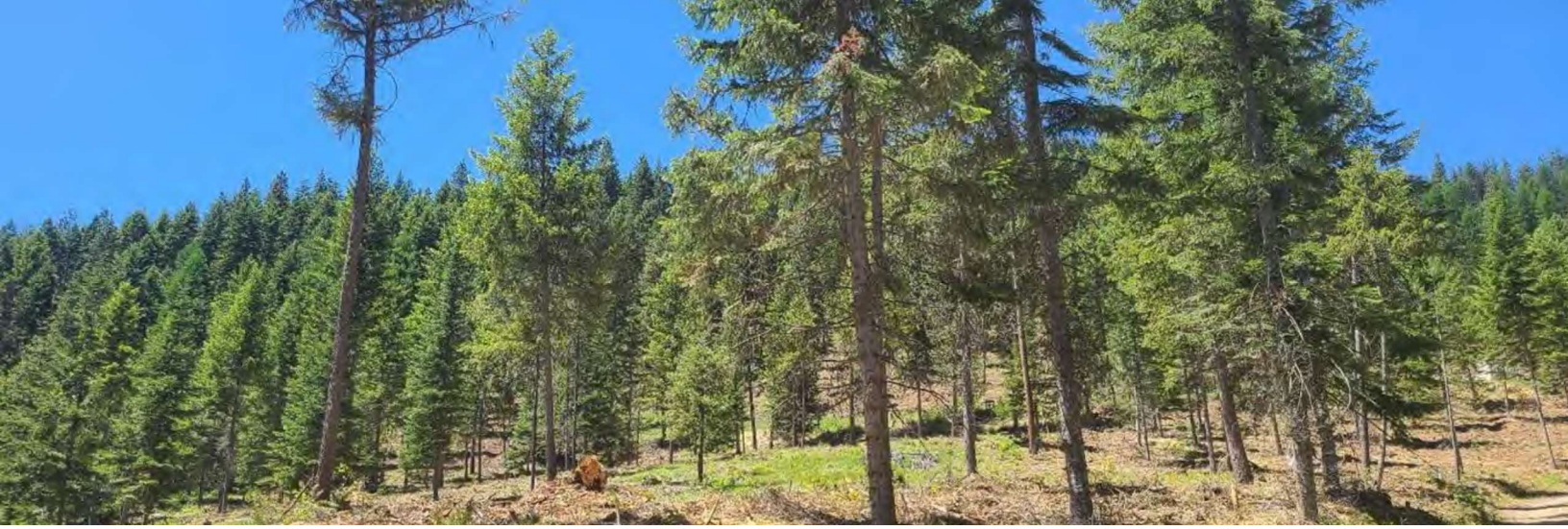
The purpose of the risk assessment contained in this plan is solely to provide a community- and landscape-level overview of general wildfire risks within the assessment area as of the date hereof and to provide a potential resource for community pre-fire planning. This risk assessment is premised on various assumptions and models, which include and are based on data, software tools, and other information provided by third parties (collectively, "Third-Party Information and Tools"). SWCA, Incorporated, doing business as SWCA Environmental Consultants ("SWCA"), relied upon various Third-Party Information and Tools in the preparation of this risk assessment, and SWCA shall have no liability to any party in connection with this risk assessment, including, without limitation, as a result of incomplete or inaccurate Third-Party Information and Tools used in the preparation hereof. SWCA hereby expressly disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy or reliability of the Third-Party Information and Tools relied upon by SWCA in preparing this risk assessment. SWCA shall have no liability for any damage, loss (including loss of life), injury, property damage, or other damages whatsoever arising from or in connection with this risk assessment. Any reproduction or dissemination of this risk assessment or any portion hereof shall include the entirety of this plan disclaimer.

CORE TEAM

The entities listed below participated in the development of and/or reviewed the Pima County Community Wildfire Protection Plan and agree that the plan is viable, complete, and realistic in terms of risk reduction and implementation.

Signature	**Signature**
Name	**Name**
Title	**Title**
Agency	**Agency**
Date	**Date**
Signature	**Signature**
Name	**Name**
Title	**Title**
Agency	**Agency**
Date	**Date**
Signature	**Signature**
Name	**Name**
Title	**Title**
Agency	**Agency**
Date	**Date**

PIMA COUNTY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pima County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) serves as an important tool for educating the public, identifying priority areas for mitigation, and guiding local wildfire preparedness efforts. It also helps Pima County (the County) secure funding for wildfire risk reduction projects. However, it is not a static plan. The Pima County CWPP should be considered a living document, which will be updated approximately every 5 years to reflect new data, evolving wildfire conditions, and best practices in mitigation or response. Regular updates will ensure that the plan remains relevant and continues to support Pima County communities in reducing wildfire risk and enhancing public safety.

Homeowners, landowners, and the broader community should take proactive measures to reduce fire risks on their properties. A combination of property owner responsibility, community awareness, public education, and agency collaboration is essential for creating a more wildfire-resilient Pima County.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CWPP?

The CWPP provides an opportunity to bring regional stakeholders together to identify and assess wildfire risks across a planning area, around communities, and throughout the wildland–urban interface (WUI). The process helps establish an understanding of risk reduction priorities and supports the development of targeted mitigation strategies and action plans to reduce the likelihood and impacts of wildfires (Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management [AZ DFFM] 2024a).

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE CWPP?

The CWPP supports efforts to enhance community wildfire resilience and improve the ability of local jurisdictions, agencies, and residents to adapt to evolving wildfire conditions. The plan identifies and promotes actions that reduce risks to human health, safety, property, and critical infrastructure while fostering public and stakeholder engagement and improving access to funding opportunities (AZ DFFM 2024a).

Federal Framework

The minimum requirements for a CWPP, as stated in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA), consist of the following (Society of American Foresters 2004):

Collaboration: Local and state government representatives, in consultation with federal agencies or other interested groups, must collaboratively develop a CWPP.

Prioritized Fuel Reduction: A CWPP must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuels reduction and treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment that will protect one or more communities at risk and their essential infrastructures.

Reducing Structural Ignitability: A CWPP must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.

Arizona State Requirements

The following requirements are defined within AZ DFFM's most up-to-date CWPP requirements at the time of drafting this plan (AZ DFFM 2024a).

1. Local area description, which defines the CWPP area; describes the community (or communities) within the CWPP; summarizes current/past community engagement or collaborations, and; identifies other plans within the CWPP area that provide valuable information to reduce the threat of wildfires.
    a. Brief description of fuel types in areas covered by the CWPP (Chapter 2 – Fire Environment).
    b. 10-year fire history for areas covered by the CWPP that describes how fires impacted the communities (Chapter 2 – Fire Environment).
    c. Completed fuel treatments post-2018 (Chapter 1 – Accomplishments since the 2013 CWPP).
2. List of communities at high risk for damage from wildfire (Chapter 3 – Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment Results).
    a. Top five to 10 communities that are at a high or moderate risk of damage from wildfire.
        i. Brief overview of preparation activities already taken in these communities and where additional resources are needed.
        ii. Evacuation plans for at-risk communities where there are limited escape routes.
    b. Description of values at risk for each community and the extent to which wildfire has the potential to impact these values.
3. Wildfire response resources that are already in place (high-level overview of resources available to local governments in case of a wildfire) (Appendix B: Fire Response Resources).
    a. List of equipment (size, age, capacity, etc.).
    b. Personnel (training, experience, etc.).
    c. Preventative measures in place that reduce the threat of wildfires.
4. Projects the community would like to accomplish within the next 5 years (Chapter 4 – Mitigation Strategies**).**
    a. Fuel reduction projects within the WUI and values at risk.
        i. Values/areas for which the project will be mitigating wildfire impacts.
        ii. Description of the project area, with a focus on increasing the protection of people, structures, and communities (mapping, fuel type, treatment levels, etc.).
    b. Training and equipment
        i. Community education and outreach (education and outreach to local prevention programs and community groups).
        ii. Firewise implementation and education at a neighborhood level.

WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES ADDRESSED?

This CWPP identifies and addresses key wildfire risks in Pima County based on the Core Team's and county residents' priorities and concerns. The following issues are addressed in this plan:

- **Hazardous Fuels on Private and Public Lands –** Hazardous fuel conditions in high-risk areas, particularly in the WUI, influence wildfire occurrences, fire intensity, and firefighter access. Defensible space conditions within home ignition zones (HIZs) also affect structural vulnerability. Addressing wildfire risk across the landscape often involves connecting fuel reduction efforts on public lands with mitigation actions on adjacent private lands.
- **Firefighting and Wildfire Prevention –** Wildfire response capabilities vary across Pima County depending on available personnel, equipment, and access to resources. In addition, certain areas experience higher concentrations of human-caused ignitions, highlighting the importance of varied wildfire prevention efforts and continued support for firefighting resources and programs.
- **Evacuation Routes and Emergency Access** – Ingress and egress route limitations can affect evacuation efficiency and emergency response during wildfire incidents. Roadside vegetation conditions and roadway access may also influence the ability of emergency vehicles to reach communities safely and quickly.
- **Public Outreach and Community Involvement –** Community awareness of defensible space, home hardening, and wildfire prevention plays an important role in reducing wildfire risk to homes and neighborhoods. Continued engagement with residents supports broader adoption of wildfire mitigation practices and participation in programs that promote Firewise principles.
- **Wildfire Risk Elevated by Presence of Invasive Species** – Invasive plant species that alter natural fire regimes and increase wildfire spread and intensity. These species may change fuel characteristics and influence fire behavior, making invasive species management an important consideration in wildfire risk reduction efforts.

HOW WAS THE 2026 PIMA COUNTY CWPP UPDATE DEVELOPED?

The 2026 update to the Pima County CWPP was developed through collaboration among federal, state, tribal, and local agencies; fire districts; utilities; conservation organizations; and community partners across the county. These entities formed the Core Team, which includes representatives with expertise in wildfire planning, emergency management, fire response, land management, and infrastructure operations across the county. The Core Team provided technical input and local knowledge throughout the planning process to help ensure that the updated plan reflects regional priorities and wildfire risk conditions.

WHAT WAS THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT?

The development of the 2026 Pima County CWPP also included advertising of the CWPP and opportunities for the public to be involved, which resulted in community members who were highly engaged in providing input. See Appendix F for details on public outreach and engagement. Various

types of public outreach, including open house events, a public survey, and informational flyers, were provided to increase awareness and collect local input. Additionally, social media and online forums supported CWPP advertisement and furthered public engagement.

The public was invited to provide comments on a draft of the CWPP update from February 13, 2026 to March 2, 2026. By incorporating public and Core Team input into the CWPP and associated recommendations, treatments and other strategies are tailored specifically for Pima County.

WHAT ARE THE STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS WILDFIRE HAZARDS?

The Pima County CWPP aligns with Arizona standards by prioritizing fuel reduction projects within the WUI and areas at risk, as well as improvements in training, equipment, and community education over the next 5 years. These actions support the goals of the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy), a national framework led by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of the Interior, by focusing on mapping and treating hazardous fuels, protecting people and property, and implementing Firewise principles at the neighborhood level, ensuring a coordinated and effective approach to wildfire mitigation (Forests and Rangelands 2023).

The Cohesive Strategy goals are as follows.

Goal 1: Restore and Maintain Resilient Landscapes

Landscapes, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries, are resilient to fire, insects, disease, invasive species, and climate change disturbances in accordance with management objectives. Recommendations to reduce wildfire hazards and improve landscape resilience in Pima County include the following:

- Thinning densely forested areas to reduce fuel loads.
- Removal of ladder fuels in forests and shrublands.
- Control and removal of fire-prone invasive species.
- Educating the public about how to identify and report (through mapping tools) invasive species observed on public lands and how to get involved in volunteer removal efforts.
- Coordinated fuel reduction and mapping projects across property boundaries.

Goal 2: Fire-Adapted Communities

Human populations and infrastructure are prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from wildland fires through proactive mitigation and education efforts. Strategies for Pima County include the following:

- Green waste removal and chipping programs for hazardous vegetation.
- Expansion of defensible space assessment and education programs to help homeowners identify and address vegetation and structural conditions that may increase wildfire risk around homes.
- Promotion of fire-resistant construction and retrofits.
- Education for homeowners on reducing home ignitability.

- Education for the public about how to identify and report (through mapping tools) invasive species observed in their neighborhood, how to remove them from their property, and how to get involved in neighborhood volunteer removal efforts.
- Education for developers on reducing invasive plant species spread via construction equipment and in areas with soil disturbance.
- Education for landscapers on native plant selection and recommendations for effective invasive species control.
- Education for the public, developers, and landscapers on identifying, reporting, and controlling nonnative invasive species, including public reporting via mapping tools, safe removal practices, prevention of spread during development and soil disturbance, guidance on native plant selection, and volunteer removal efforts.
- Coordinated and consistent education and outreach messaging between agencies, fire districts, and other partners.

Goal 3: Safe and Effective Wildfire Response

All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective, and efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions. Recommendations for improving wildfire response capabilities in Pima County include the following:

- Increasing firefighting and prevention capacity through recruitment, staffing support, and expanded wildland fire training.
- Supporting investments in firefighting equipment and operational resources needed for effective wildfire response.
- Strengthening multiagency coordination and communication among local, state, federal, and tribal partners during wildfire incidents.
- Conducting joint training exercises and scenario-based planning to improve interagency response and decision making.

HOW WERE THE WILDLAND–URBAN INTERFACE AND AREAS OF CONCERN IDENTIFIED?

The WUI identifies areas where homes and other development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland vegetation that can carry wildfire. In this CWPP, the WUI was mapped using a building-density approach that applies a uniform hexagonal grid across Pima County. Each hex was classified based on the number of structures per square mile using structure data. This method helps identify where communities are most likely to be exposed to wildfire risk because of their proximity to flammable vegetation. See Chapter 2 for more information on how the WUI was delineated for this planning process.

Areas of Concern (AOCs) highlight specific locations where wildfire mitigation actions are recommended to help protect life, property, and other important resources. These areas were identified by Pima County's interdisciplinary Core Team using results from the Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment, along with information about fuels, past fires and ignitions, structure locations, and local knowledge. Many AOCs are present along drainage and riparian corridors, transportation corridors, and parts of the WUI

where fuels may concentrate or where fires could spread quickly. See Chapter 4 for more information on AOCs, how they were developed, and their intended use.

Although the WUI and AOCs are related, they serve different planning purposes. The WUI is a broad, countywide delineation that identifies where development and wildland fuels overlap and where wildfire risk to communities is generally elevated. In contrast, AOCs represent specific locations within or adjacent to the WUI where conditions suggest a higher priority for mitigation actions. Although WUI mapping helps guide long-term land-use planning, outreach, and community wildfire preparedness, AOCs are used to focus project development and on-the-ground treatments, such as fuel reduction, defensible space improvements, and strategic mitigation along corridors that influence fire spread. Together, these designations help prioritize resources and guide coordinated wildfire risk reduction efforts across Pima County.

Figures ES.1. and ES.2. illustrate how AOCs and the WUI are distributed across the landscape.

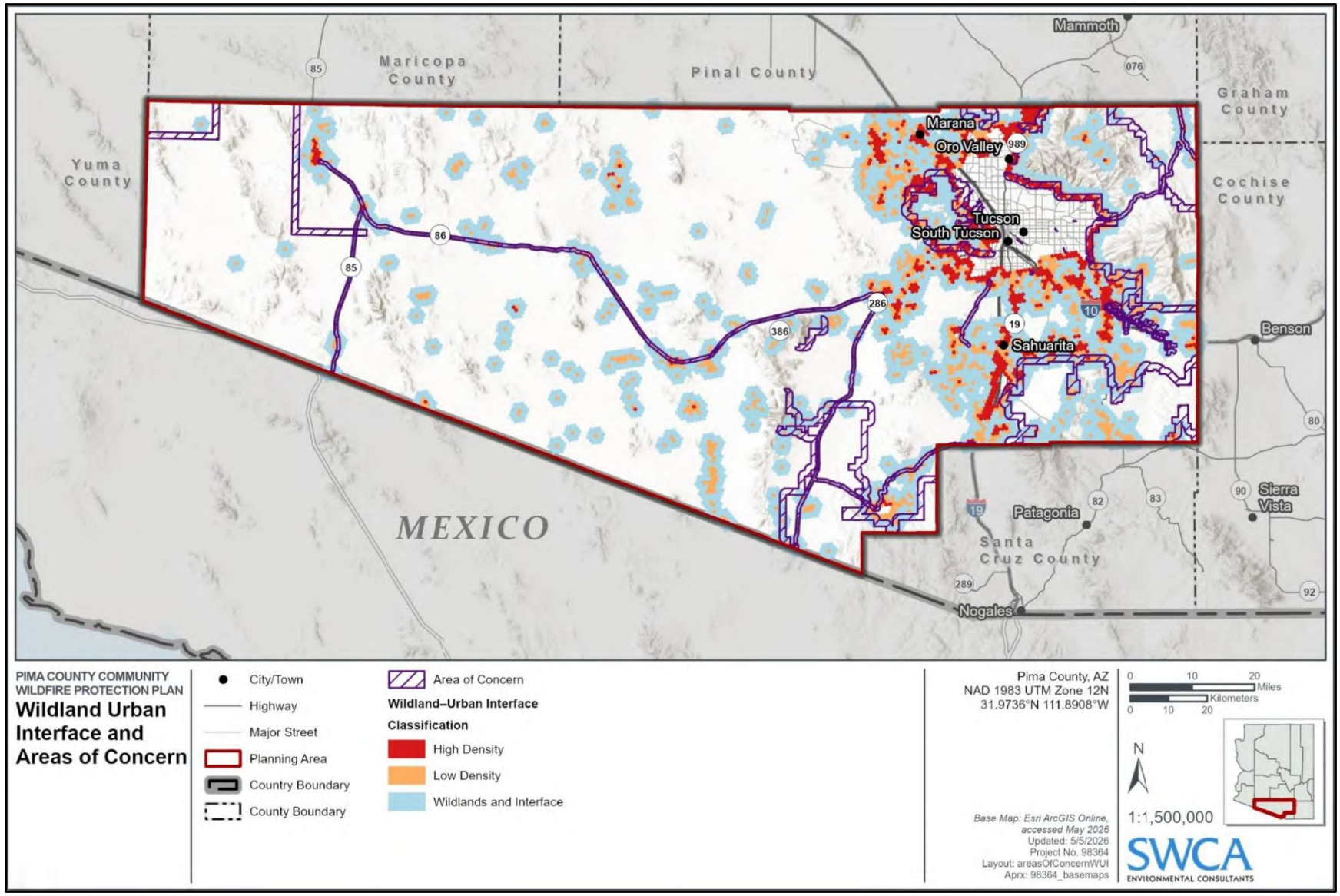


Figure ES.1. Pima County WUI and AOCs mapping overlapped.

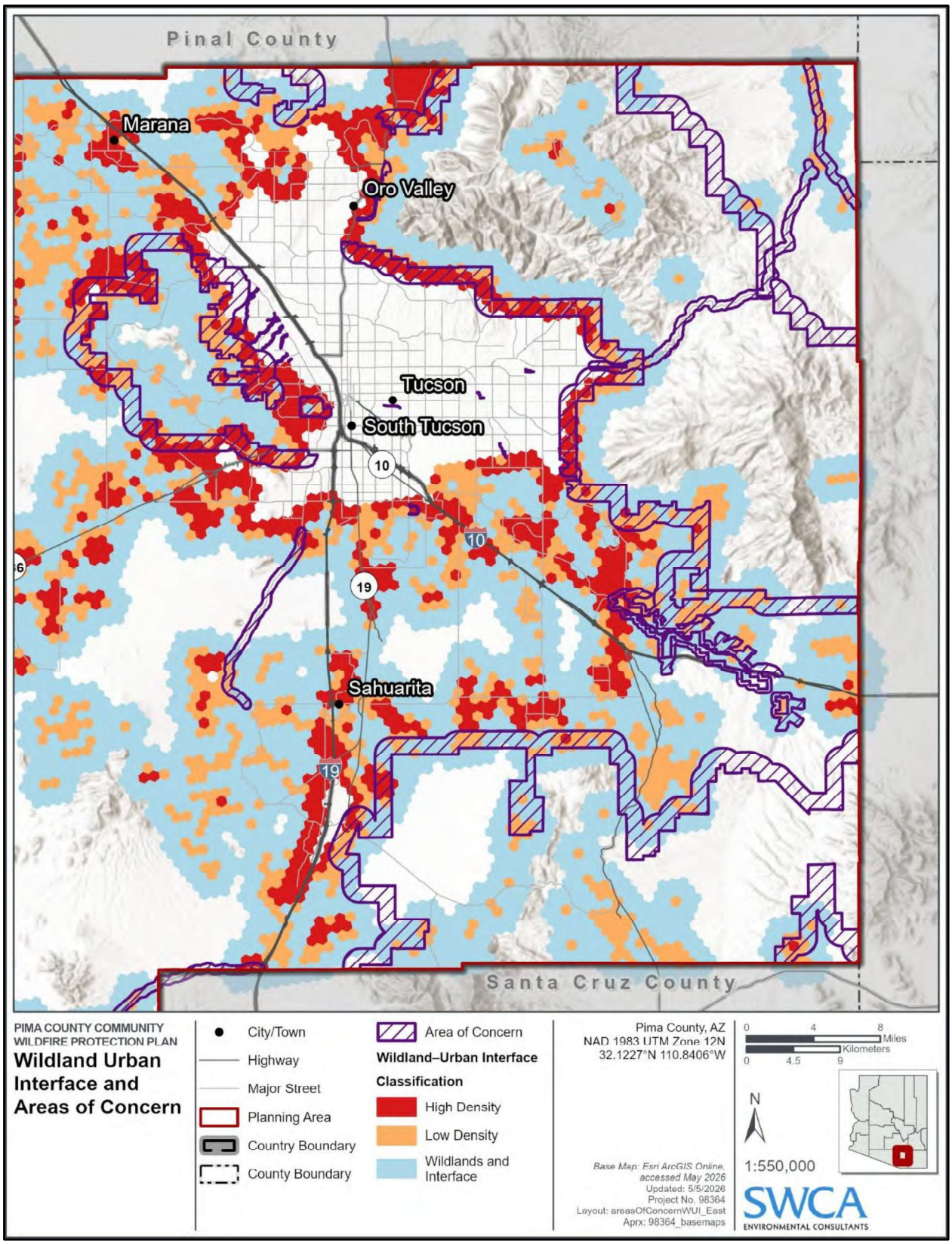


Figure ES.2. Eastern Pima County WUI and AOCs mapping overlapped.

HOW WILL THE PLAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

The CWPP does not require implementation of any of the recommendations, but the message throughout this document is that successful wildfire risk reduction depends on the joint efforts of homeowners, private landowners, local fire departments, fire districts, land management agencies, and state and federal partners. The most effective mitigation will occur through coordinated actions that address fuel hazards, improve emergency preparedness, and strengthen community resilience.

Recommendations for fuel reduction projects outlined in this plan are general in nature and will require site-specific planning before implementation. Factors such as land ownership, access, topography, soils, fuels, and community priorities will need to be assessed to ensure projects are both effective and feasible. This CWPP identifies the relevant land management agencies mentioned in the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, Coronado National Forest, National Park Service, Arizona State Lands Department, AZ DFFM, Arizona State Parks, tribes, private landowners, and other local organizations to help streamline project coordination and funding opportunities.

Collaboration among Pima County stakeholders will support strategy and action plan development and help secure funding for mitigation projects. This includes leveraging grants, cost-share programs, and agency partnerships to carry out fuel treatments, enhance fire response capabilities, and improve public outreach efforts. Ongoing collaboration between fire managers, landowners, and the community will be essential for tracking progress and ensuring that wildfire mitigation efforts remain a long-term priority. The Pima County Wildfire Mitigation Plan will serve as the County's annual review and operational roadmap for the year ahead (Pima County 2025a).

WHEN DOES THE CWPP NEED TO BE UPDATED?

The HFRA allows for maximum flexibility in the CWPP planning process, permitting the Core Team to determine the time frame for updating the CWPP. For the Pima County CWPP, the Core Team and stakeholders agreed that the plan will be reviewed annually and formally updated every 5 years following plan adoption.

Due to the dynamic nature of wildfire risk, evolving land use patterns, and changing fire behavior, there are several factors that may warrant an update before the 5-year mark. These include significant wildfire events, major policy or regulatory changes, shifts in community priorities, rapid spread of invasive species, or new data from fire behavior modeling and risk assessments. CWPPs greater than 10 years old are outdated and will not be prioritized when considered for competitive funding opportunities.

The best practice for Pima County is to treat the CWPP as a living document, reviewing content annually and documenting updates appropriately, which may include new mitigation projects, funding opportunities, and community engagement efforts. Immediate revisions should be considered following a major wildfire to incorporate lessons learned, reassess priorities, and refine mitigation strategies.

CORE TEAM

Name
Ajo-Gibson Fire District
Altar Valley Conservation Alliance
Arivaca Fire District
Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management
Arizona National Guard, 162nd Wing Fire Department
Arizona Public Service
Arizona-Sonoran Desert Museum
Avra Valley Fire District
Bureau of Land Management
City of South Tucson Emergency Management
City of Tucson Emergency Management
City of Tucson Fire Department
Corona de Tucson Fire District
Coronado National Forest
Davis-Monthan Air Force Base Emergency Management
Davis-Monthan Air Force Base Fire Department
Drexel Heights Fire District
Golder Ranch Fire District
Mt. Lemmon Fire District
Northwest Fire District
Pascua Yaqui Tribe Emergency Management
Pascua Yaqui Tribe Fire Department
Pima County Administration
Pima County Communications Office
Pima County Conservation Lands and Resources
Pima County Department of Transportation
Pima County Development Services
Pima County Office of Emergency Management
Pima County Parks and Recreation
Pima County Regional Flood Control District
Rincon Valley Fire District
Rural Metro Fire Department
Saguaro National Park
Santa Rita Experimental Range (University of Arizona)

Name
Santa Rita Fire District
Sonoita-Elgin Fire District
Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative
Tohono O'odham Nation Emergency Management
Tohono O'odham Nation Fire Department
Tohono O'odham Nation Fire Management
Town of Marana Emergency Management
Town of Oro Valley Emergency Management
Town of Sahuarita
Trico Electric Cooperative
Tucson Airport Authority Fire Department
Tucson Bird Alliance
Tucson Electric Power
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Why Fire District

For additional information on this project, please contact Emergency Management Planner Jennifer McDowell at Jennifer.McDowell@pima.gov or Project Manager Cody Stropki at cstropki@swca.com

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

The United States is facing urgent forest and watershed health concerns. In recent years, wildfires have shown a trend of increasing severity, with the total acres burned and the average acres burned per fire rising significantly over time. Since 2000, there has been a clear increase in the total acreage burned, with particularly high spikes observed in 2007, 2012, 2015, and 2020 (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration [NOAA] 2024). From 2013 to 2022, an average of 7.2 million acres were impacted annually due to wildfire, more than doubling the annual average of acres burned in the 1990s (Congressional Research Service [CRS] 2023). The average acres burned per fire have also increased notably in recent years, especially after 2015, reflecting larger and more destructive fires (NOAA 2024). The 2015 fire season had the most acreage impacted in a single year (between 1960 and 2022) at 10.13 million acres. In 2020, 10.12 million acres were burned, making it the second most extensive year for wildfire (CRS 2023). These statistics demonstrate that wildfires are becoming larger and harder to control.

The Southwest Area, which primarily include lands in Arizona and New Mexico, is managed by the Southwest Coordination Center and is part of the larger Geographic Area Coordination Center managed by the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC) (2024b). The Southwest Area has experienced notable peaks in acres burned during recent years. In 2020, the area saw its highest recorded acreage burned to date at 1,073,527 acres, closely followed by 2022 at 1,061,680 acres. Although 2023 and 2024 both registered lower than average fire activity, the 5-year average for the Southwest Area has increased to 744,806 acres, up from a 10-year average of 585,546 acres (NIFC 2024a). This upward trend is mirrored in Pima County, where 184,834 acres have burned in the past 5 years, which already exceeds the total of 147,450 acres burned between 2010 and 2019. These metrics indicate that Pima County is following regional and national patterns of increasing wildfire acreage.

The 2020 Arizona Forest Action Plan (Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management [AZ DFFM] 2020) identifies wildfire as both a critical resource issue and a cross-cutting threat exacerbated by drought, invasive species, and past suppression practices. These issues require a collaborative process analysis of the current gap between existing and necessary wildland fire management strategies. A top priority in Arizona is aligning current and future wildland fire management strategies with designated fire and fuel priority areas to effectively direct federal, state, and private program funds toward projects that restore natural forest conditions, help communities live with wildfire, protect watersheds, conserve wildlife, and enhance the public benefits from trees and forests (AZ DFFM 2020).

As the severity and extent of wildfires increase, communities need a plan to help prepare for, reduce the risk of, and adapt to wildland fire events. Community wildfire protection plans (CWPPs) help accomplish

these goals. A CWPP provides recommendations that are intended to reduce, but not eliminate, the extreme severity or risk of wildland fire.

The development of the CWPP is rooted in meaningful collaboration among many stakeholders, including local, state, and federal officials. The planning process involves studying past fires and treatment accomplishments and incorporating the knowledge and expertise of the professional fire managers who work for the various agencies and governing entities in the county. From there, the CWPP ultimately identifies the current local wildfire risks and needs that occur in the county, which is further supported with relevant science and literature from the western region of the United States.

In addition, this 2026 Pima County CWPP update will develop fuel reduction projects that are based on each community's wildfire risk and include high-level recommendations for fire mitigation and risk reduction that align with local and state regulations while incorporating indigenous perspectives. However, this CWPP does not attempt to mandate the type and priority for treatment projects that will be carried out by the land management agencies and private landowners. The responsibility for implementing wildfire mitigation treatments lies at the discretion of the landowner.

GOAL OF A CWPP

A CWPP provides a collaborative framework for local communities, government agencies, and other stakeholders to identify areas of wildfire risk and prioritize actions that reduce hazards to people, property, and natural resources. Through this process, the CWPP helps inform mitigation planning, fire response preparedness, and public awareness of both natural and human-caused wildfire risks that threaten lives, safety, and the local economy. The minimum requirements for a CWPP, as stated in the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (HFRA), include the following:

Collaboration: Local and state government representatives, in consultation with federal agencies or other interested groups, must collaboratively develop a CWPP (Society of American Foresters [SAF] 2004).

Prioritized Fuel Reduction: A CWPP must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuels reduction and treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment that will protect one or more communities at risk and their essential infrastructures (SAF 2004).

Treatments of Structural Ignitability: A CWPP must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan (SAF 2004).

The 2026 Pima County CWPP update adheres to the AZ DFFM CWPP requirements and provides a countywide framework for identifying wildfire risk identification and developing mitigation recommendations (AZ DFFM 2024a). The plan brings together wildfire management and response agencies, local governments, tribes, utilities, landowners, residents, and other community partners to collaboratively address wildfire risk across the county. Information on the planning process is available in Appendix B.

This CWPP complements other local and regional planning efforts that address wildfire risk and related hazards. The Pima County Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan (MJHMP) provides broader planning for natural hazards that contribute to wildfire risk, such as drought and extreme heat, whereas regional climate planning efforts address long-term environmental factors, including the spread of invasive species that influence wildfire behavior (Pima County 2022a). Pima County's Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) supports implementation by identifying and prioritizing specific mitigation projects and actions

(Pima County 2025a). Together, these efforts help translate shared priorities into coordinated actions that support long-term wildfire risk reduction.

ALIGNMENT WITH COHESIVE STRATEGY

The 2026 Pima County CWPP update is aligned with the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy) and its Phase III Western Regional Action Plan by adhering to the nationwide vision "to safely and effectively extinguish fire, when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and collectively, live with wildland fire" (Forests and Rangelands 2023).

The primary, national goals identified as necessary to achieve the vision are:

Resilient Landscapes – Landscapes, regardless of jurisdictional boundaries are resilient to fire, insect, disease, invasive species, and climate change disturbances in accordance with management objectives.

Fire-Adapted Communities – Human populations and infrastructure are as prepared as possible to receive, respond to, and recover from wildland fire.

Safe, Effective, Risk-based Wildfire Response – All jurisdictions participate in making and implementing safe, effective, efficient risk-based wildfire management decisions.

Alignment with these Cohesive Strategy goals is described in more detail in Chapter 4 – Mitigation Strategies.

In addition to aligning with the Cohesive Strategy, the CWPP also incorporates information on post-fire recovery, the significant hazards of a post-fire environment, and the risk that post-fire effects pose to communities (Figure 1.1)

ALIGNMENT WITH PLANS AND AGREEMENTS

This CWPP is an update of the 2013 Pima County CWPP and aligns with multiple local, state, and federal planning documents. These documents or agreements are summarized in Appendix B. In addition, fire policy and legislative direction are also summarized in Appendix B.

For wildfire hazards that are, or may become, declared emergencies or major disasters under the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act), the State of Arizona (specifically the AZ DFFM) has entered into a cooperative wildland fire management agreement with multiple federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) (NIFC 2023). These agreements support coordinated wildfire response and management by facilitating the exchange of equipment, personnel, supplies, services, and funding among participating agencies. These agreements are detailed in the Arizona Master Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement, which supports coordination in prevention, preparedness, communication, fuels management, hazard mitigation, fire planning, suppression, and post-fire rehabilitation and restoration (NIFC 2023).



Figure 1.1. The CWPP incorporates the three primary goals of the Cohesive Strategy with post-fire recovery to serve as holistic plan for fire prevention and resilience.

CORE TEAM

The first step in the CWPP update process was to bring together a broad group of stakeholders representing both agency and private interests to form a Core Team. The Pima County Office of Emergency Management (PCOEM)—in coordination with the AZ DFFM—initiated engagement from adjacent government agencies in the development of this 2026 Pima County CWPP, forming the "Core Team." The Core Team drives the planning process through decision-making, data sharing, experience, communication with community members, and development of actionable project recommendations. Additional information about Core Team meeting accomplishments, attendees, and schedule are available in Appendix F.

The Core Team has outlined the following goals and objectives for this CWPP update:

- Improve the resilience and adaptation to wildfire for Pima County communities.
- Develop a CWPP update and annual action plans with broad public and stakeholder input and support.
- Develop a CWPP update and annual action plans that will serve as a source and guide for accessing grant opportunities and funding.
- Identify the wildfire risks facing Pima County communities and develop an annual action plan with stakeholder and community input and priorities to create recommendations to mitigate those risks.
- Provide resources, information, and actionable planning for conducting fuel mitigation or for reporting hazardous fuels concerns on private and public lands.
- Implement a process to monitor and report project progress in an accessible format that is easily understood.
- Provide community members with clear guidance on how to reduce wildfire risk around their properties.

Pima County Wildfire Executive Group

The Pima County Wildfire Executive Working Group was established in response to the Board of Supervisors' directive to address the increasing, year-round threat of wildfire related to climate change, drought, and invasive species. Participants include senior leaders from key County departments, such as Communications, Conservation Lands and Resources, Development Services, Office of Emergency Management, Regional Flood Control District, and Administration. The group supports coordination of wildfire mitigation and preparedness efforts among County departments and collaborates with partner agencies and jurisdictions throughout the region.

Through ongoing collaboration, the group inventories existing wildfire prevention and response programs, identifies gaps in services, and coordinates efforts to improve public education, vegetation management, emergency response, and wildfire risk mapping.

The group's accomplishments include completing the WMP (Pima County 2025a), participating in the 2026 Pima County CWPP process, launching interdisciplinary training, developing a wildland–urban interface (WUI) map, securing grant funding for equipment, and hosting educational events and workshops. These activities involve partnerships with fire districts, law enforcement, and non-governmental community organizations and aim to support coordinated wildfire mitigation and outreach efforts focused on protecting people, property, and natural resources (Pima County 2025a, 2025b, 2025c).

PLANNING AREA

This CWPP is a countywide plan; therefore, the planning area boundary aligns with the geographic and political boundaries of Pima County (Figure 1.2). Pima County spans 9,184 square miles and had an estimated population of approximately 1,080,149 people as of 2024, reflecting a 3.5% increase from the 2020 census population of 1,043,333 (U.S. Census Bureau 2024). Although the county continues to grow,

the rate of population increase has slowed in recent years. The population density is 117 people per square mile, reflecting the county's large geographic area and the presence of extensive rural and semi-rural regions alongside urban centers, such as Tucson, the county seat. The incorporated municipalities include the cities of Tucson and South Tucson and the towns of Marana, Oro Valley, and Sahuarita, which together represent approximately 5% of the planning area. The remaining land area is unincorporated Pima County, totaling approximately 8,774 square miles and including 49 census-designated places. Lands in Pima County encompass a wide range of land uses and community types, including residential suburbs, tribal nation lands, federal and state protected lands, rural and agricultural areas, and retirement and resort communities.

The county has 490,150 housing units, with development patterns ranging from high-density urban to very low-density rural areas. Several communities are unplanned, which contributes to a lack of standardized road attributes such as width, paved/unpaved, and turnarounds. Pima County currently has goals to promote planned growth of vibrant neighborhoods (Pima County 2022; U.S. Census Bureau 2024). Pima County also features diverse areas for promoting eco-tourism, conservation, and recreation, including Tucson Mountain Park, Colossal Cave Mountain Park, Saguaro National Park, Coronado National Forest, Organ Pipe Cactus (NPS) and Ironwood Forest National Monuments (BLM), multiple National Wildlife Refuges, county preserves, rivers, desert, and other amenities.

Additional information on the county profile is provided in Appendix A.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Pima County encompasses a diverse array of land ownership (Table 1.1, Figure 1.3), which influences wildland fuel conditions and wildfire response strategies due to varying management objectives and practices. Major ownership categories include tribal nation lands, Arizona State Trust Lands, federal preserve lands, other public lands managed by Pima County and partner agencies, and private lands. Tribal lands represent the largest share of the planning area and include the Tohono O'odham Nation, the San Xavier District of the Tohono O'odham Nation, and the Pascua Yaqui Nation. Federal lands are managed by agencies such as the USFS, BLM, NPS, USFWS, and the Department of Defense (DOD). Additional lands are managed by the State of Arizona and Pima County for parks, preserves, conservation areas, and other public uses, whereas private lands include residential, commercial, agricultural, and conservation properties. The intermingling of these various land types necessitates a collaborative approach to wildfire management across all jurisdictions and ownerships.

Table 1.1. Breakdown of Land Ownership in Pima County

Land Ownership	Square Miles	Percentage of Planning Area
Tribal National Lands	3,867	42.1
Federal lands (BLM, USFWS, NPS, DOD, and USFS)	1,111	12.1
Arizona State Trust Lands	1,369	14.9
Other public lands (Pima County Preserve, etc.)	1,570	17.1
Private lands (individual and corporate)	1,267	13.8
Total	**9,184**	**100**

Additional details regarding land in Pima County, such as topography and land management direction, are included in Appendix A.

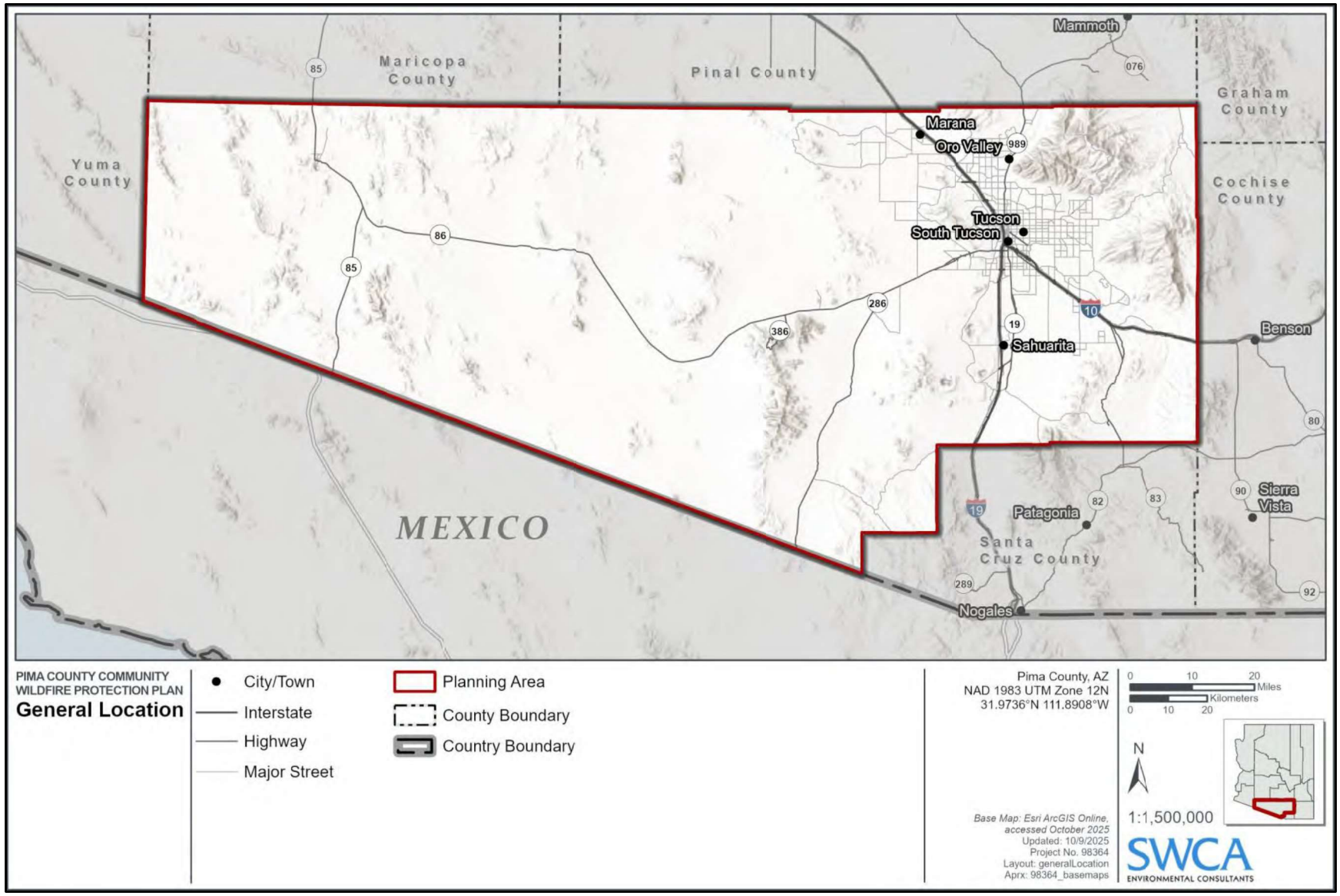


Figure 1.2. Pima County general location.

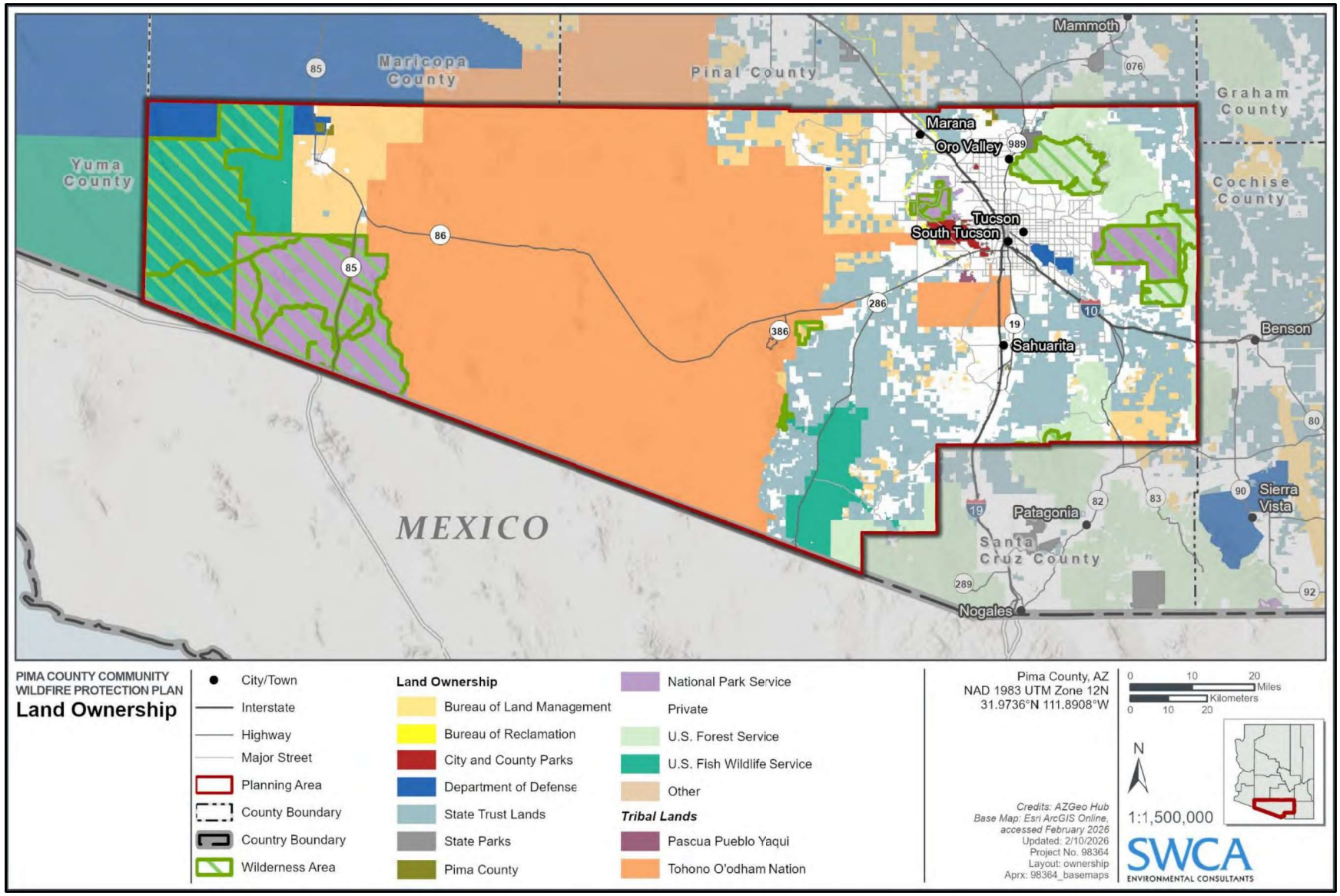


Figure 1.3. Pima County land ownership.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS SINCE THE 2013 CWPP

Since 2013, Pima County and land management partners, such as the AZ DFFM, USFS, BLM, and NPS have together completed approximately 38,696.50 acres of fuels treatments across Pima County (Table 1.2). Fuel treatments completed in the county include chemical, hand, grazing, mechanical, and prescribed burns (Table 1.3). More information on fuel treatment methods is provided in Appendix D, Fuel Treatment Types and Methods.

The data provided below are derived from LANDFIRE, AZ DFFM, and USFS datasets. Figures 1.4 through 1.7 show the areas where various treatments have been completed across different land jurisdictions.

Table 1.2 Fuels Treatments Completed Since 2013 Across Various Land Jurisdictions

Agency	Acres
BLM	5,057.64
County	1,294.61
AZ DFFM	7,280.99
Municipal	1,622.06
NPS	697.96
Private	1,216.21
State Park	3.00
State Trust Land	571.78
State Wildlife Area	7.99
USFS	20,934.27
Total	**38,696.50**

Source: AZ DFFM (2024d); LANDFIRE (2025c); USFS 2022

Table 1.3. Fuels Treatments Completed Since 2013 by Type

Fuel Treatment Type	Acres
Chemical	2,204.78
Chemical and mechanical treatment	3,251.36
Grazing and range management	3,663.21
Hand treatment	966.93
Hand and mechanical treatment	243.33
Mechanical	8,331.63
Planned treatment area burned in wildfire	12,569.16
Prescribed burn	12,655.66
Total	**33,970.86**

Source: AZ DFFM (2024d); LANDFIRE (2025c); USFS (2022)

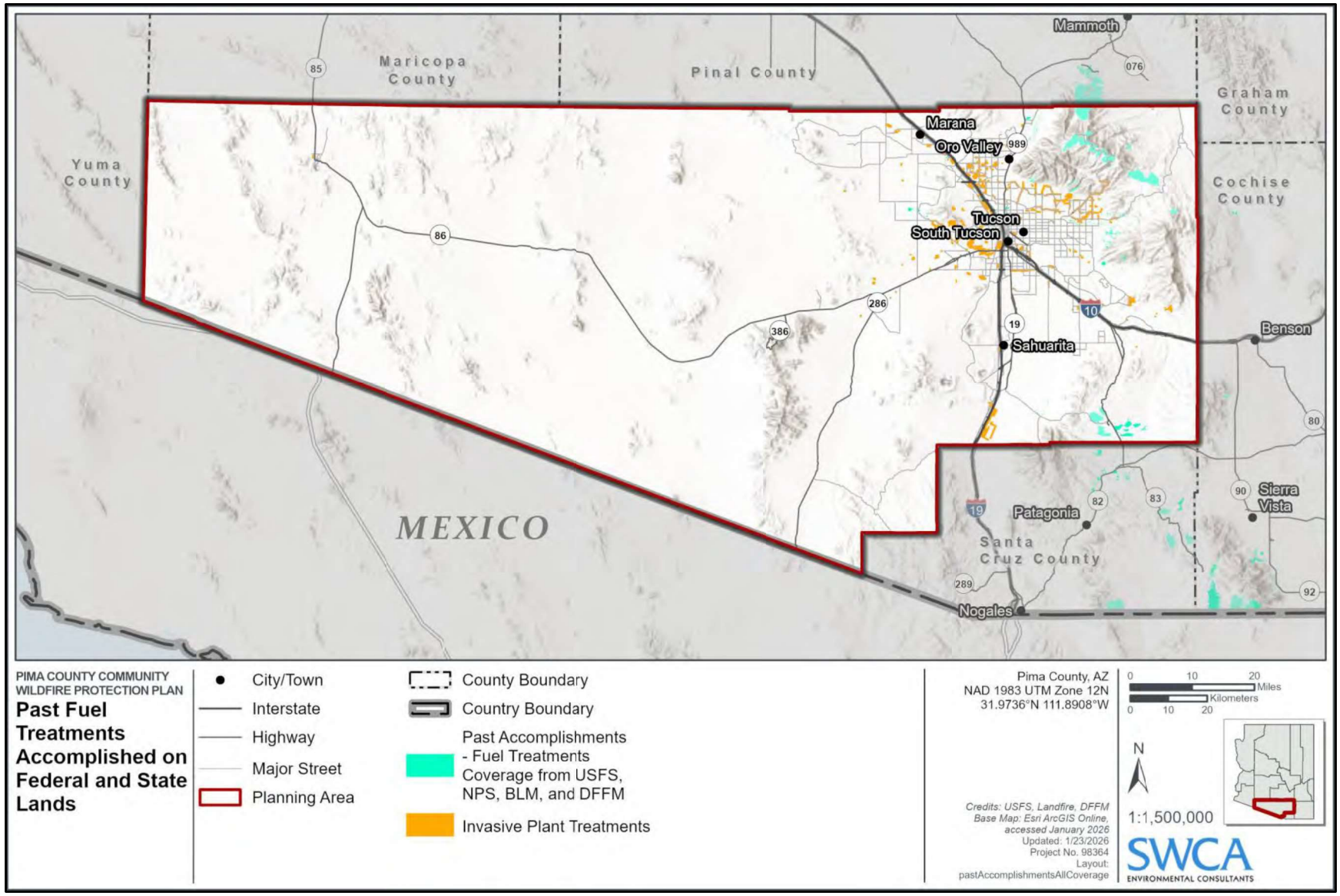


Figure 1.4. An overview of wildfire mitigation activities completed since 2013 in Pima County, Arizona.

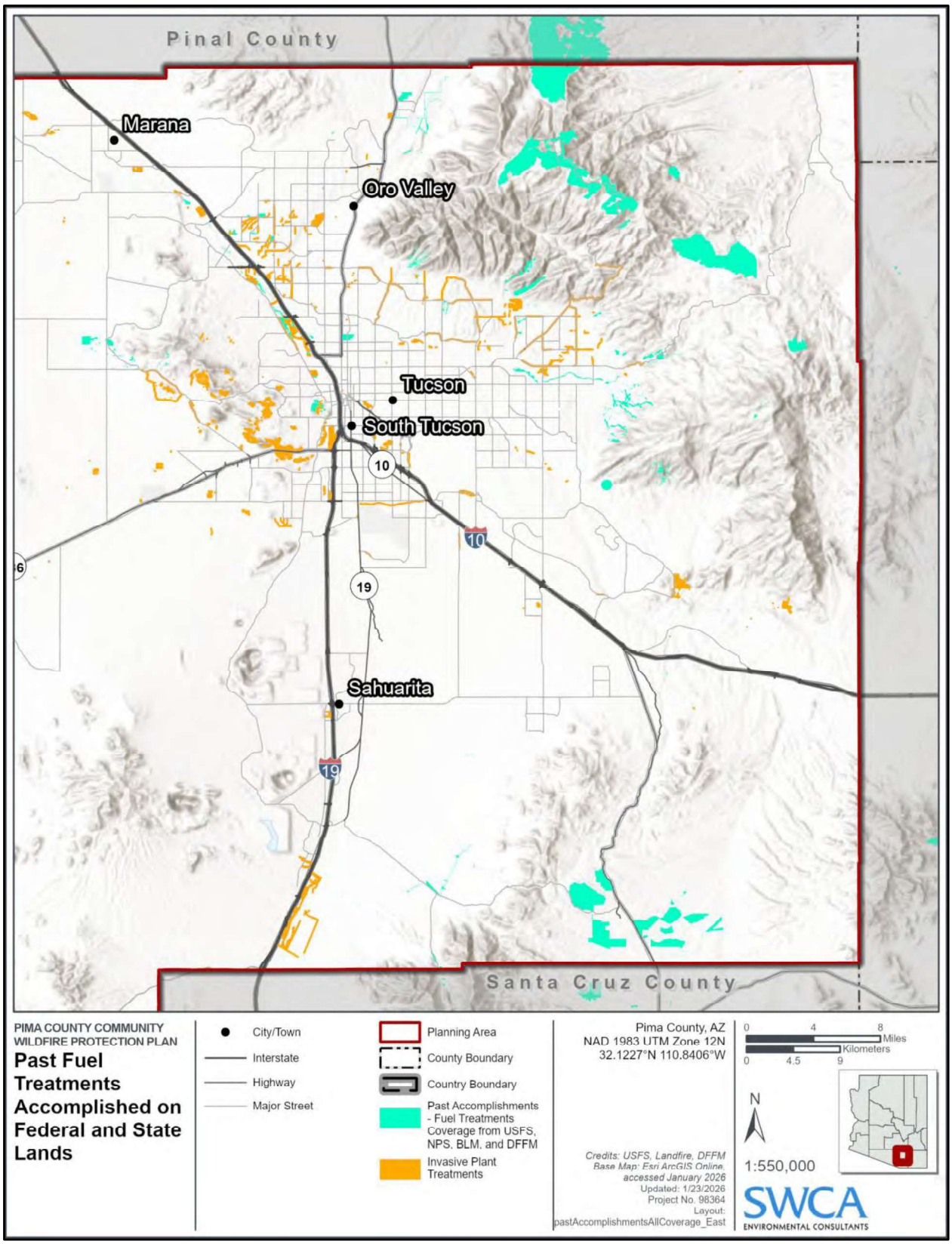


Figure 1.5. Eastern portion of Pima County, Arizona, showing completed wildfire mitigation activities since 2013.

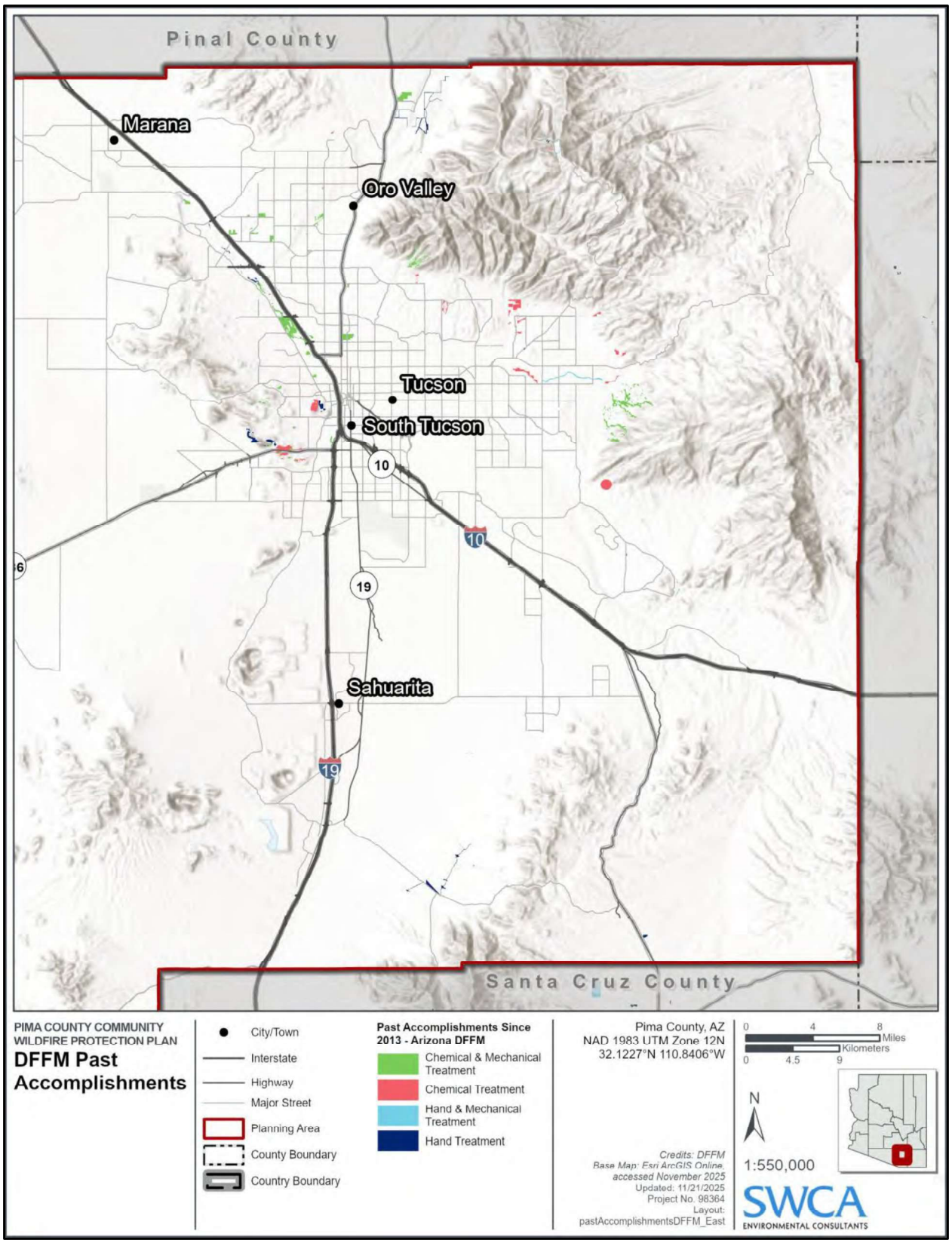


Figure 1.6. Eastern portion of Pima County, Arizona, showing wildfire mitigation activities completed through AZ DFFM funding and reported by LANDFIRE since 2013.

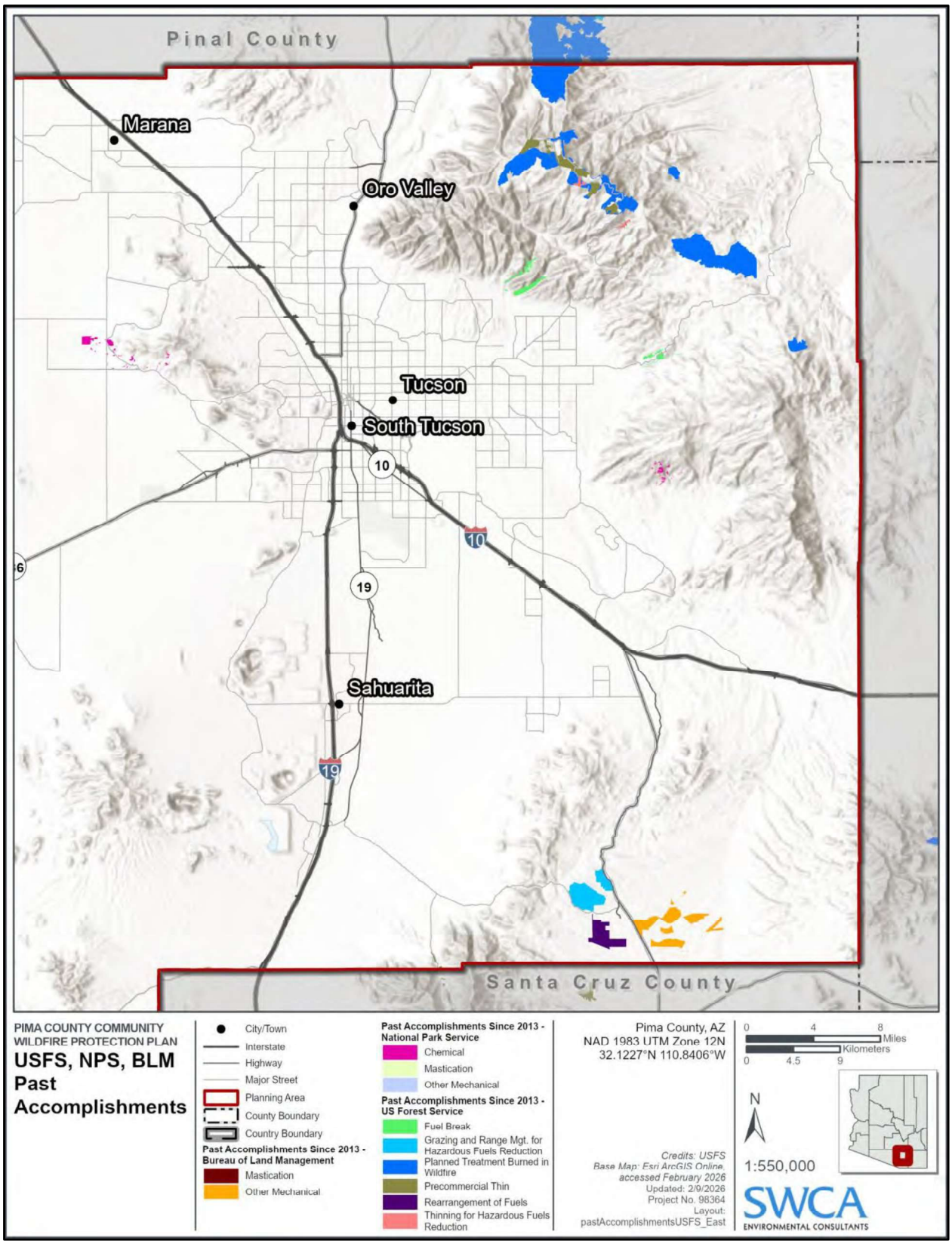


Figure 1.7. Eastern portion of Pima County, Arizona, showing wildfire mitigation activities completed by the USFS, BLM, and NPS since 2013.

Fire District Accomplishments

In addition to completing fuel treatments, several fire districts in Pima County have enhanced their fire response capabilities since the publication of the 2013 CWPP document. The Avra Valley, Northwest Fire Department, Rincon Valley, and Three Points fire districts managed to secure funding to acquire new equipment and expand staffing capacity.

Avra Valley and Three Points Fire Districts

Avra Valley and Three Points fire districts have successfully purchased three Type 6 engines between 2020 – 2025 and one Type 3 engine in 2021. These purchases have helped increase wildfire response capacity to both districts.

Northwest Fire District

The Northwest Fire District (NWFD) purchased a new Type 6 engine in 2023, a new Type 1 support tender in 2025, and a new rapid extraction module support truck in 2022. Additionally, NWFD and PCOEM collaboratively developed fire breaks in the Santa Cruz riverbed from Ruthrauff to Avra Valley to mitigate fire risk.

Rincon Valley Fire District

The 2013 CWPP enabled Rincon Valley Fire District to expand staffing personnel, update equipment, and acquire land to build a new fire station. The district increased staffing by 41.6% equivalent to hiring approximately 17 firefighters per day. In 2024, Rincon Valley Fire District purchased land for a third fire station and ordered a new Type 6 brush engine. All these purchases have allowed the district to increase emergency response time and firefighting capacity.

Santa Rita Fire District

The Santa Rita Fire District has made sustained investments to strengthen wildfire awareness, mitigation, and response capabilities across the district. Through its Community Emergency Response Team program, the district has supported 15 homeowner associations in achieving Firewise USA recognition through the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), reflecting measurable community engagement in wildfire risk reduction, defensible space improvements, and resident education. These partnerships have enhanced neighborhood-level resilience and shared responsibility for wildfire mitigation.

At the operational level, the district has expanded its wildland response capacity by acquiring three Type III wildland engines, one Type VI engine, and an all-terrain vehicle to support off-road response and mitigation activities. Together, these community and operational initiatives improve rapid deployment, expand access in rugged terrain, and strengthen initial attack effectiveness, positioning the district to better protect lives, property, and natural resources.

Tucson Fire Department

Since 2013, the Tuscon Fire Department (TFD) enhanced fire response capabilities by acquiring additional wildland fire engines, increasing wildland fire trained personnel, and adding a Type 1 Rapid Emergency Medical Services team equipped with a utility-terrain vehicle (TFD 2026).

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CHAPTER 2 – FIRE ENVIRONMENT

WILDLAND–URBAN INTERFACE

The WUI is the zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development. It is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels (U.S. Fire Administration [USFA] 2021).

Under the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA), a CWPP provides the authority for local partners to define and delineate the WUI boundary based on local wildfire risk and development patterns (U.S. Congress 2003, Section 101(16)(B)(ii)) In this CWPP, the WUI is delineated using a building density-based methodology that applies a uniform spatial grid across the planning area and classifies development intensity based on the number of structures per unit area (Figures 2.1 and 2.2).

Hexes represent approximately 0.33 square miles and are approximately 3,000 feet across. Each hex was then analyzed to determine the total building count per square mile. The building density was calculated for four classes using 2018 Pima County structure data (Microsoft 2018).

- Interface and Wildlands: 0-4 buildings per square mile
- Low Density: 4-100 buildings per square mile
- High Density: 100-300 buildings per square mile

Any hex with more than 300 buildings per square mile that is adjacent to interface and wildland areas was included as high density WUI. Any hex that was more than 1 mile from an interface and wildlands hex was removed.

Following review of the dataset, the following areas were revised:

1. The north end of the Davis-Monthan Air Force base runway included a single hex identified as wildland, mandating inclusion of the surrounding areas. This hex was removed, as were the hexes in immediate proximity.
2. The sand and gravel pit near the Santa Cruz River and Rillito confluence was flagged as wildland, creating an area of inclusion. This hex and the surrounding hexes were removed.
3. An area of development in northwest Pima County visible on the aerial photos but not captured in the buildings layer was added.

The Pima County Core Team supported the development and review of the density-based WUI delineation to ensure consistency with local development patterns and wildfire risk considerations under the HFRA Section 101(16)(B)(ii). **Infrastructure such as transmission lines, communication towers, and camping/day use areas were not included in the analysis.**

The expansion of the WUI into areas with a potential for high-severity fire, combined with the collective effects of land use patterns, climate change and encroachment of invasive weeds, has created an urgent need to modify fire management practices and policies and to understand and manage fire risk effectively in the WUI (Pyne 2001; Stephens and Ruth 2005). Human expansion into wildland ecosystems within recent decades is increasing the extent of the WUI throughout the county, which carries a significant influence on wildland fire management practices.

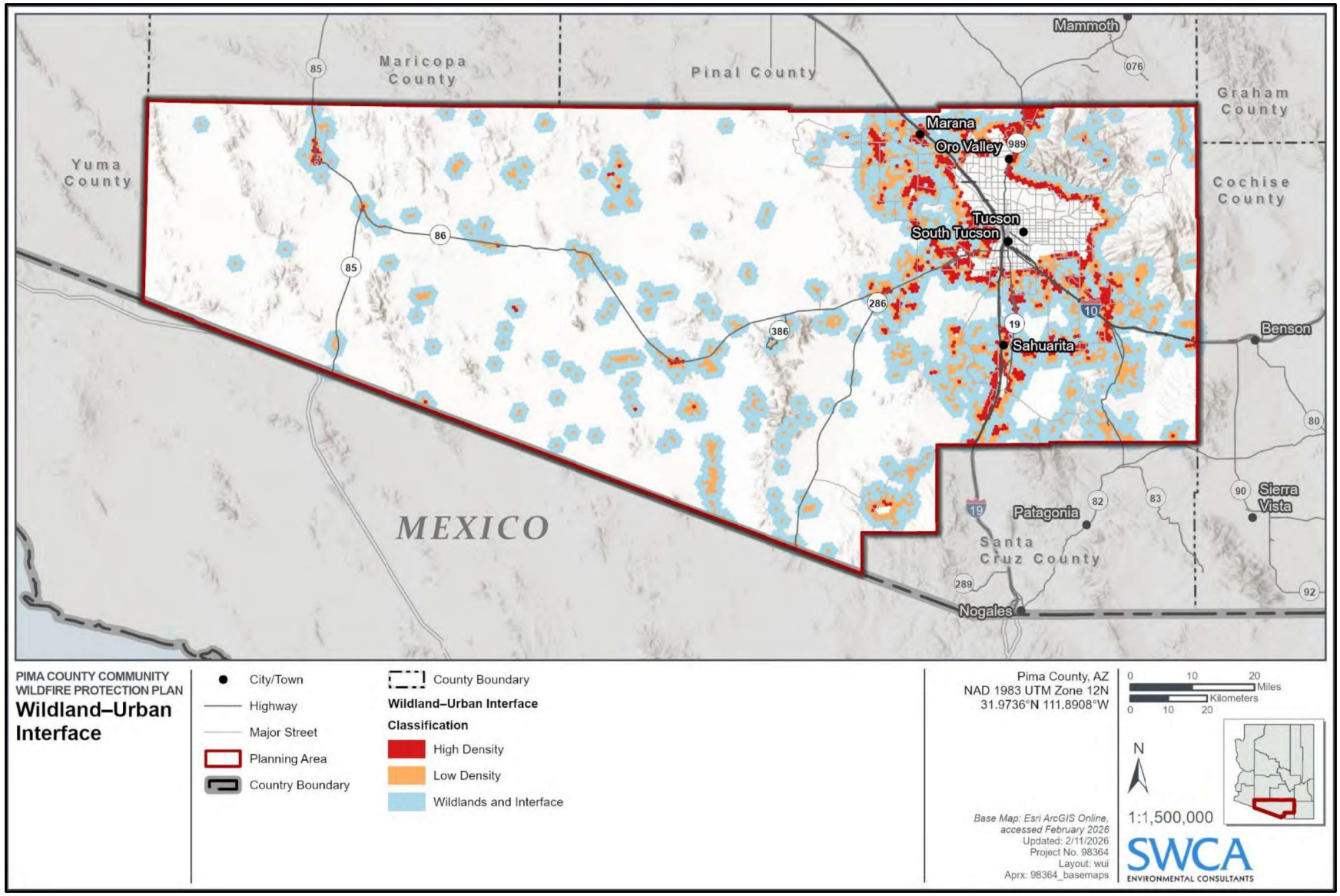


Figure 2.1. Pima County WUI map.

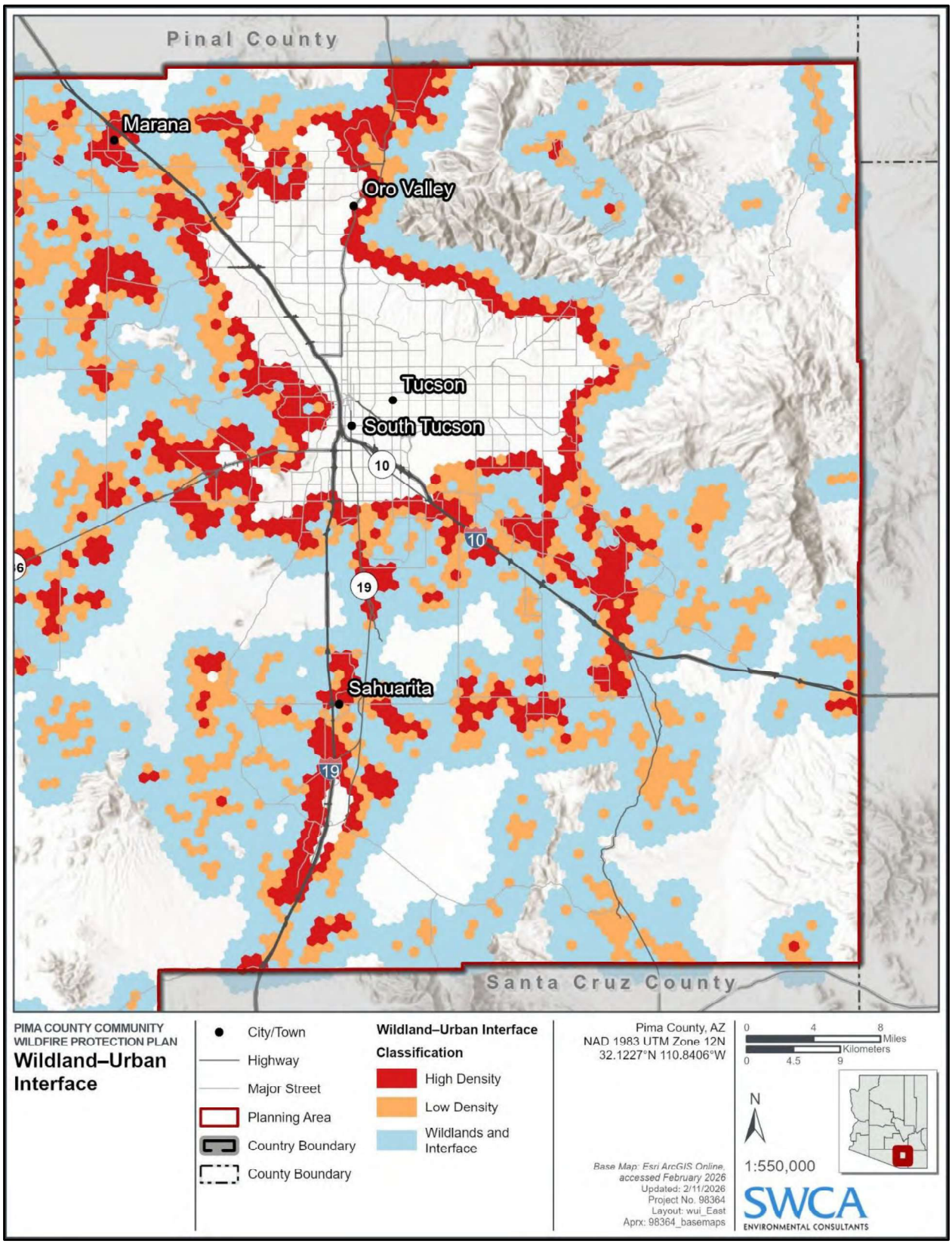


Figure 2.2. Eastern Pima County WUI map.

Wildland–Urban Interface Land Use

Today, 99 million people and 46 million residences in 70,000 communities across the United States are at risk for WUI fires. Wildfire in the WUI is linked to an increased risk of loss of human life, property, natural resources, and economic assets (USFA 2023). Known as the second-largest county by population size in Arizona, Pima County faces growing challenges related to housing development in WUI zones (Figure 2.3).

Pima County's population growth, combined with the desire for homes in scenic, undeveloped areas, has led to more housing being built near wildfire-prone lands. The county experienced a 10% growth rate between 2010 to 2024 and hosts a total of 490,150 housing units (U.S. Census Bureau 2024). Additionally, more than one-third of the county's households reside in unincorporated communities and towns of Sahuarita, Marana, and Oro Valley. Cities, towns, and unincorporated communities throughout Pima County are continuously challenged to accommodate both current and future residents in need of safe and affordable housing (Kurtz et al. 2022).



Figure 2.3. Example of the WUI in Pima County.
Source: Big Horn Fire (2020).

According to Pima County's 2022 *Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan*, future development is expected to expand WUI areas and increase wildfire risk. In particular, developments where homes are built on larger land parcels, resulting in greater distances between structures, are at higher risk for wildfires and potential structure loss (Pima County 2022a). This is because dispersed homes can be more difficult to protect during a wildfire and may be surrounded by more flammable vegetation, compared to higher density developments where homes are closer together.

FIRE ECOLOGY

Vegetation and Land Cover

Vegetation zones within the county are primarily a function of elevation, slope, aspect, substrate, and associated climatic regimes. Since a broad range of topography exists across the county, vegetative communities vary (Figures 2.4 and 2.5). As discussed in the Surface Fuels and Fire Behavior Fuel Models section, fuel models and associated vegetation are essential in understanding fire behavior and the natural role of fire across different ecosystems in Pima County. Table 2.1 categorizes the county's vegetation into several groups based on the existing vegetation type.

Table 2.1. Simplified LANDFIRE Vegetation Types

LANDFIRE Vegetation Classification	Acres within Planning Area	Percentage of Planning Area
Tree	207,260	4%
Shrub	5,122,053	87%
Herb	254,989	4%
Water	3,647	0%
Barren	38,941	1%
Developed	209,748	4%
Sparse	24,417	0%
Agriculture	16,183	0%
Total	**5,877,238**	**100%**

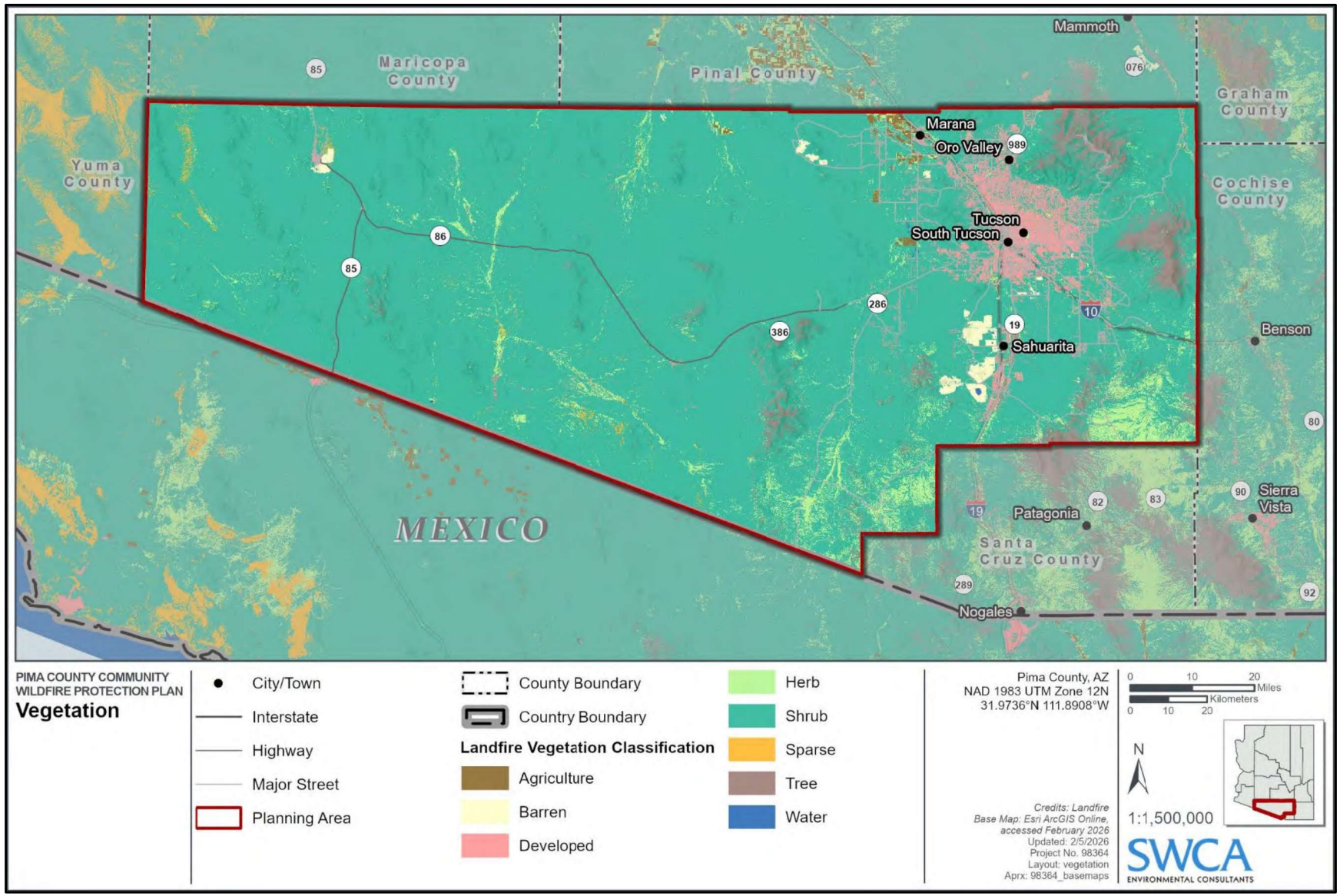


Figure 2.4. Vegetation classifications in Pima County.

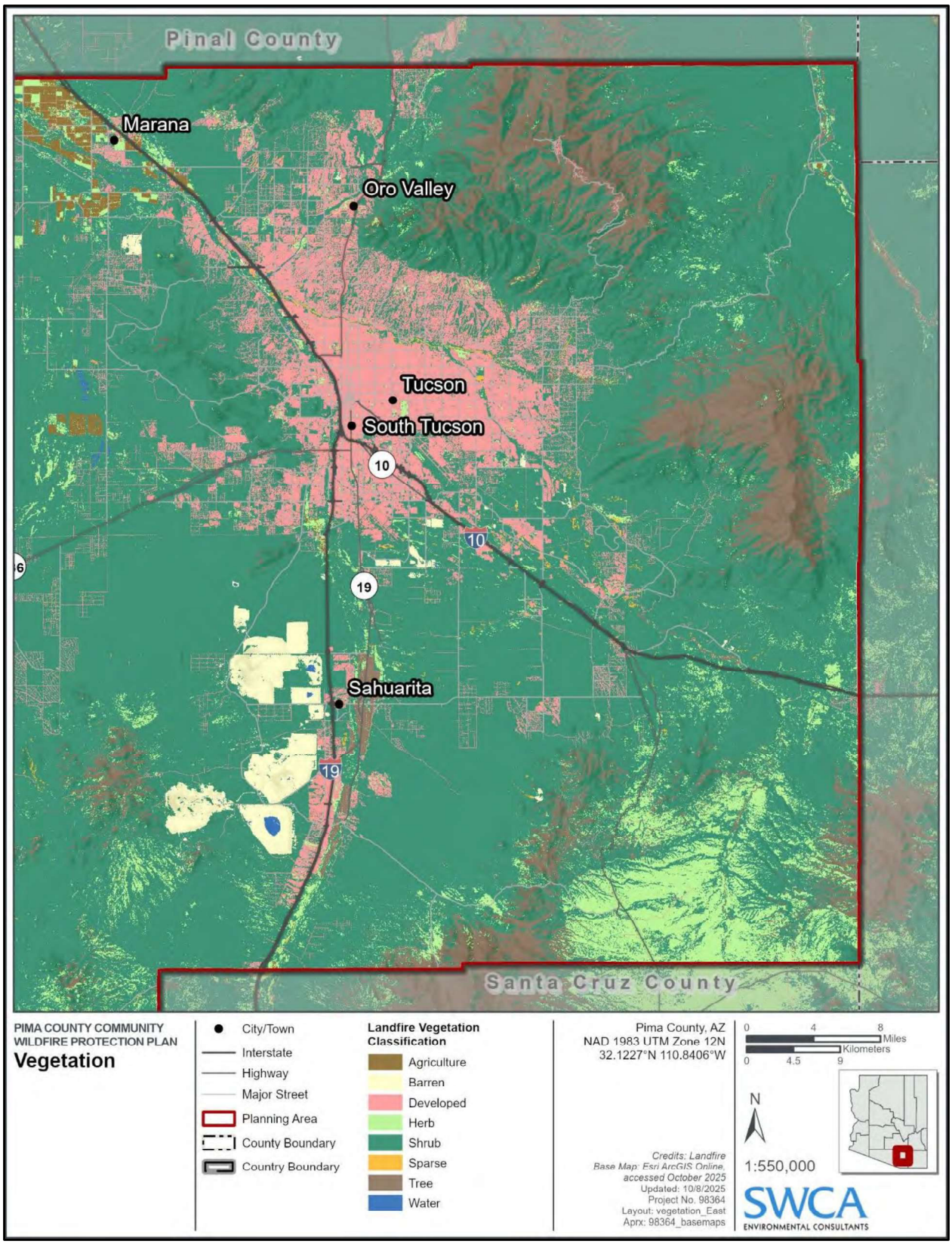


Figure 2.5. Vegetation classifications in eastern Pima County.

Surface Fuels and Fire Behavior Fuel Models

Understanding the composition and distribution of surface fuels is essential to describing the fire environment of Pima County. Total fuel load (e.g., grasses, shrubs, forbs, leaf litter, needle cast and woody debris) largely determines how a fire behaves under different weather and topographic conditions.

The fuel models are broadly described by the following acronyms, which have specified fuel codes (e.g., GR1, GR2, etc.) to represent more specific fuel types (Scott and Burgan 2005):

- **NB – Non-burnable:** Areas with insufficient wildland fuel to carry fire (e.g., urban, water, bare ground).
- **GR – Grass:** Areas where grass is the primary carrier of fire.
- **GS – Grass-Shrub:** Areas with a mix of grass and shrubs, both contributing to fire spread.
- **SH – Shrub:** Areas dominated by shrub vegetation as the main fuel.
- **TU – Timber-Understory:** Forested areas where surface fuels include a mix of litter, forbs, grass, and/or shrubs beneath trees.
- **TL – Timber Litter:** Forested areas where dead and down woody material (litter) is the primary surface fuel.
- **SB – Slash-Blowdown:** Areas with heavy dead and down woody debris, often from logging (slash) or wind events (blowdown).

Table 2.2 summarizes acreages and percentages by fuel model, and Figure 2.6 shows fuel model distributions countywide. Figure 2.7 provides a more detailed view of fuel model distributions in the eastern portion of the county, where there is the highest concentration of urban development. The adjective fire behavior classes used throughout this plan (very low, low, moderate, high, very high, extreme), including their rate of spread and flame length thresholds, are defined in Table 2.3.

The Pima County CWPP planning area is dominated by grass-shrub fuels, with GS2 (moderate grass-shrub) covering nearly half the landscape (49.3%). These fuels are widespread across open rangelands and valleys, creating a highly flammable landscape, especially during dry and windy conditions. Shrubland fuels are also significant, with SH1 and SH2 accounting for 9.7% and 8.4% of the area, respectively. These shrub types are concentrated in foothills, canyons, and undeveloped areas along the county's mountain ranges. Approximately 5% of the county comprises roads and urban development. Although these zones do not typically support wildland fire spread, they remain vulnerable to destructive urban fires, particularly where they border wildland fuels. It is important to note that, although building materials and the presence of invasive species are major factors in wildfire behavior in urban environments, this model only considers wildland fuels. Other fuel types, including additional grass, shrub, timber-understory, and timber litter models, are present in smaller patches throughout the county, but each individually accounts for less than 8% of the area. Timber (tree) communities are primarily found at higher elevations above the shrub-dominated areas. This pattern is clearly demonstrated by Figures 2.4 and 2.5, which show the distribution of LANDFIRE vegetation classifications across the county.

For wildfire modeling outputs that use these fuel models (burn probability, flame length/conditional flame length, and rate of spread), see Chapter 3 – Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment.

Table 2.2. Fuel Model Types, Acreages, and Percentages of Planning Area

Fuel Model	Fuel Model Name and Definition	Acres Within Planning Area	Percentage of Planning Area
GS2	**Moderate Load, Dry Climate Grass-Shrub:** Grass and shrubs 1 to 3 feet tall with moderate grass load. Moderate flame length; high rate of spread.	2,900,159.95	49.3%
SH1	**Low Load, Dry Climate Shrub:** Woody shrubs about 1 feet tall with some grass present; low fuel load. Very low flame length; very low rate of spread.	569,017.39	9.7%
SH2	**Moderate Load, Dry Climate Shrub:** Woody shrubs approximately 1 feet tall with moderate fuel load and little to no grass. Low flame length; low rate of spread.	492,281.79	8.4%
NB9	**Bare Ground (non-burnable):** Land devoid of vegetation sufficient to sustain wildland fire spread, such as gravel pits, dunes, or rocky terrain. No flame length; no rate of spread.	505,074.36	8.6%
GS1	**Low Load, Dry Climate Grass-Shrub:** Grass and shrubs combined; shrubs about 1 feet high with low grass load. Low flame length; moderate rate of spread.	449,487.16	7.6%
GR2	**Low Load, Dry Climate Grass:** Continuous dry climate grass about 1 feet tall; slightly higher load than GR1. Moderate flame length; high rate of spread.	439,721.88	7.5%
NB1	**Urban/Developed (non-burnable):** Land covered by urban or suburban development with insufficient wildland fuel to carry fire spread. No flame length; no rate of spread.	209,747.40	3.6%
GR1	**Short, Sparse, Dry Climate Grass:** Sparse, short grass, either naturally short or heavily grazed; may be discontinuous. Low fuel loading and continuity. Low flame length; moderate rate of spread.	201,879.15	3.4%
Other*	**All remaining fuel types combined**	**110,757.33**	**1.9%**

Source: Scott and Burgan (2005)

* "Other" includes all remaining fuel models, each of which individually accounts for less than 1% of the planning area.

Table 2.3. Fire Danger (adjective class) Definitions for Predicted Fire Behavior

Adjective Class	Rate of Spread (chains* per hour)	Flame Length (feet)
Very Low	0–2	0–1
Low	2–5	1–4
Moderate	5–20	4–8
High	20–50	8–12
Very High	50–150	12–25
Extreme	>150	>25

Source: Scott and Burgan (2005)

* 1 chain is equal to 66 feet.

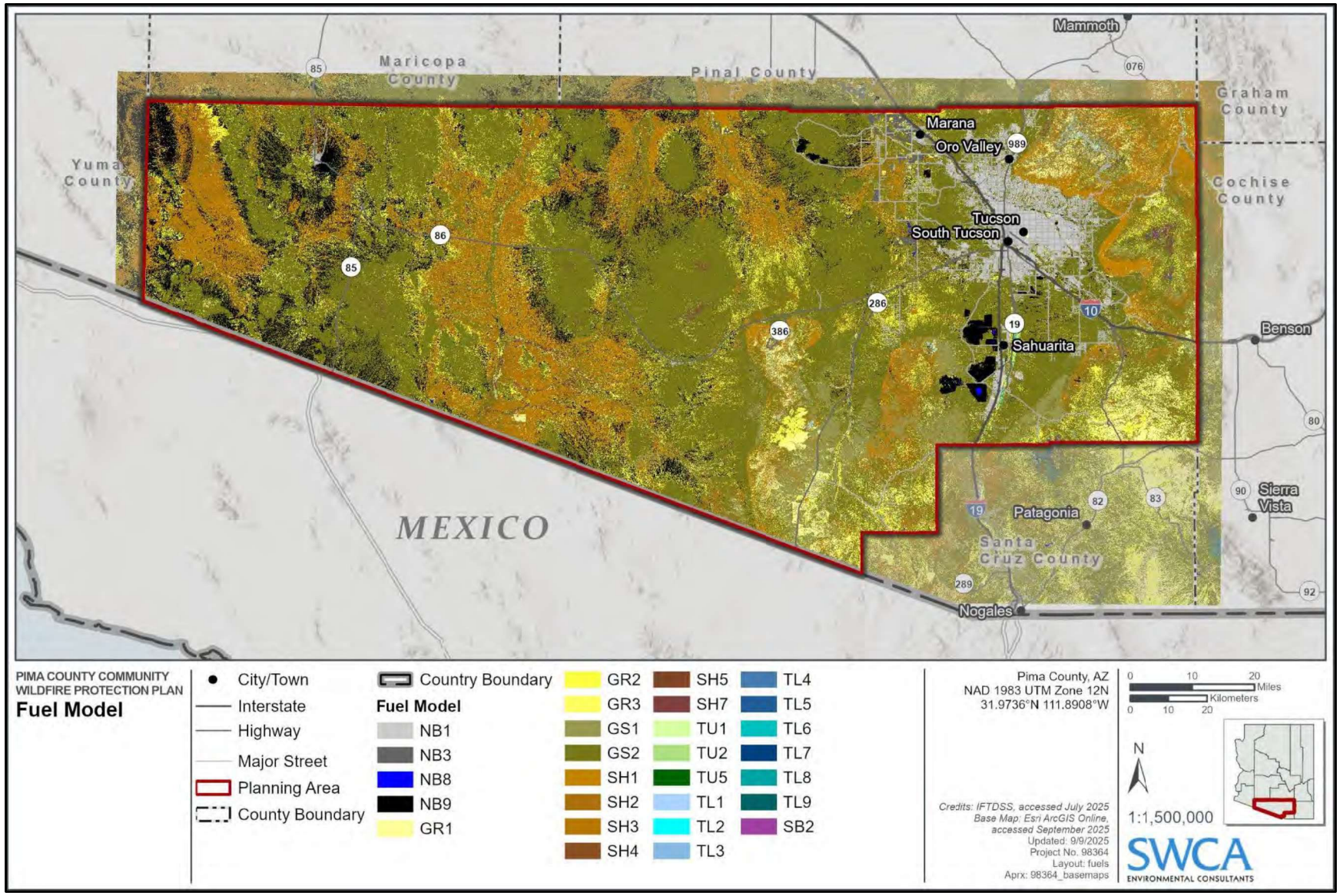


Figure 2.6. Fire behavior fuel models throughout the Pima County CWPP planning area.

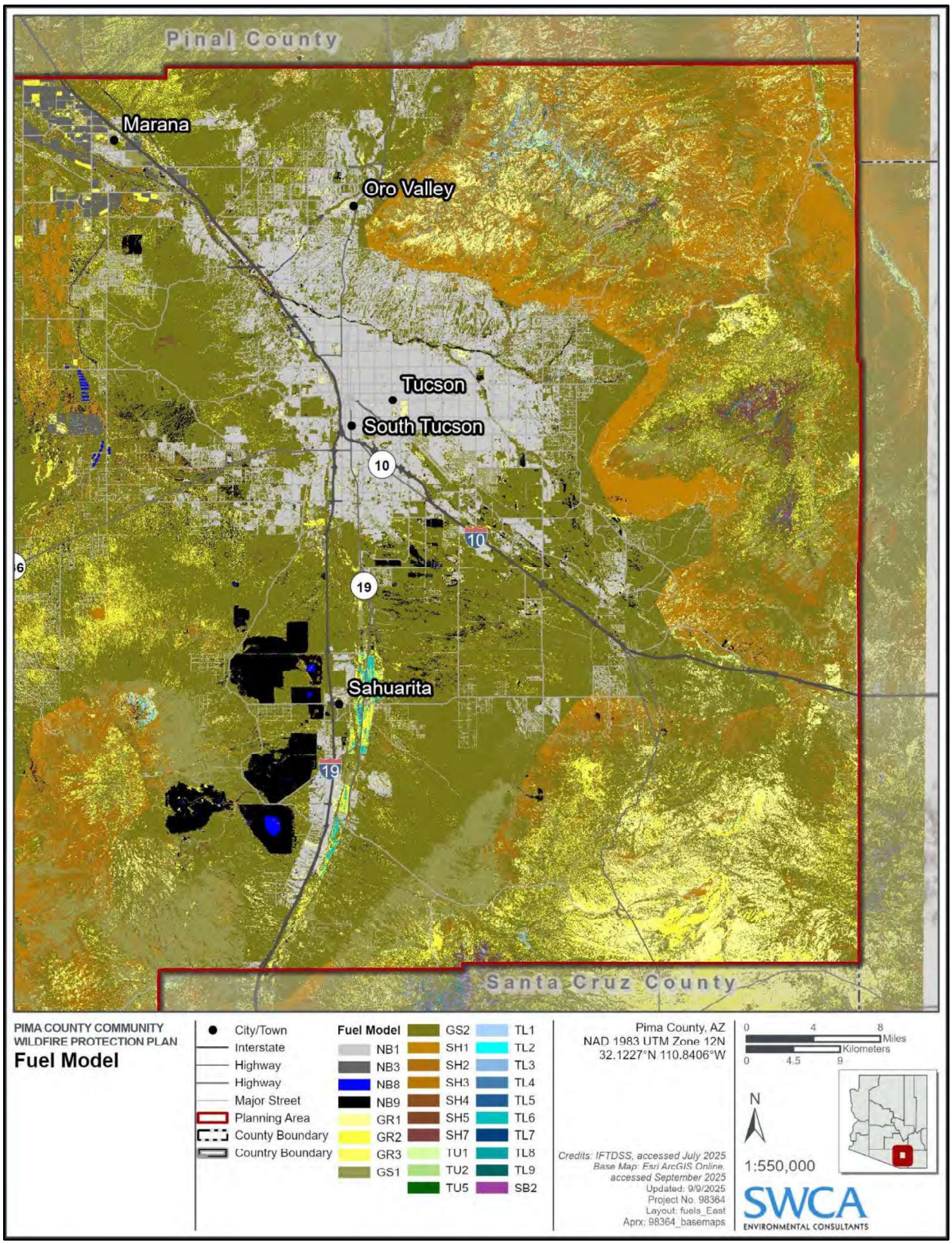


Figure 2.7. Fire behavior fuel models in the eastern Pima County CWPP planning area.

Fire Regimes

Fire regimes describe characteristic wildfire patterns associated with dominant vegetation types, including the frequency of fire and the degree of overstory vegetation replacement. Fire Regime Classes (I–V) combine these attributes and are commonly used to support fuels planning and restoration prioritization (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4. Fire Regime Classifications

Regime Class	Frequency	Severity	Percentage of Dominant Vegetation Replacement
Class I	0–35 years	Low	<75%
Class II	0–35 years	High	>75%
Class III	35–100+ years	Mixed	<75%
Class IV	35–100+ years	High	>75%
Class V	200+ years	High	>75%

Source: California Fire Safe Council (2003)

Fire regimes in Pima County vary across elevation gradients and vegetation communities, ranging from low-elevation desert scrub and riparian systems to high-elevation chaparral, woodlands, and mixed conifer forests (Table 2.5). These regime types provide an ecological context for interpreting mapped fire return intervals and vegetation departure patterns across the planning area.

Table 2.5. Contemporary Fire Regimes in Pima County.

Regime Type	Elevation Range (feet)	Fire Regime Class	Fire Frequency (years)
Sonoran Desert Scrub	100–3,500	Class III	100–1,000
Warm Desert Riparian Woodlands	Below 4,000	Class I and IV	500–1,000
Mogollon Chaparral	3,000–6,500	Class III	20–100
Madrean Encinal Woodlands	4,900–7,500	Class II	2.5–10
Madrean Montane Conifer-Oak Forests	4,700–8,900	Class I	6–30

Sources: Babler (2020); LANDFIRE (2025a); Swetnam and Babler (2020); Webb et al. (2019); Zouhar (2023)

Fire suppression, historical land use changes, and invasive species have disrupted these natural fire cycles, leading to increased fuel loads and shifts in vegetation composition (Zouhar 2003a). These changes heighten the risk of high-severity wildfires, particularly in ecosystems furthest from their historical range of variability.

Existing Conditions

The mean fire return interval (MFRI) represents the average number of years between fires at a given location and is commonly used to describe the historical fire regime to which vegetation communities evolved. Evaluating MFRI across the planning area provides insight into whether current fire frequencies

align with historical disturbance patterns and helps identify areas where wildfire behavior and ecological conditions may be altered.

Analysis of LANDFIRE 2025 MFRI data indicates that long-interval fire regimes dominate the Pima County CWPP planning area (Figures 2.8 and 2.9) (LANDFIRE 2025a). The most extensive class is the 301–500-year MFRI, which accounts for approximately 3.1 million acres (52.8%) of the planning area. These long-interval regimes are widespread across the eastern, southeastern, and southern portions of the county and correspond with desert scrub, rocky uplands, and sparsely vegetated mountain slopes where large, infrequent fires historically occurred.

Additional long-interval regimes include 151 to 200 years (663,145 acres; 11.3%) and 501 to 1,000 years (636,213 acres; 10.8%), which together reinforce the predominance of infrequent fire regimes across much of the landscape. Mid-range fire return intervals are comparatively limited in extent. The 21–25-year class accounts for 361,422 acres (6.1%) and is primarily associated with grass- and shrub-dominated systems in lower elevation basins and foothills.

Short-interval fire regimes are present but spatially constrained. Areas with 6–10-year MFRIs comprise approximately 783,502 acres (13.3%) of the planning area and are concentrated in valley bottoms, along transportation corridors, and near developed areas where fine fuels, invasive grasses, and human ignitions are more prevalent. Other short-interval classes (less than 20 years) collectively represent less than 1% of the planning area. Small portions of the landscape are classified as indeterminate fire regime characteristics, barren, sparsely vegetated, or water, each accounting for approximately 1% or less of total acreage.

Overall, the spatial distribution of MFRI classes reflects a planning area largely characterized by historically infrequent fire, with more frequent fire regimes occurring primarily in grass-influenced landscapes and areas affected by development and land use change.

Deviation from Natural Regimes

LANDFIRE's Vegetation Condition Class (VCC) describes the degree to which current vegetation composition, structure, and disturbance processes differ from estimated historical conditions. This classification is used to evaluate ecological departure and identify areas where altered fire regimes may influence wildfire behavior and ecosystem function.

The VCC system categorizes landscapes into three primary classes based on the degree of departure from historical conditions:

- VCC I: Represents areas with **low departure** from historical conditions. Vegetation composition, structure, and disturbance processes remain within the natural range of variability, and fire regimes generally reflect historical patterns.
- VCC II: Denotes areas with **moderate departure** from historical conditions. Vegetation structure and composition have changed sufficiently to alter ecosystem function and fire behavior, often indicating a need for active management to restore or maintain resilience.
- VCC III: Indicates areas with **high departure** from historical conditions. These landscapes exhibit substantial changes to vegetation structure, composition, and disturbance regimes and often experience elevated wildfire risk or uncharacteristic fire behavior.

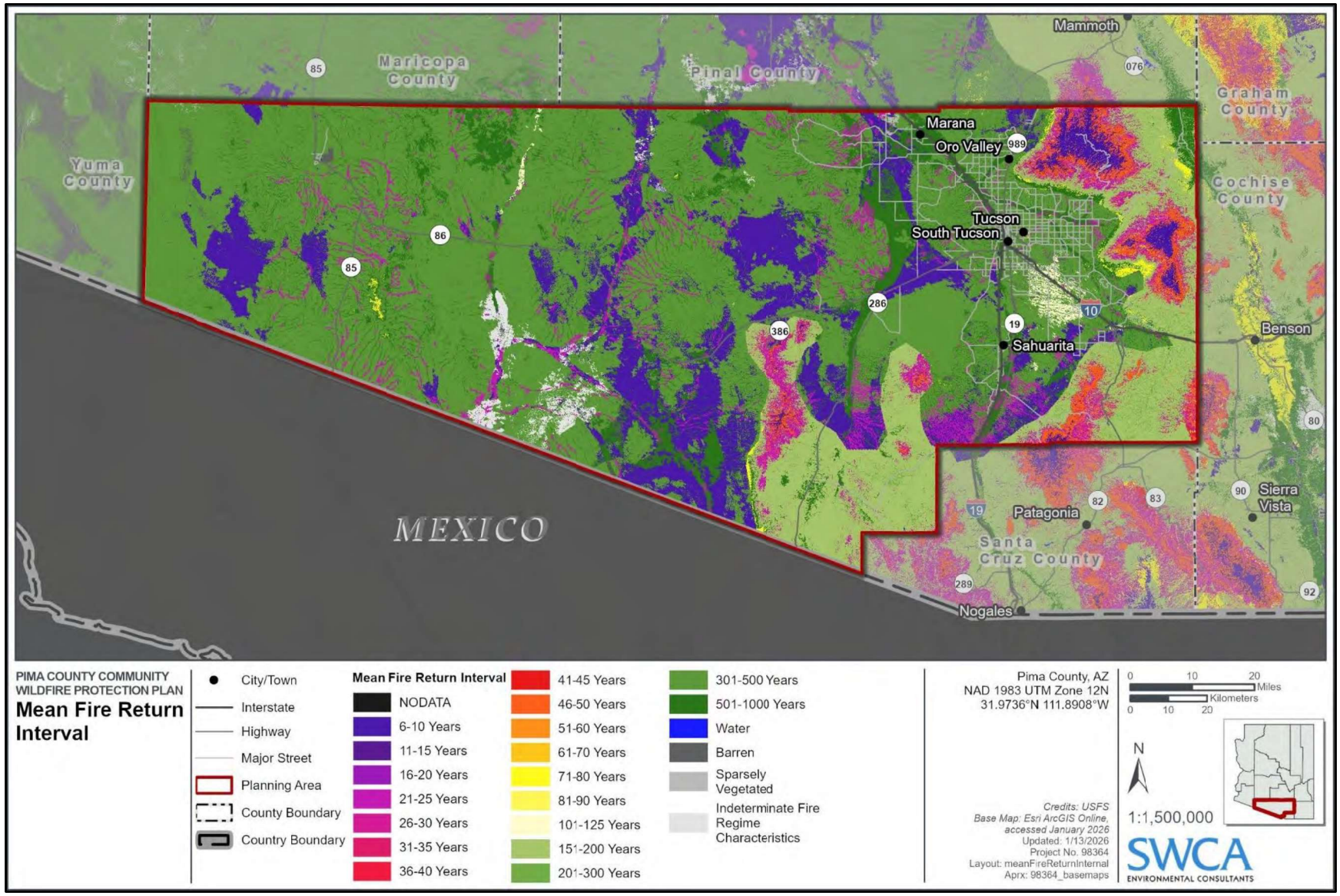


Figure 2.8. MFRIs across the planning area.

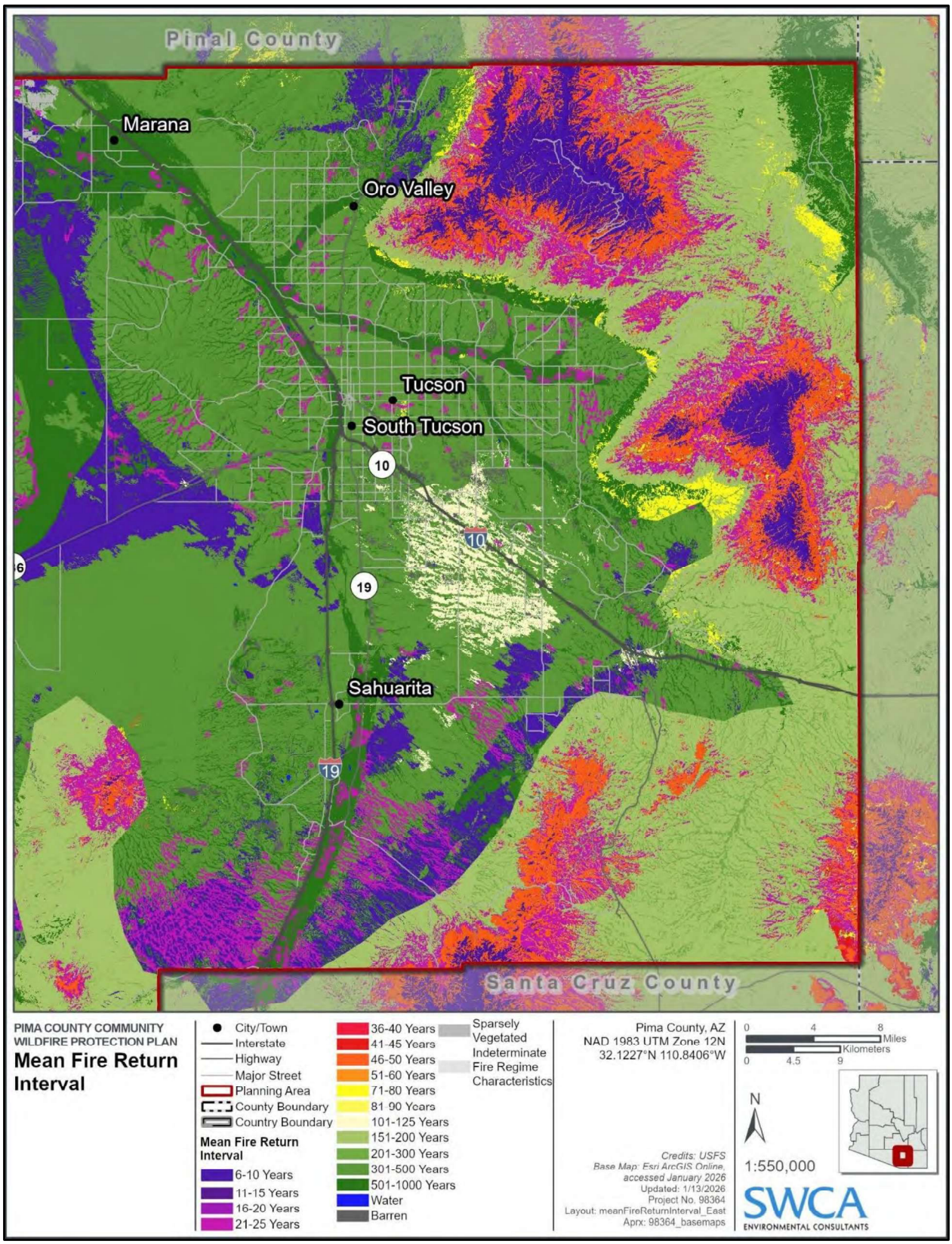


Figure 2.9. MFRIs across the eastern portion of the planning area.

Within each class, subclasses (A and B) further distinguish the degree of departure, with "B" designations reflecting greater departure than their corresponding "A" subclasses.

Across the Pima County CWPP planning area, moderate to high departure classes are widespread (Figures 2.10 and 2.11). VCC II (II.A and II.B combined) accounts for approximately 1.82 million acres (30.9%) of the planning area and is broadly distributed across lower elevation basins, foothills, and transitional landscapes. These areas commonly overlap with grass- and shrub-dominated systems where altered fire frequency, invasive species, and land use change have modified fuel characteristics.

VCC III (III.A and III.B combined) represents approximately 2.16 million acres (36.7%) of the planning area and is concentrated around developed corridors, transportation networks, agricultural interfaces, and portions of the WUI surrounding Tucson, South Tucson, Marana, Oro Valley, and Sahuarita. These areas reflect the highest degree of departure from historical conditions and frequently coincide with shorter fire return intervals and increased human influence.

VCC I (I.A and I.B combined) comprises approximately 1.53 million acres (26.1%) of the planning area and is generally associated with less fragmented desert scrub, high-elevation mountain systems, and areas farther from intensive development. In these locations, vegetation structure and fire regimes more closely resemble historical conditions.

Developed, agricultural, barren or sparsely vegetated, and water classes collectively account for approximately 6.3% of the planning area and occur primarily within valley bottoms and urbanized areas.

Anthropogenic Impacts on Fire Regimes

Contemporary fire regimes in Pima County reflect cumulative human influences that have altered historical disturbance processes across the landscape. Fire suppression, historical land use change, and the introduction and spread of invasive plant species have modified fire frequency, fuel structure, and fire behavior across multiple ecosystems (Babler 2020; Iniguez et al. 2009; Swetnam and Baisan 1993).

Reductions in cultural burning, intensive livestock grazing, and prolonged fire suppression have altered fuel composition and continuity in many vegetation types, contributing to departure from historical fire regimes (Babler 2020; Southwest Climate Adaptation Center 2021; Swetnam and Baisan 1993). These influences correspond with observed patterns in MFRI and vegetation condition class across the planning area (LANDFIRE 2024).

Invasive Species

Invasive plant species are a primary anthropogenic driver of altered fire regimes in Pima County, particularly in lower elevation ecosystems where fire was historically infrequent. Invasive grasses increase fine-fuel continuity and biomass, enabling fire spread through Sonoran Desert Scrub and adjacent WUI areas (Innes 2022; Wilder et al. 2024).

Increased fuel continuity associated with invasive species promotes repeated fire, alters post-fire vegetation recovery, and reinforces feedbacks that further depart ecosystems from historical fire regimes (Innes 2022; Zouhar 2003a;). In combination with anthropogenic ignition sources, these fuel changes have expanded wildfire potential in areas that historically limited fire spread (Wilder et al. 2024).

Additional detail on fire suppression effects, historical land use practices, invasive species dynamics, and ecosystem-specific management considerations is provided in Appendix A.

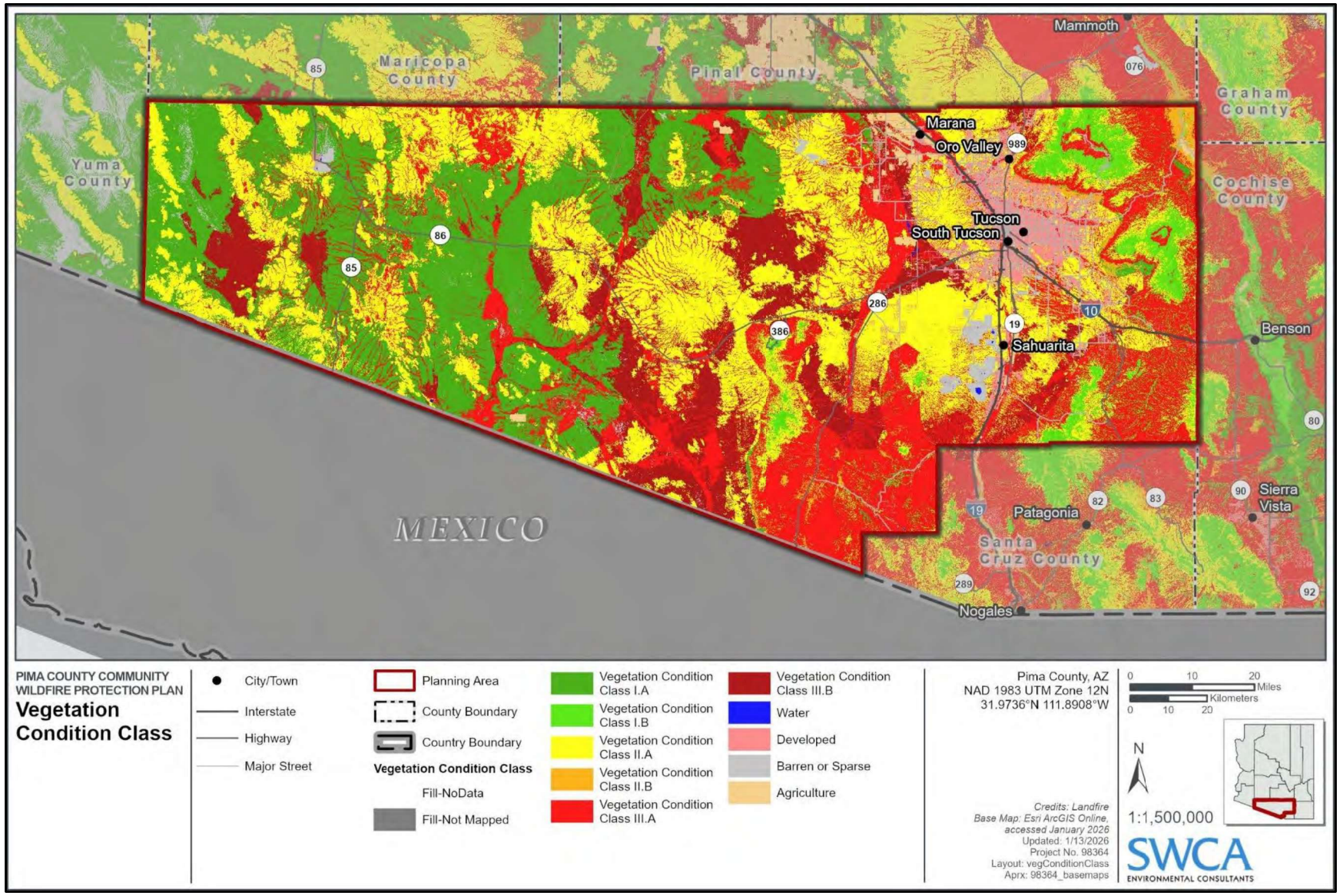


Figure 2.10. VCC across the planning area.

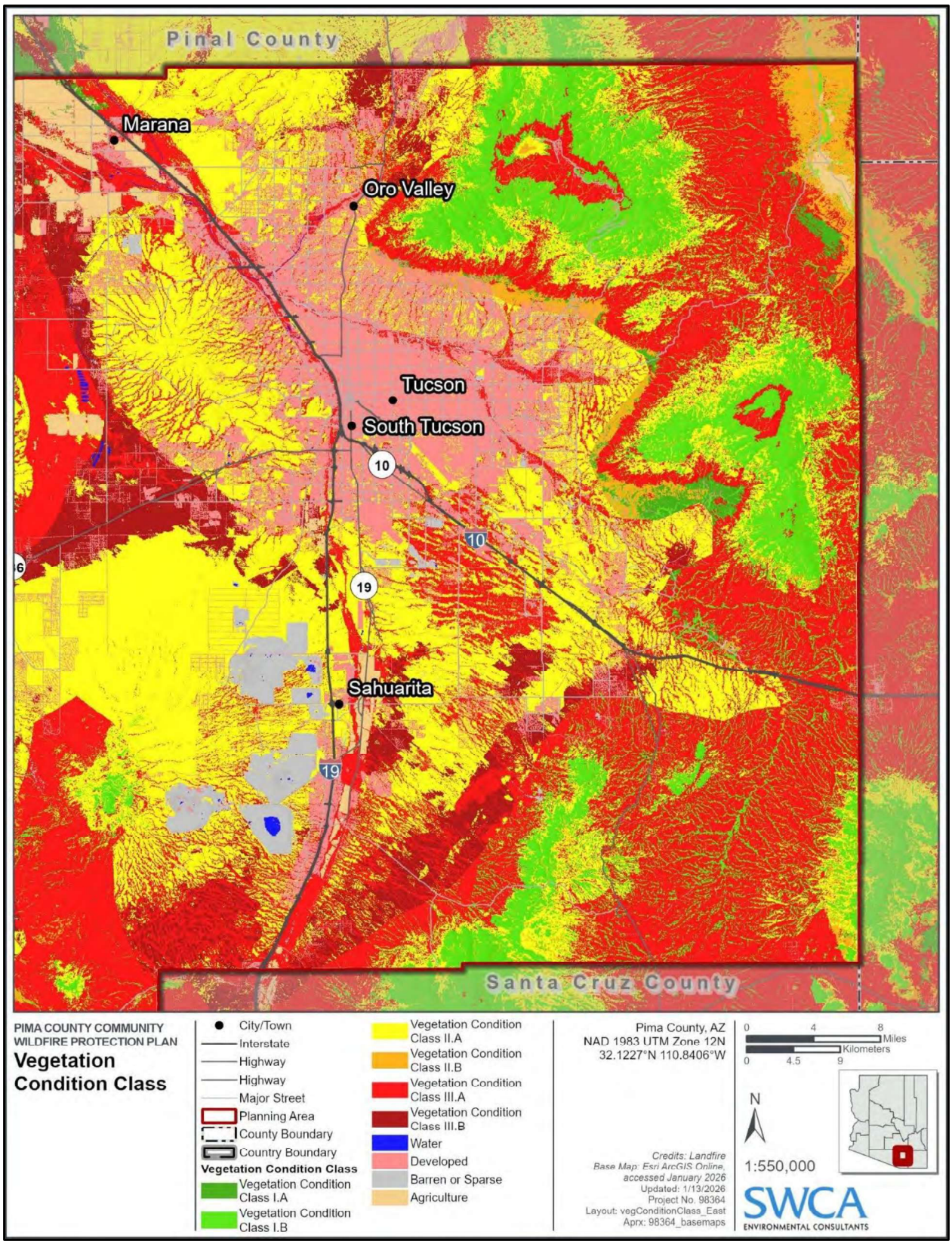


Figure 2.11. VCC across the eastern portion of the planning area.

Topography

Pima County's diverse topography and vegetative fuels create a complex landscape that significantly influences wildfire behavior, fire regimes, and management strategies. The county's elevation ranges from as low as 1,200 feet to as high as 9,185 feet above mean sea level (amsl) (Pima County 2025d). A large portion of Pima County is dominated by desert; however, the unique range of elevation creates isolated mountain ranges called Sky Islands, which are defined as mountain ranges surrounded by lowlands of a drastically different environment (USFS 2025a). A few Sky Islands reside in Pima County, including Santa Catalina, Rincon, and Santa Rita mountains, which provide the highest peaks and coolest environments. These sky islands are all closest to Tucson, the largest city in the county, where approximately half of the county's residents reside. The combination of vast elevation ranges, rugged terrain, and urbanized areas combined with varied vegetation poses significant wildfire risks.

Topography plays a vital role in fire behavior. Features such as steep slopes and canyons facilitate rapid fire spread, particularly during extreme weather conditions, as they will change wind speed and direction. Northern and western aspects are typically cooler and wetter, supporting denser vegetative communities, whereas southern and eastern aspects are hotter and drier, with sparser vegetation that experiences more frequent fire. These terrain features also create challenges for wildfire response, as limited access to remote and rugged areas can hinder firefighting efforts, potentially allowing for large fire growth in inaccessible regions

Climate and Weather Patterns

Pima County has a desert climate characterized by hot summers and mild winters, with conditions varying by elevation. Climate records from weather stations across the county show that average winter temperatures range from the low 30s to the upper 60s (degrees Fahrenheit [°F]), whereas average summer temperatures range from the low 60s (°F) in higher elevations to around 100°F in lower desert areas. Annual precipitation generally ranges from roughly 6 to over 20 inches, depending on elevation and other geographic factors, with most rainfall occurring during the summer season. May is typically the driest month (Pima County 2022a). This seasonal temperature variation further influences the local environment, contributing to the overall complexity of the region's environment.

The following section provides an overview of the typical climate and weather patterns of the region. Table 2.6 presents data collected from two local weather stations within the county, offering a comprehensive look at key meteorological metrics. Additionally, Figures 2.12 and 2.13 visually depict air temperature and precipitation data, enhancing the understanding of seasonal variations and long-term trends.

Table 2.6. Mean Annual Temperature and Precipitation by Station in Pima County

Location	Period of Record	Mean Annual Precipitation (inches)	Mean Annual Temperature (°F)		
			Maximum	Minimum	Mean Annual
Ajo	1991–2020	6.98	85.9	61.1	73.5
Oracle	1991–2020	21.70	73.7	50.9	62.3
Tucson	1991–2020	10.61	84.0	57.3	70.6

Source: NOWData data from NOAA (2020)

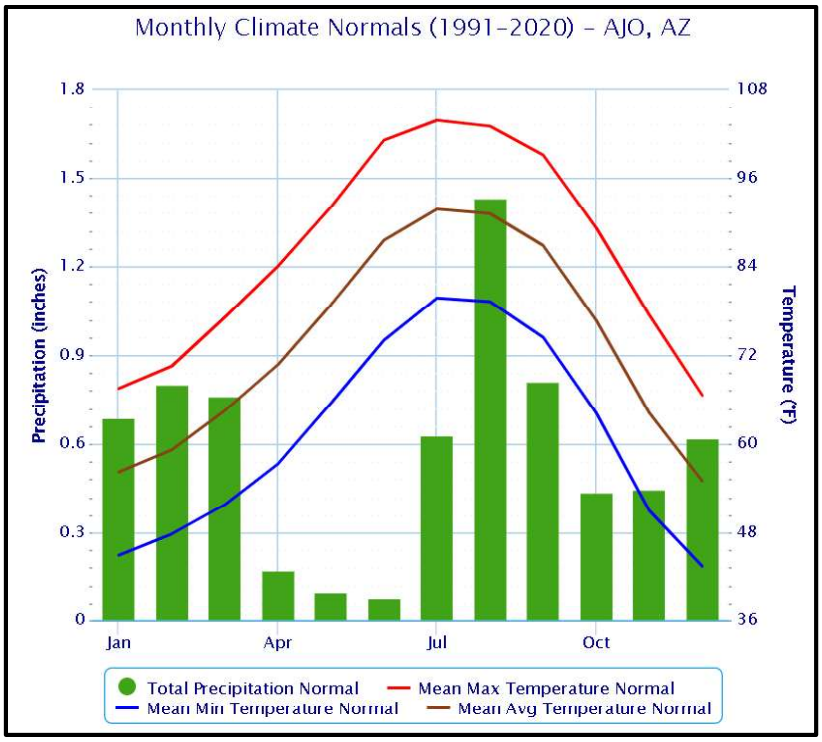


Figure 2.12. Monthly climate averages for Ajo, Arizona, between 1991 and 2020.

Source: NOAA (2020).

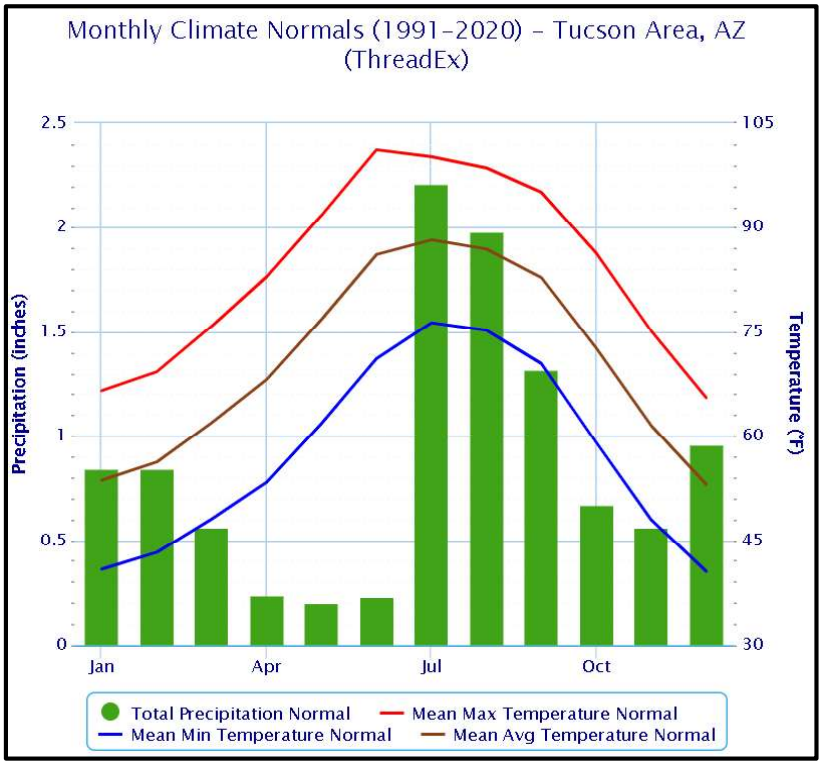


Figure 2.13. Monthly climate normals for Tucson, Arizona, between 1991 and 2020.

Source: NOAA (2020).

The county's climate is generally dry and warm throughout most of the year, receiving most of the annual precipitation during the summer monsoon season between June and September. During the monsoon season, high summer temperatures draw cooler, humid air mass from the Gulf of California, which promotes daily thunderstorm development until the land temperatures cool down in the early fall. Rainfall during the monsoon season can often produce frequent lightning and large amounts of intense rainfall in short periods (NOAA 2008). Growth rates of annual grasses and forbs tend to increase during years of greater monsoonal precipitation. During the drier periods in the fall, wildfire risk typically increases due to increased fuel loading of fine fuels (Mohrle 2003).

Outside of the monsoon season, temperatures are often milder, with higher elevations experiencing temperatures below freezing during the winter months. Most of the county receives some precipitation during the winter months between December to March at much lower amounts than monsoon season (NOAA 2008). These climatic variations result in a unique distribution of vegetation and play a crucial role in the area's fire behavior and ecosystem dynamics.

Embers

Characteristics of tree, shrub, and grass fuels contribute to the size of embers produced and the distance embers travel during a wildfire. Embers from thick-barked species, such as ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, travel shorter distances compared to those from species with lighter bark, such as tamarisk, mesquite, and palo verde. Under high winds, invasive grasses may loft embers ahead of a fast-moving fire, contributing to even greater rates of spread and in some cases breaching containment lines. Grass and shrub embers can play a significant role in wildfire spread, especially under conditions with high dead fuel accumulations. Known for burning at high temperatures and intensities, grasses and shrub fuels can promote spot fires and affect ember production. These embers are capable of igniting surrounding grass or shrub fuels and spreading fires miles ahead of the fire front (National Wildfire Coordinating Group [NWCG] 2021).

Fire that involves burning structures and roadside trash results in the lofting of large and long heat-retention fire brands that are not common in the natural environment. Local topography influences where embers may land, ridges can catch embers, and steep valleys tend to collect embers. A combination of vertical loft, wind, slope angle, and the positioning of structures can all impact ember production and potential ignitions.

Spotting occurs when embers travel in advance of the flaming front; long-range spotting can be miles ahead of the main fire (Figure 2.14).

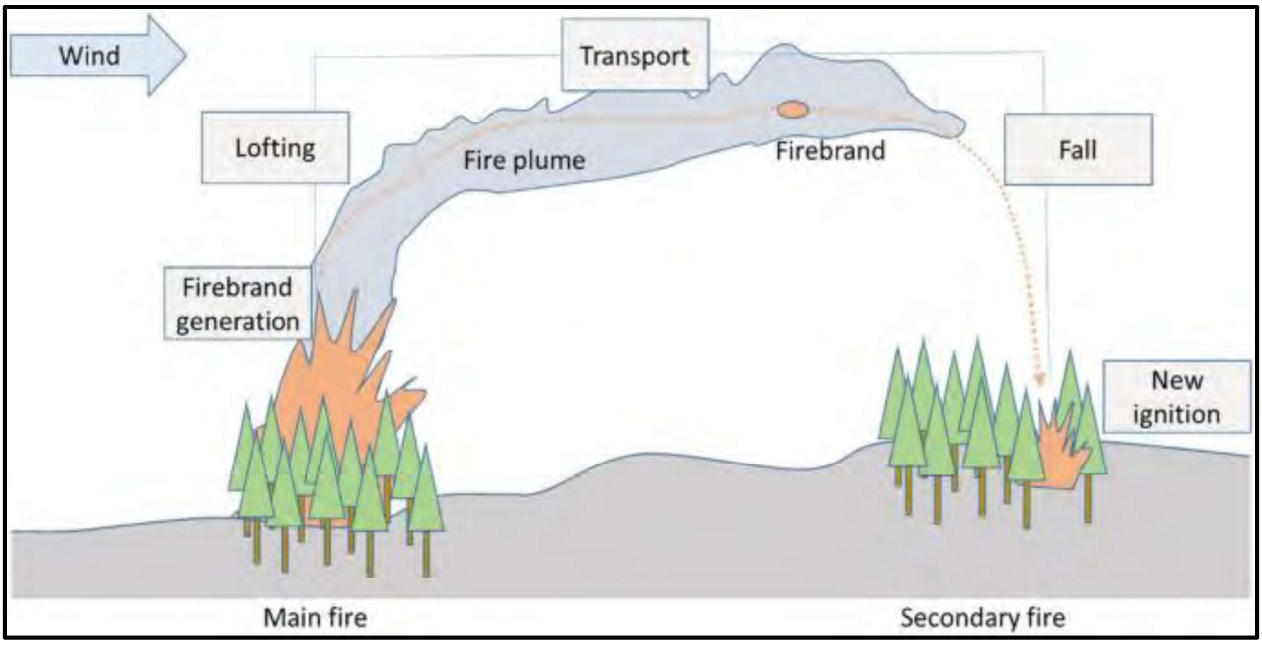


Figure 2.14. Factors associated with embers (firebrands) on the landscape. Vegetation type, wind, and topography all influence ember production and travel distances.
Source: Martin and Hillen (2016).

FIRE HISTORY

The Sonoran Desert ecosystem makes up a large portion of Pima County that, historically, does not have a prominent fire history. This ecosystem consists of patchy vegetation that is not fire-adapted and lacks the continuity to sustain larger fires (Southwest Fire Science Consortium [SWFSC] 2024). Historically, fires most often occurred in the fire-adapted grassland and woodland ecosystems of the Sky Islands, restricted to the Madrean Encinal Woodlands, Mogollon Chaparral, and Madrean Montane Conifer-Oak Forests fire regimes. From the 1850s to the mid-1900s, fires started to occur more frequently at lower desert elevations during years of more moisture, which increased fine-fuel loading (Wilder et al. 2024). Fires were historically small and infrequent, but, in the last few decades, the increase in fire frequency and size has created concerns for wildfire management. The introduction and prevalence of invasive grasses and forbs in the lower elevational ecosystems has caused fires to become more frequent and larger as vegetation continuity that can support larger wildfires has developed across the landscape (SWFSC 2024).

Recent Fire Occurrence

The following summary of wildfire occurrence, trends, and fire history in Pima County is based on data compiled by the NIFC (2024a, 2024b). It should also be noted that changes in wildfire reporting and data collection methods over time may influence the apparent trends in fire occurrence and ignition frequency. As wildfire tracking and reporting has improved, a greater number of fires have been documented. As a result, some of the observed increases in recorded wildfire ignitions and occurrences over time may reflect improvements in detection and reporting practices rather than solely an actual increase in wildfire activity.

Several significant wildfires have occurred across Pima County's major mountain regions over the past several decades. In the Santa Catalina Mountains, the 2003 Aspen Fire, which was human-caused, burned approximately 84,750 acres and destroyed 333 structures, including much of the community of Summerhaven. In contrast, the 2020 Bighorn Fire was ignited by lightning and burned nearly 120,000 acres, prompting evacuations in Summerhaven and closures of Mount Lemmon and Sabino Canyon, which primarily impacting wilderness areas and wildlife habitat. The Bullock Fire, in 2002, also affected the Santa Catalina Mountains, burning about 30,563 acres. In southern Pima County near the Baboquivari Mountains, several notable fires have occurred as well, many of them human-caused, including the 2017 Sawmill Fire, which burned approximately 46,991 acres (NIFC 2024a; Pima County Public Library 2026).

Changes to Pima County's landscape, especially the increase in invasive species in Sonoran Desert ecosystems, are increasing wildfire risk (Wilder et al. 2024). The increase of invasives compounded with drought conditions and higher temperatures leads to drier vegetation that can burn more easily (NOAA 2024; SWFSC 2024). Additionally, changes in precipitation patterns leading to wetter seasons can allow invasive species to further accumulate as fuels on the landscape (Wilder et al. 2024).

Increases in wildfire occurrence and risk are further driven by encroachment into WUI. As populations expand into the WUI, particularly around the Tucson area, more people are exposed to risk from wildland fires. More people living and recreating in the WUI can increase the likelihood of human-caused ignitions, and humans are already the leading cause of wildfire ignitions in Pima County. These ignitions often result from activities such as dragging vehicle chains, unattended or improperly managed campfires, misuse of firearms, equipment use, and other outdoor activities. Although the majority of fire ignitions in Pima County are human-caused, the number of human-caused ignitions has generally decreased in recent years.

These trends are evidenced by Pima County's shifting fire history over the past decades. Wildfires burned about 588,000 acres in Pima County in the past 35 years, which constitutes a nine times increase in acres burned over the preceding 70 years (1920–1989) (NIFC 2024a). There has also been a notable increase in the size of fires in the county, with more fires burning several hundred to over a thousand acres in recent decades (NIFC 2024b).

Figures 2.15 through 2.25 depict fire history in Pima County.

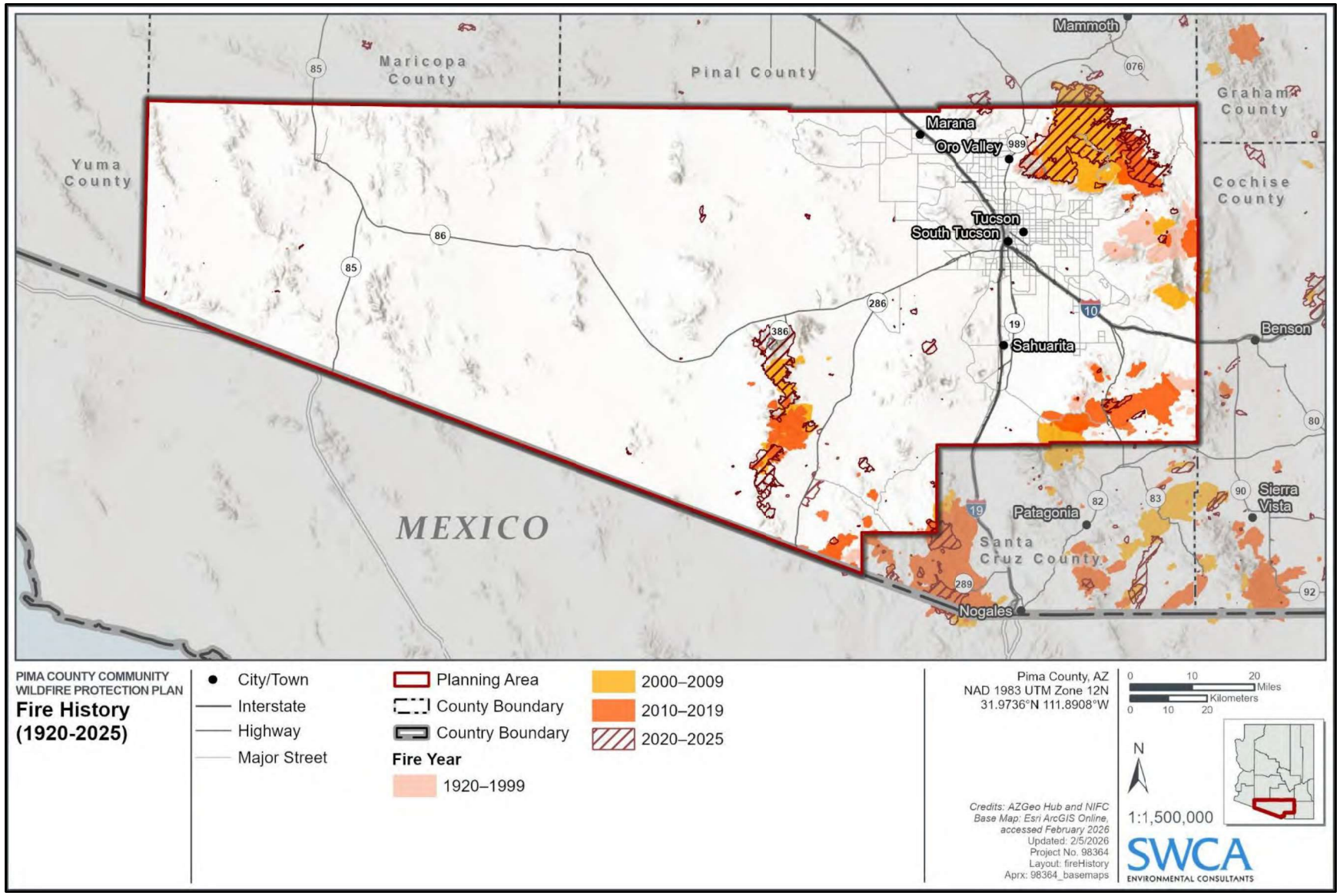


Figure 2.15. Wildfire history in Pima County from 1920 to 2025.

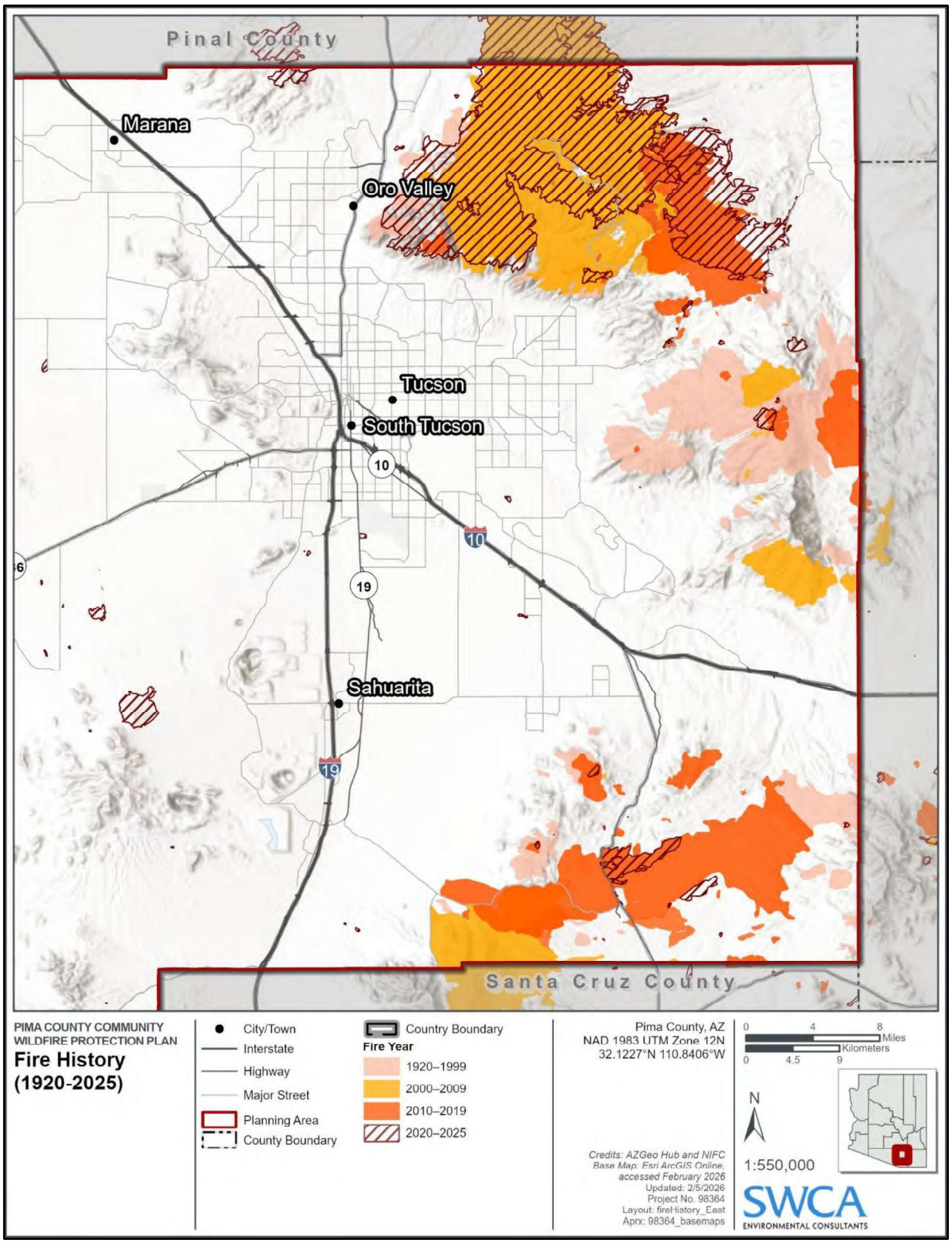


Figure 2.16. Wildfire history in eastern {Pima County from 1920 to 2025.

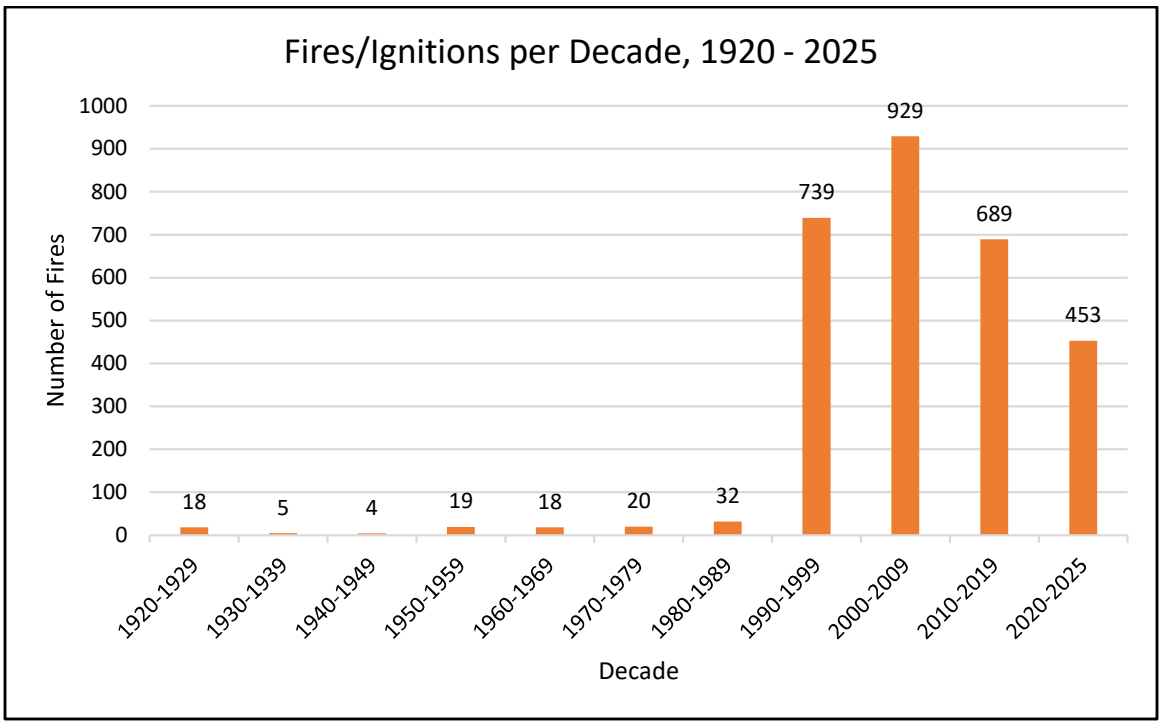


Figure 2.17. Decadal wildfire frequency for Pima County based on available data from 1920 through 2025. Reporting of wildfires significantly improved in the 1990s, accounting for the increase in reported fires/ignitions per decade after 1990.

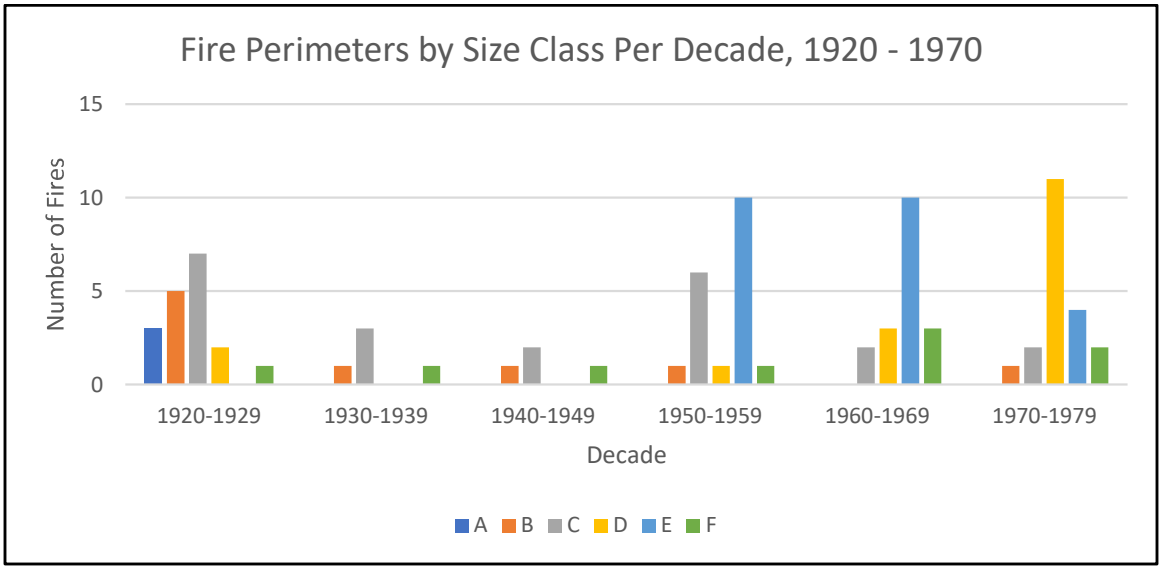


Figure 2.18. Fire size statistics for Pima County based on fire history data from 1920 through 1979.

Note: Size classifications are as follows: A = 0–0.25 acre, B = 0.25–10 acres, C = 10–100 acres, D = 100–300 acres, E = 300–1,000 acres, F = >1,000 acres.

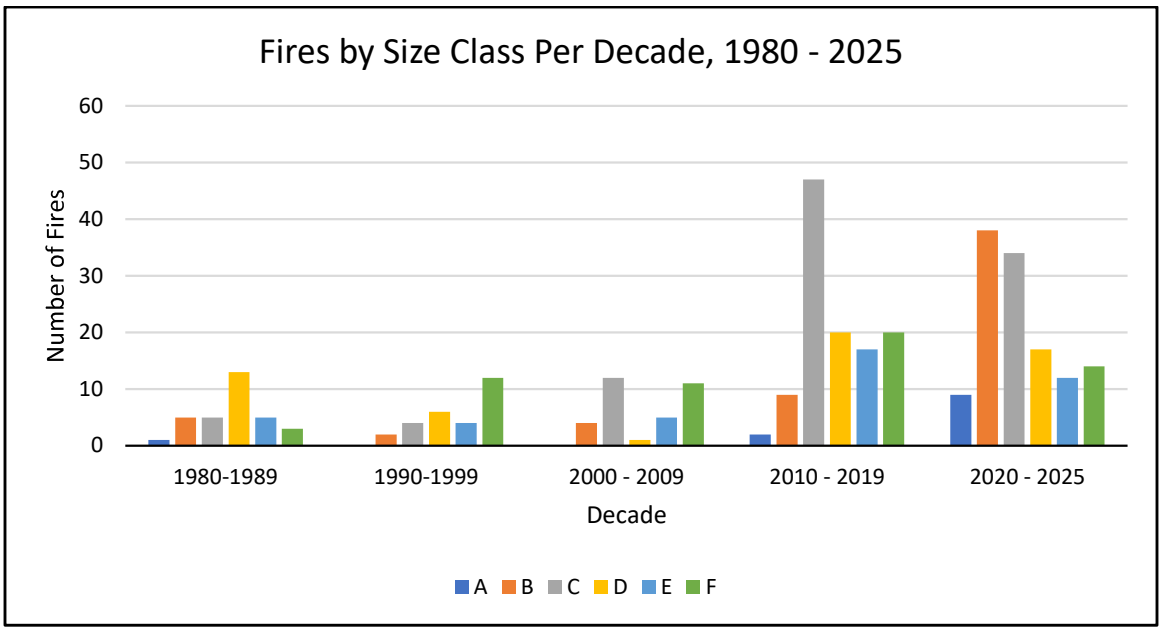


Figure 2.19. Fire size statistics for Pima County based on fire history data from 1980 through 2025.

Note: Size classifications are as follows: A = 0–0.25 acre, B = 0.25–10 acres, C = 10–100 acres, D = 100–300 acres, E = 300–1,000 acres, F = >1,000 acres.

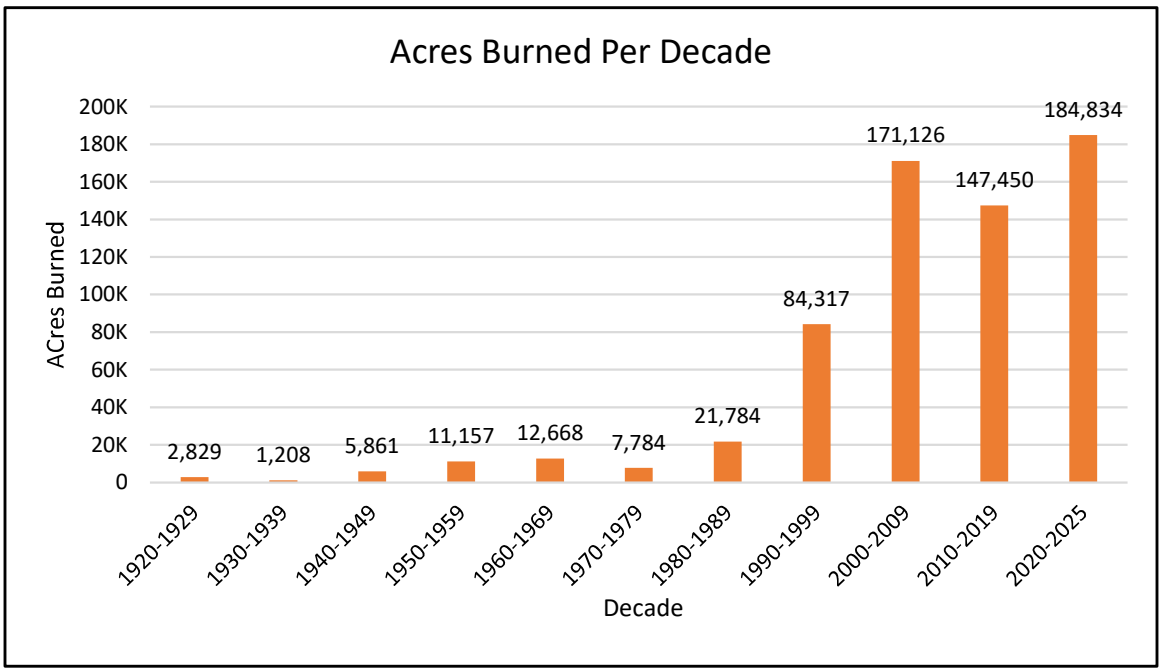


Figure 2.20. Acres burned per decade for Pima County based on fire history data from 1920 through 2025.

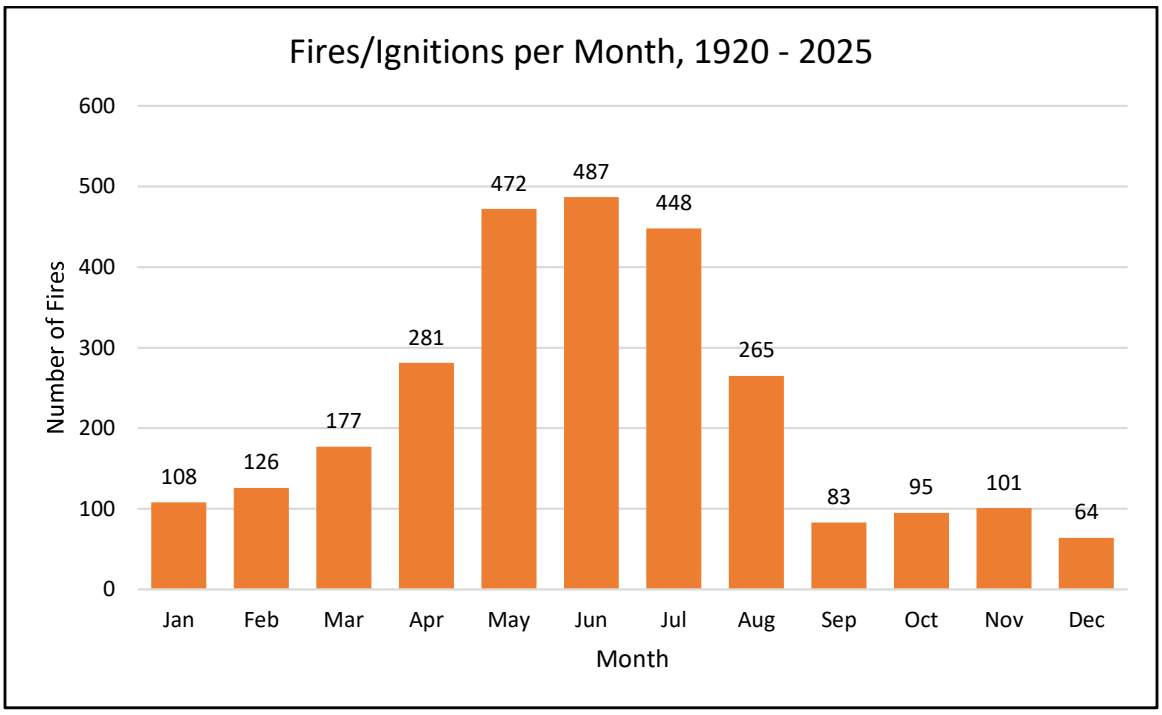


Figure 2.21. Number of recorded fires per month in Pima County from 1920 through 2025.

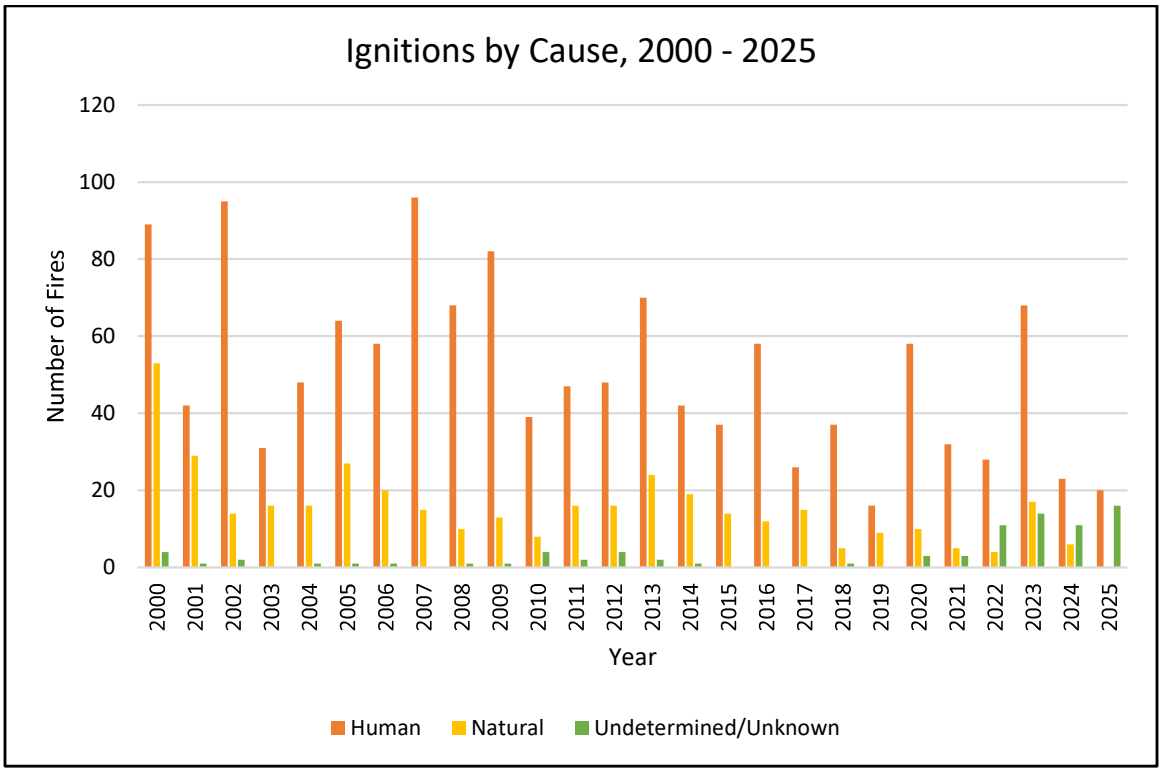


Figure 2.22. Cause of wildfire ignitions in Pima County from 2000 through 2025.

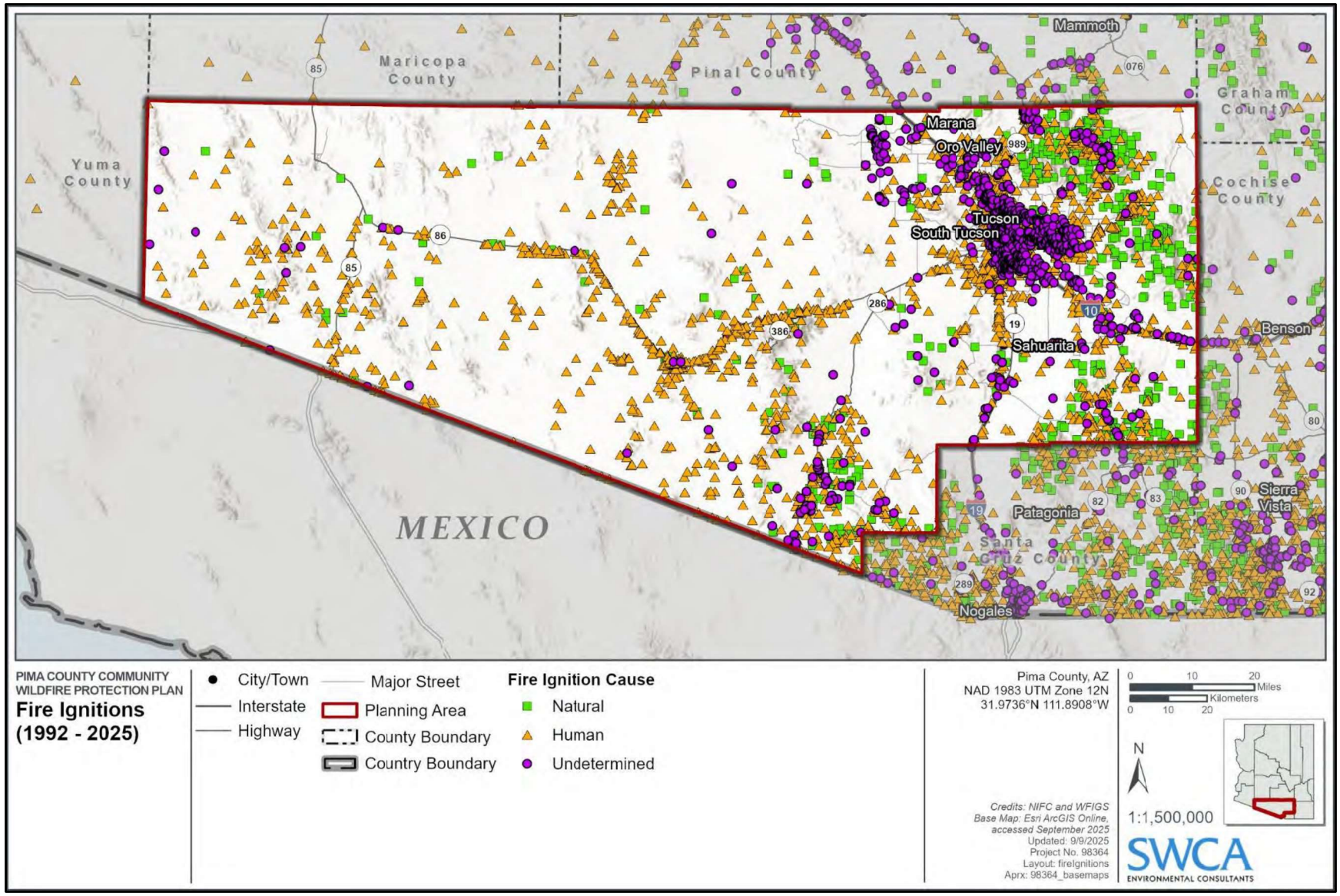


Figure 2.23. Location of fire incidents in all of Pima County from 1992 to 2025.

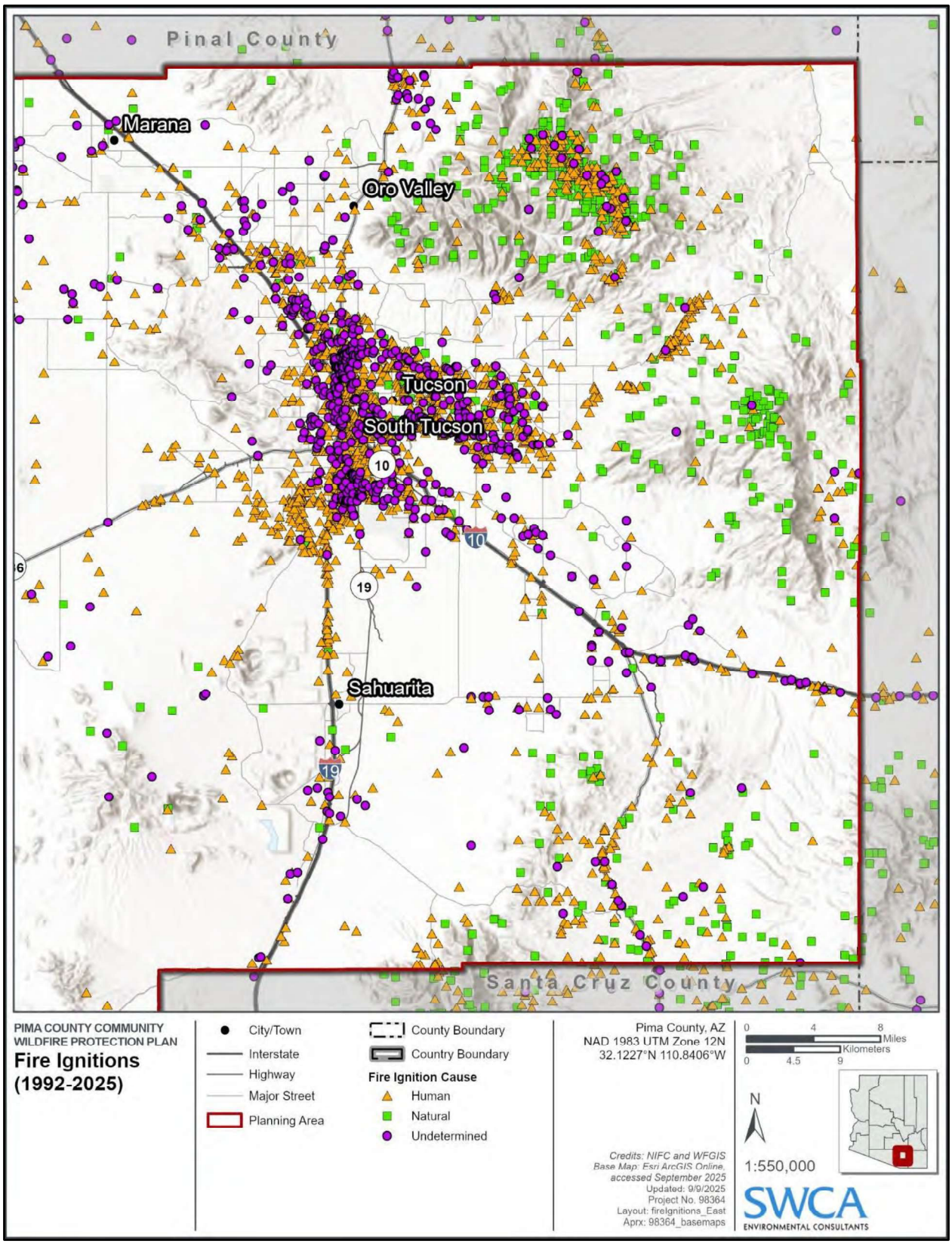


Figure 2.24. Location of fire incidents in Eastern Pima County from 1992 to 2025.

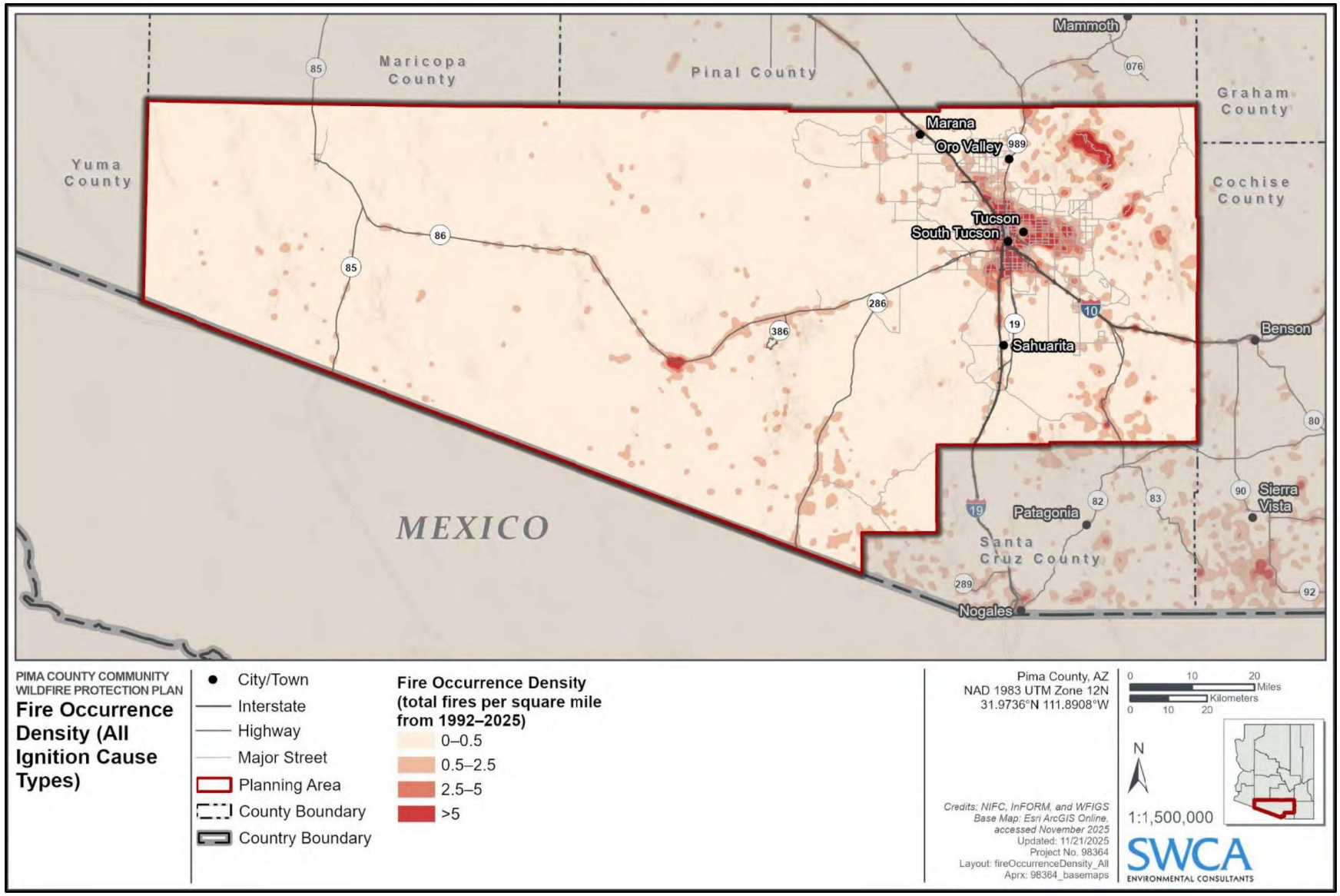


Figure 2.25. Fire occurrence densities throughout all of Pima County.

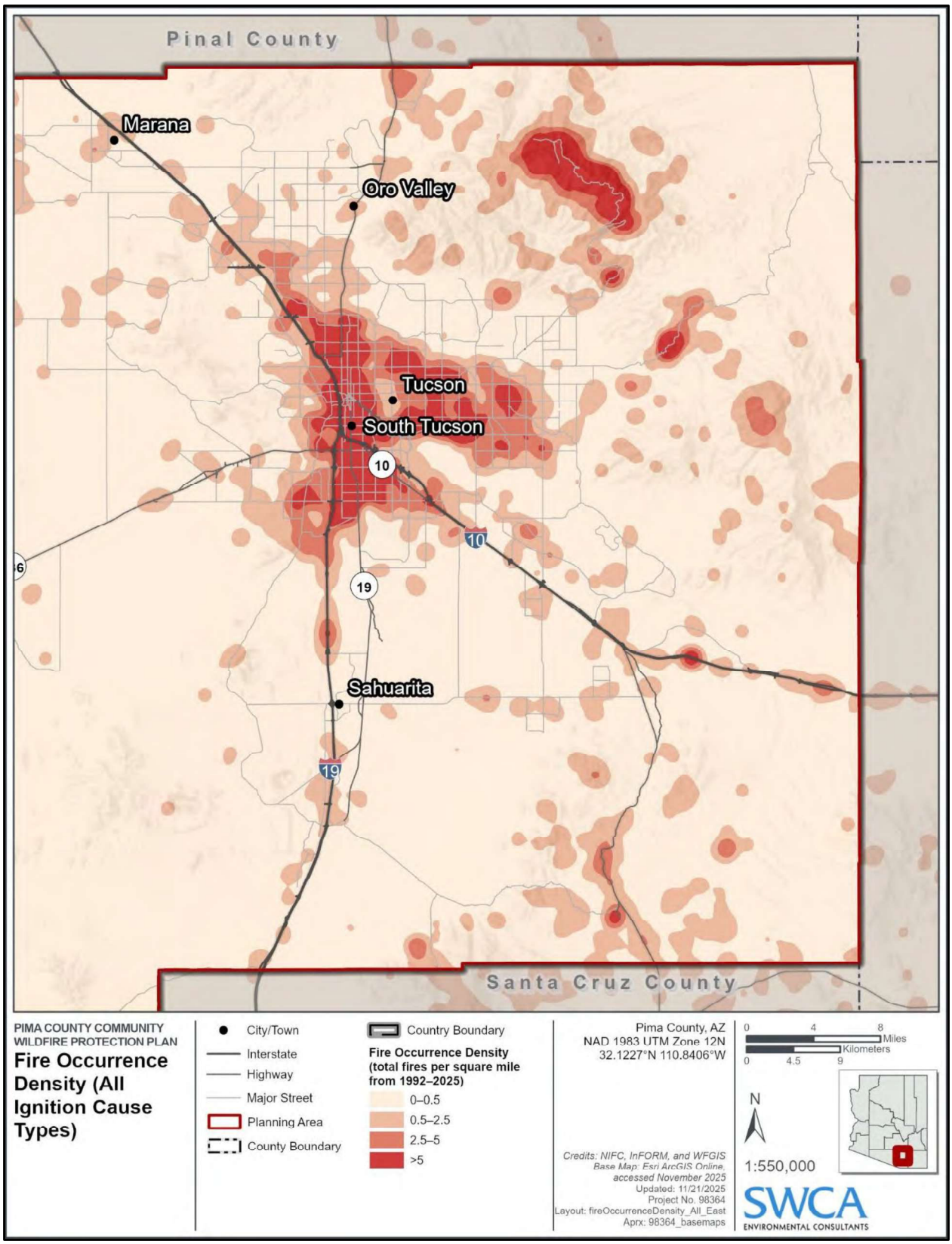


Figure 2.26. Fire occurrence densities throughout Eastern Pima County.

FIRE RESPONSE CAPABILITIES

Wildfire response in Pima County is a coordinated effort that brings together local, state, and federal partners under the guidance of the Stafford Act. Mutual aid agreements strengthen this network, enabling resources and personnel to collaborate when fires occur. See Figure 2.24 for a map of fire protection responsibilities in Pima County.

Dedicated volunteers, firefighters, hand crews, aircraft, mitigation teams, and fire prevention specialists all play a vital role in protecting lives, property, and natural areas. Together, they help keep Pima County communities safe and prepared for the challenges of wildfires.

Refer to Appendix B for details regarding fire response resources, including a breakdown of equipment, personnel, and qualifications for each fire protection district.

Planning Decision and Support

Wildfires have continued to grow in size and severity over the last decade, requiring fire managers to institute more robust pre-fire planning, as well as adapt and improve decision-making tools to reduce risk to fire responders and the public and assess impacts to ecological processes.

The 2025 Pima County WMP (Pima County 2025a) highlights the approach to wildfire prevention, mitigation, emergency response, and readiness while addressing wildfire threats and increased WUI risk across the county. The plan elaborates on several effort categories, including land use, fuels reduction, emergency preparation, public education, infrastructure, enforcement, and collaboration. Furthermore, the county's plan institutes the following goals and objectives to ensure protection of Pima County citizens and resources (Tables 2.7–2.9).

Refer to Appendix B (see Past Planning Efforts section) for more information.

Goal 1: Public Education/Prevention

Objective

Pima County desires to improve communication and collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and communities that is focused on wildfire preparedness, invasive species education, and emergency readiness (Pima County 2025b).

Table 2.7. Pima County WMP Public Education/Prevention Objectives

Objective	Description
1.1	Develop collaborative communication strategies for consistent wildfire safety messaging year-round, including providing multilingual public education materials.
1.2	Create a website with interactive tools addressing emergency checklists, real-time alerts, and risk maps.
1.3	Increase MyAlert registrations, ensuring residents can easily locate evacuation information. Additionally, promote signups through outreach campaigns, community events, and public service announcements.

Source: Pima County (2025b)

Goal 2: Mitigation

Objective

Promote innovative strategies for invasive species management via coordinated data sharing and align all mitigation efforts with collaborators across all jurisdictions (Pima County 2025b).

Table 2.8. Pima County WMP Mitigation Objectives

Objective	Description
2.1	Map high-priority areas impacted by invasive species, WUI, and drought. Additionally, train staff and contractors on invasive species identification and treatment. Ultimately, the goal is to provide and streamline educational material to the public, staff, contractors, and stakeholders.
2.2	Pursue grants, create partnerships, and collaborate with resources for large-scale mitigation projects (i.e., prescribed burns, defensible space).
2.3	Update administrative procedures for invasive species mitigation efforts (for species such as stinknet and buffelgrass) to address the need for internal departments to mitigate in their areas of responsibility.
2.4	Pursue new opportunities for invasive species mitigation, increasing participation and engagement from the county and other stakeholder employees.
2.5	Incorporate mitigation into zoning/coding ordinances updates for WUI areas.

Source: Pima County (2025b)

Goal 3: Emergency Response

Objective

Improve emergency response, coordination, agency roles, and response systems throughout Pima County (Pima County 2025b).

Table 2.9. Pima County WMP Mitigation Objectives

Objective	Description
3.1	Collaborate with dispatch, emergency responders, and other response partners to assure clear guidelines for roles during wildfire response. Host biannual regional task force meetings and regional wildland fire training course.
3.2	Update county CWPP on a 5-year cycle, unless conditions warrant an earlier update (see Chapter 5).
3.3	Partner with local utility companies to pursue new ideas for early detection of wildfires in remote areas and identify response during wildfire. Additionally, create and keep updated water resource maps for fire response.
3.4	Work with Department of Transportation to pre-identify evacuation routes and create clear signage for routes. Additionally, coordinate with regional law enforcement entities on evacuation response.

Source: Pima County (2025b)

Regional Fire Response

Community fire protection in Pima County is managed by multiple municipal fire departments and rural fire districts (Table 2.10). Most of these fire district's response zones are relatively large, serving much of Pima County's rural and unincorporated communities (Figures 2.10 and 2.11). Fire districts in Pima County face challenges in recruiting and maintaining sufficient staff.

Table 2.10. Fire Districts Within Pima County

Agency	Service Areas
Ajo-Gibson Volunteer Fire Department	Ajo and surrounding areas
Arivaca Fire District*	Arivaca, southern Pima County, and Santa Cruz County border
Avra Valley Fire District*	Picture Rocks, Red Rock Village, Marana, and Silverbell Road
Corona de Tucson Fire District*	Corona de Tucson
Drexel Heights Fire District*	South and southwest areas outside the City of Tucson (Drexel Heights, Tucson Estates, the Foothills, and the surrounding neighborhoods)
Golder Ranch Fire District*	Oro Valley, Catalina, Saddlebrooke, and unincorporated areas of northern Pima County
Helmet Peak Volunteer Fire Department*	Curly Horn ranch, Ocotillo Ranch, Wrangler Ranch, Flying Diamond Airpark, University of Arizona San Xavier Mine training facility, and Komatsu Proving Ground
Hidden Valley Fire District*	Sabino Canyon Homeowners Association (HOA) and most properties in Hidden Valley HOA and Sabino Town & Country HOA
Mt. Lemmon Fire*	Summerhaven, Soldier's Camp, and Willow Canyon
Northwest Fire District*	Marana, Oro Valley, and numerous unincorporated communities in northwest Tucson metropolitan area
Pascua Yaqui Fire Department	Pascua Yaqui tribal lands
Picture Rocks Fire District*	Picture Rocks
Rincon Valley Fire District*	Vail and surrounding unincorporated areas
Rural/Metro Fire Department*†	Catalina Foothills, Sabino Canyon, Tanque Verde, areas in Pima County south of Tucson, Hidden Valley, Sabino Vista, Tucson Country Club, and Tanque Verde Valley Fire Districts
Santa Rita Fire District*	Green Valley and Town of Sahuarita
South Tucson Fire Department	City of South Tucson
Three Points Fire District*	Three Points
Tohono O'odham Nation Fire Department	Tohono O'odham Nation tribal lands
Tucson Airport Authority Fire Department	Tucson International Airport and Ryan Airfield
Tucson Fire Department	City of Tucson and areas within direct municipal boundaries
Why Fire District*	Why

Source: Pima County Fire (2025)

* Indicates agencies that serve unincorporated communities.

† Indicates for profit.

The AZ DFFM is responsible for wildfire suppression and prevention on state lands and private lands outside incorporated municipalities (Arizona Revised Statute [ARS] 37-1301) while maintaining cooperative agreements with local fire districts to support and augment wildfire response capacity when needed. Interagency wildfire coordination occurs through established systems, including the Southwest Coordination Center and the NWCG.

Fire suppression responsibilities on public and private lands fall to the federal and state agencies (Table 2.11). On public forest lands, fire suppression responsibilities fall to the Coronado National Forest (Santa Catalina and Nogales Ranger Districts). Other federal agencies, such as the BLM, NPS, and USFWS, are all responsible for fire responses on their designated lands. The AZ DFFM is responsible for fire suppression and management on all state and private lands.

Table 2.11. Public and Private Lands Fire Protection Resources in Pima County

Agency	Land Jurisdiction	Location
AZ DFFM	State, state trust lands, and private lands	All state and private lands
BLM	BLM lands	Ironwood National Monument, Sonoran Desert National Monument, and other BLM lands, including Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Disposable Lands, Grazing Allotments, and Special Recreation Management Areas
NPS	National Park lands	Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and Saguaro National Park
USFS	Coronado National Forest – Santa Catalina Ranger District	Santa Catalina Mountains and Rincon Mountains
USFS	Coronado National Forest –Nogales Ranger District	Santa Rita Mountains (north section), San Luis Mountains, Tumacácori Mountains, and Pajanto Mountains
USFWS	National Wildlife Refuges	Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge

Source: Pima County Fire (2025)

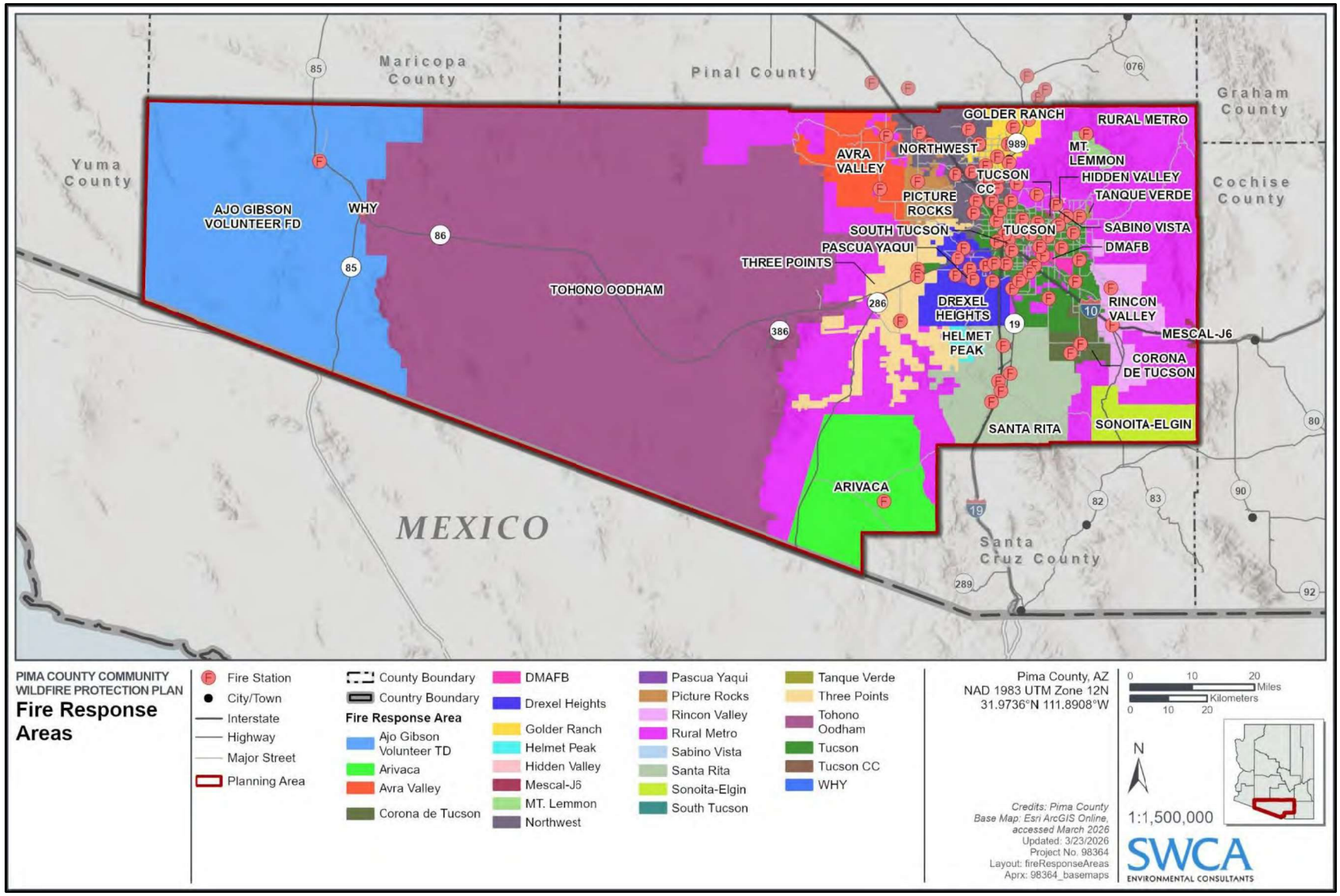


Figure 2.27. Fire district response areas within Pima County.

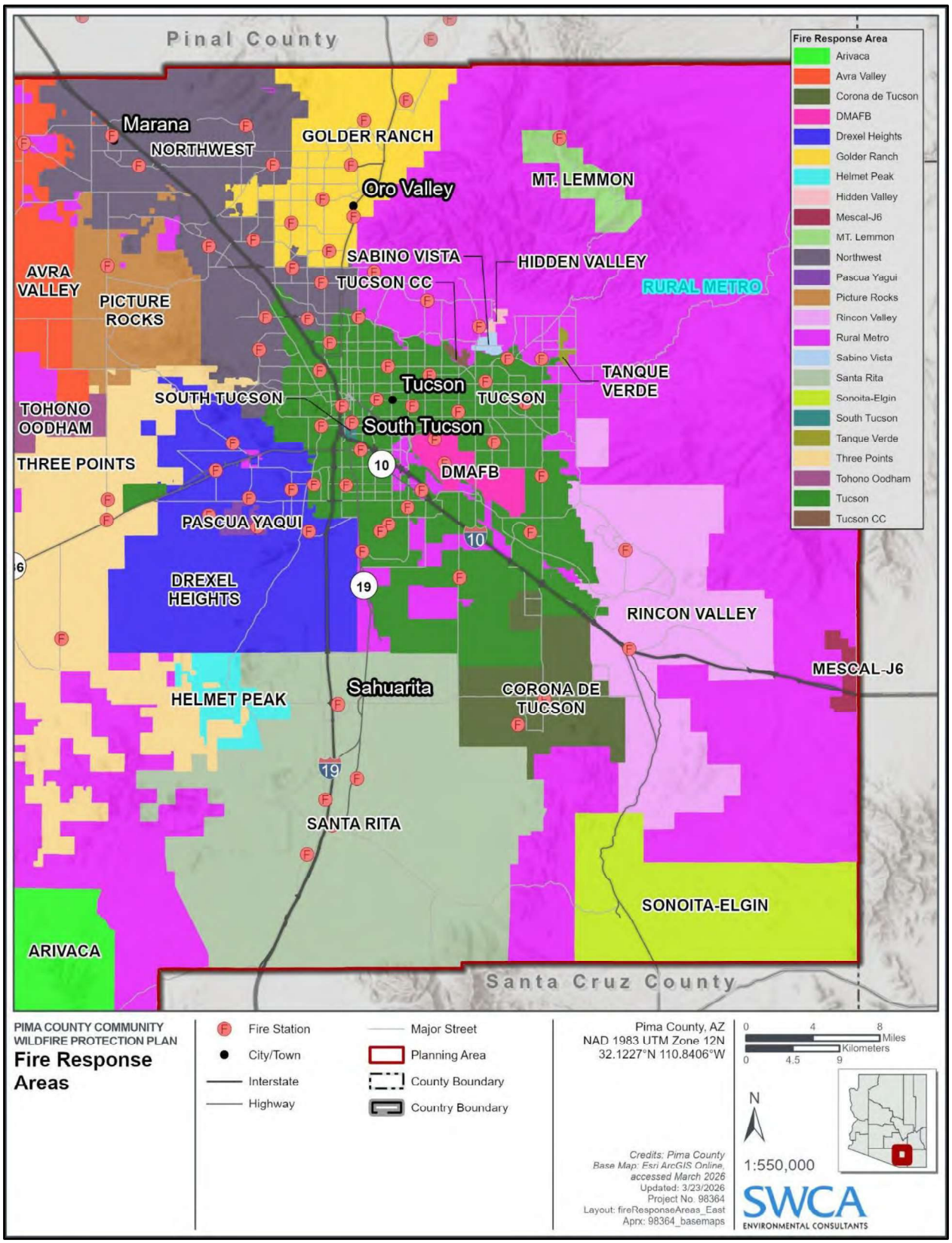


Figure 2.28. Fire district response areas in eastern Pima County.

Utility Fire Response and Communication Considerations

Effective wildfire response requires reliable coordination between utility operators and emergency responders, particularly when infrastructure or power systems are compromised. Utilities should incorporate redundant communication strategies into fire response planning, including radio interoperability with local agencies and backup methods that do not rely on cellular networks, internet connectivity, or grid power. Options such as land mobile radio, satellite communications, and other non-digital methods can help maintain coordination when primary systems fail.

For major incidents, utilities and emergency managers should also establish a Utility Liaison or utility coordination desk within the Emergency Operations Center/Incident Command System structure. This role helps coordinate priority infrastructure protection, arrange safe access and escorts for utility crews, facilitate controlled sharing of system maps and operational information, and support unified public messaging during wildfire incidents.



CHAPTER 3 – QUANTITATIVE WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

PURPOSE

The completion of a quantitative wildfire risk assessment (QWRA) provides land use managers, fire officials, and planners with critical information to develop targeted strategies for reducing wildfire threats. This assessment not only informs land use and mitigation planning efforts but also supports outreach and education initiatives to engage community members in minimizing fire-related risks. For this CWPP update, areas of high wildfire hazard and risk are identified using the QWRA process through the modeling of fire behavior, burn probability, and fire intensity, along with evaluating the exposure and susceptibility of structures, critical infrastructure, and highly valued resources and assets (HVRAs).

Stakeholders and expert input further guided the QWRA process, ensuring that recommended fuel treatments are prioritized appropriately according to wildfire risk. For further details on fuels treatments and other risk reduction activities, refer to Chapter 4 and Appendix D.

The QWRA provides a community- and landscape-level overview of wildfire risk and is not intended for use at smaller scales (such as for a property-level analysis). It is also not recommended for use in determining insurance rates or policies. This QWRA is derived from computer modeling simulations and, as such, contains inherent limitations and assumptions, though every effort has been made to include the best available data and use the most robust scientific processes. Although an area may be shown as high or low risk in the QWRA, this does not guarantee that it will or will not burn in a wildfire. The risk values represent relative probabilities under modeled very high fire season weather conditions for Pima County. For example, a grid-cell with a 10% burn probability means that out of 10 unsuppressed fire scenarios with randomly placed ignitions across the county that cell burned in one of those scenarios. Although actual wildfire outcomes are influenced by fire suppression efforts and variable weather conditions, even areas labeled as “low risk” have a measurable chance of burning when conditions are severe. Thus, a low-risk designation does not mean immunity, it simply reflects the likelihood of severe impacts compared to high-risk areas and under modeled conditions. These areas will still experience fire at a predictable rate. Further, the presence and extent of invasive plant species may not be fully or accurately captured in this analysis. As a result, areas of fire risk associated with invasive species could exist on the ground even if they are not represented in the model outputs. It is important to recognize that actual fire risk may be underestimated in locations where invasive species are present but not detected or mapped in the available data.

This QWRA is also not intended for use during active wildfire events but rather only as a tool for pre-fire planning. It is not recommended that this QWRA be used for any other purpose than what is stated here.

EXISTING INFORMATION

Arizona Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal

The Arizona Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal (AZ WRAP) is an online tool designed to help individuals, communities, and professionals assess wildfire risk for specific properties and areas throughout Arizona. By offering a suite of applications, AZ WRAP supports the needs of the public, landowners, government officials, planners, and fire managers, serving as the primary resource for wildfire risk information and awareness in the state. The portal aims to provide baseline data to inform mitigation and prevention efforts. Users are advised that all information is provided "as is," without warranty, and that they assume all responsibility and risk associated with its use. The portal is intended for non-commercial purposes, and property boundaries shown are approximate and not suitable for legal or surveying use. The AZ WRAP is a separate exercise from the one conducted for this CWPP, with different use cases at different scales.

QUANTITATIVE WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Framework

The QWRA is a customized tool for evaluating the risk that wildland fires pose to communities within the county. The analysis distinguishes between wildfire hazard (the physical potential for fire occurrence and intensity in a given location) and wildfire risk, which incorporates the vulnerability and exposure of specific assets and communities to those hazards. Although hazard mapping identifies where dangerous fire behavior is likely, risk assessment reveals which assets are most susceptible to loss or disruption, both of which are crucial for taking a measured approach to prevention and mitigation. Wildfire risk is quantified by “multiplying” hazard and vulnerability, which are derived from four key components (Figure 3.1); probability and intensity, which represent hazard; and exposure and susceptibility, which characterize vulnerability. These components are defined below:

- ***Probability*** is the likelihood of a 30-square-meter grid-cell on the landscape burning within wildfire behavior models. Probability is also influenced by the frequency and distribution of ignitions.
- ***Intensity*** is an expression of the rate of energy release and is represented by flame length in feet.
- ***Exposure*** is the proximity of assets to hazards on a landscape (e.g., how close homes are to fuels, such as shrubs and trees or even continuous buffelgrass).
- ***Susceptibility*** is a measure of how easily an asset is damaged by wildfire and to what degree. Factors influencing susceptibility include construction methods, materials, and maintenance.

By combining spatial modeling, historical fire data, and asset vulnerability, this approach provides a comprehensive foundation for targeted mitigation strategies, operational planning, and resource

allocation. This ensures that wildfire risk is understood, not only in terms of probability and intensity but also exposure and susceptibility across the landscape.



Figure 3.1. QWRA Framework.
Derived from Scott et al. (2013).

Process Overview

SWCA Environmental Consultants (SWCA) generated a landscape file for the county in the Interagency Fuel Treatment Decision Support System (IFTDSS), with Core Team input guiding the refinement of fuel models, response functions, and relative importance values, resulting in tailored fire behavior outputs and risk scoring. Key spatial landscape data (e.g., fuels, topography, vegetation characteristics) were sourced from LANDFIRE, a shared wildland fire management program between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Department of the Interior. The hazard outputs of intensity and burn probability were assessed using established models integrated within the IFTDSS and processed through ArcGIS Pro Spatial Analyst tools. Buffers were added around HVRAs, such as buildings and infrastructure. These buffered areas were then processed and reclassified in ArcGIS Pro together with the hazard outputs to define the scope of the risk assessment and represent the vulnerability component. The raster calculator in ArcGIS Pro then produced the final risk layer, which is demonstrated within the Wildfire Risk to Assets layer, which evaluates the likelihood of impacts to values based on expected fire probability under modeled conditions.

Data Collection

The data required for this QWRA are summarized in Table 3.1. It is important to note that burn probability considers factors such as landscape characteristics (e.g., topography and fuels), weather conditions

(e.g., humidity and wind), and historical ignition patterns. Similarly, flame length calculations incorporate fuel types, topography, and weather conditions.

Table 3.1. Data Inputs for the QWRA

Inputs	Source	Type/Subtype
Weather	RAWS	Hazard
Fuels	LANDFIRE	Hazard
Critical Infrastructure HVRAs	Turbines (Esri) Substations (Esri) Powerplants (Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data [HIFLD]) Communication towers (AZGeoHub) Transmission Line (HIFLD) Pipeline Lines (HIFLD)	Vulnerability/exposure
Building Footprint HVRAs	Pima County building footprints	Vulnerability/exposure

Identification of Hazard

Fuels

Surface fuels are a critical component of wildfire modeling because they influence flame length, rate of spread, and overall fire intensity across the landscape. For the QWRA, surface fuel characteristics were represented using the Scott and Burgan (2005) 40 standard fire behavior fuel models, which provide a nationally consistent classification of wildland fuels for modeling purposes.

Detailed descriptions of these fuel model groups, their distribution across the Pima County planning area, and corresponding acreage percentages are provided in Chapter 2 (see Surface Fuels and Fire Behavior Fuel Models section, Table 2.4, and Figures 2.4–2.5). The adjective fire behavior classes for fire danger (very low, low, moderate, high, very high, extreme) and their rate of spread and flame length thresholds used to interpret model outputs are defined in Table 2.5.

Within the QWRA, these fuel model datasets were integrated with topographic, weather, and fuel moisture information to simulate wildfire behavior using the RANDIG and FlamMap fire models within the IFTDSS. These fuels directly influence modeled burn probability, flame length, conditional flame length, and rate of spread outputs discussed in the following sections.

Burn Probability

Burn probability considers several factors, including fire size, frequency, rate of spread, and weather conditions (IFTDSS 2025a). Figures 3.2 and 3.3 illustrate the likelihood of a specific location on the landscape burning, which is represented as burn probability. Figure 3.3 provides a more detailed view of the eastern portion of the planning area.

For example, a 20% burn probability means that one in five ignitions under very high fire danger conditions would reach and burn that location.

Within the Pima County CWPP planning area, burn probability distribution reflects the county's diverse landscape and patterns of development. Urban centers, such as Tucson, South Tucson, Ajo, Marana, Oro Valley, and Sahuarita, are predominantly classified as non-burnable in the model, owing to dense development and limited contiguous vegetation. This highlights a known limitation in current wildfire behavior models, which do not incorporate structures as a burnable fuel model, even though recent events have shown that wildfires can impact the built environment, initiating potentially destructive urban conflagrations (Calkin et al. 2023). To address this, a 0.25-mile buffer from the edge of the wildland and into the urban building footprints was incorporated into the analysis to more accurately assess risk to structures.

Outside the urban core, burn probability generally increases. The lowest (0%–20%) and lower (20%–40%) burn probability zones are most common in the immediate outskirts of urban areas and throughout much of the county's western and central regions. Middle (40%–60%), higher (60%–80%), and highest (80%–100%) burn probability categories are predominantly found in the southern, northwestern, and central portions of the county, particularly in areas along the State Route 86 corridor. These higher probability zones—although often outside city boundaries—are important to consider due to their connectivity to urban edges, which can facilitate fire spread toward developed areas.

Flame Length

Flame length, which is influenced by fuels, weather, and topography, serves as a direct measure of wildfire intensity and is a key hazard component in the QWRA equation. From a suppression standpoint, direct attack by hand crews is generally feasible for flame lengths less than 4 feet. For flames between 4 and 8 feet, mechanical suppression resources, such as the use of dozers and engines, are typically required. When flame lengths exceed 8 feet, control efforts become extremely challenging, and suppression is often limited to indirect and defensive containment actions. The highest flame length zones are typically found in foothills, mountains, and riparian areas, where timber, shrubs, and denser vegetation provide abundant fuels. Invasive species such as buffelgrass are known to support higher flame lengths than native vegetation, particularly in riparian areas and other ecosystems affected by invasive grasses. (AZ DFFM 2021; NPS 2025d).

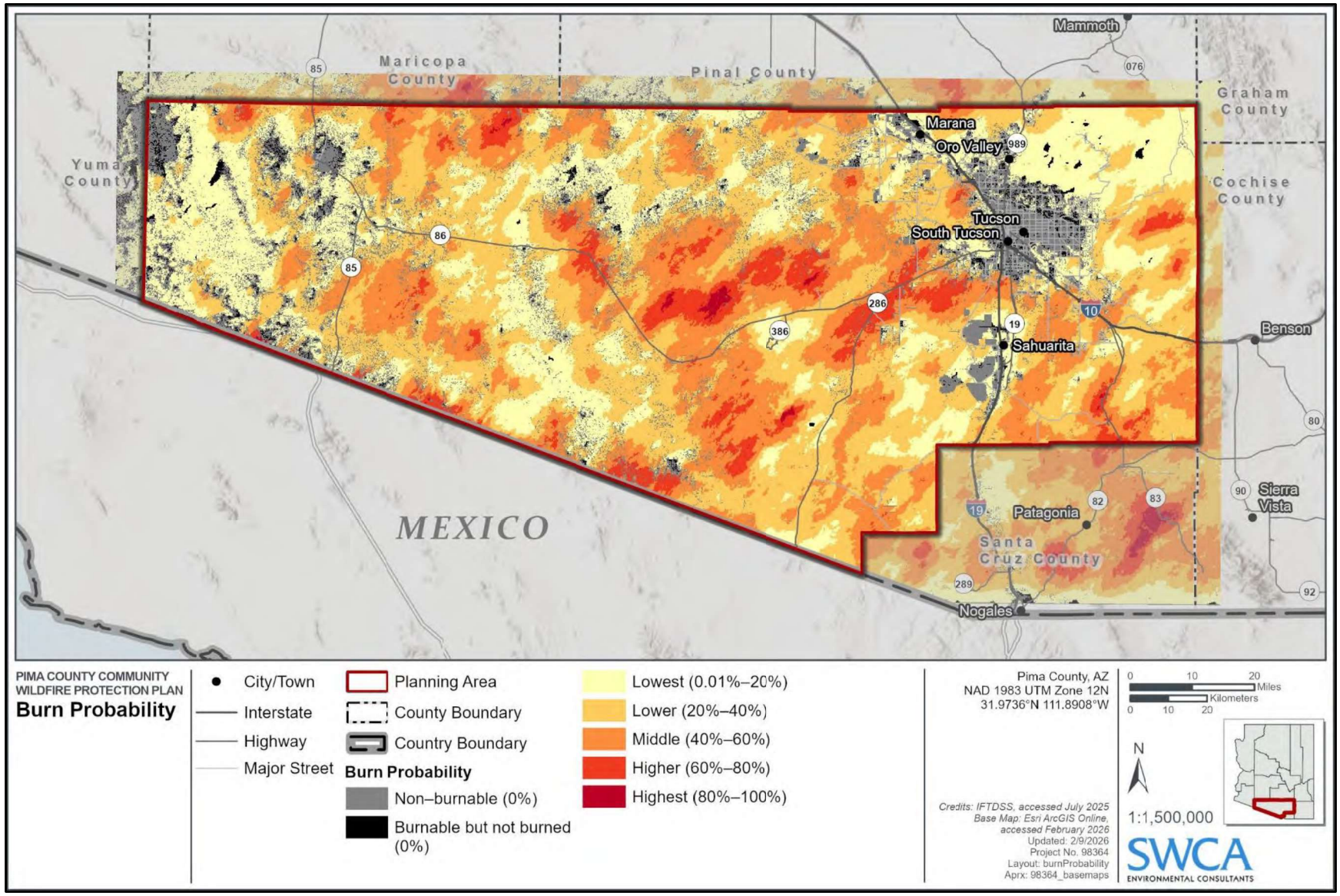


Figure 3.2. Burn probability in the Pima County CWPP planning area.

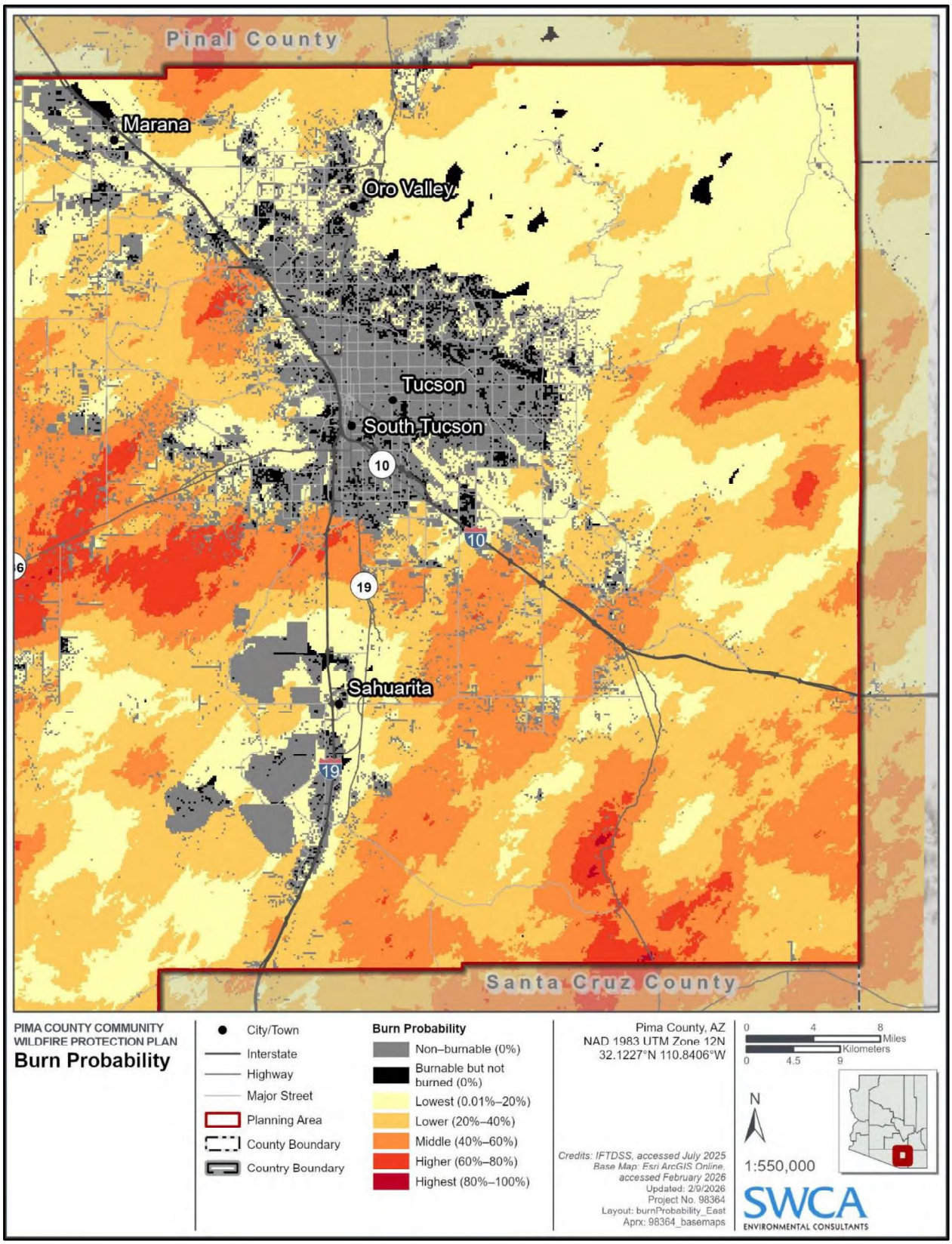


Figure 3.3. Burn probability in the eastern Pima County CWPP planning area.

CONDITIONAL FLAME LENGTH

Conditional flame length is the average flame length for all fires at a given location during a burn probability model run, providing a realistic average of expected flame lengths at a location by accounting for all fire types (e.g., heading, backing, flanking fire). Conditional flame length typically produces lower output values than the "flame length" model due to this probability-derived approach and incorporation of non-heading fire (IFTDSS 2025b).

Within the planning area, modeled flame length distribution closely mirrors the county's development and fuel patterns. Urbanized areas, including Tucson, South Tucson, Ajo, Marana, Oro Valley, and Sahuarita, are predominantly classified as non-burnable due to dense development and minimal available fuels. Most areas of the county exhibit low to moderate conditional flame length, ranging from 0 to 6 feet. This pattern is especially prevalent in the central and northern regions. High conditional flame length values, which are greater than 8 feet, and extreme conditional flame length values, which are greater than 12 feet, are scattered in locations where timber or denser fuel loads are present. These higher concentrations are most notable near the eastern and south-central borders of the county. Figures 3.4 and 3.5 illustrate the distribution of conditional flame length throughout the planning area. Figure 3.5 provides greater detail for the eastern portion of the county.

Rate of Spread

Rate of spread is the average speed—over 1 hour—that a fire progresses outward from a defined edge, which is often measured in chains (66 feet).

The planning area exhibits a wide range of wildfire spread potential, with most of the county displaying moderate to extreme rates of spread (Figures 3.6 and 3.7). Rates of spread in these areas often exceed 20 chains per hour, and some portions can surpass 150 chains per hour. For reference, there are 80 chains in a mile; thus, a fire spreading at 80 chains per hour is moving at 1 mile per hour. Although 1 mile per hour may seem slow compared to driving or walking speeds, it is extremely challenging to catch and contain a wildfire moving at this rate. The areas with the greatest rates of spread typically overlap with regions dominated by grass and grass-shrub fuels.

In contrast, the primary urban areas, including Tucson, Marana, Ajo, Oro Valley, Sahuarita, and South Tucson, are shown in gray on the maps. These zones represent non-burnable areas where wildfire spread is unlikely due to urbanization and lack of sufficient vegetation. Smaller patches with lower rates of spread, indicated in green and yellow, are scattered and relatively limited across the county.

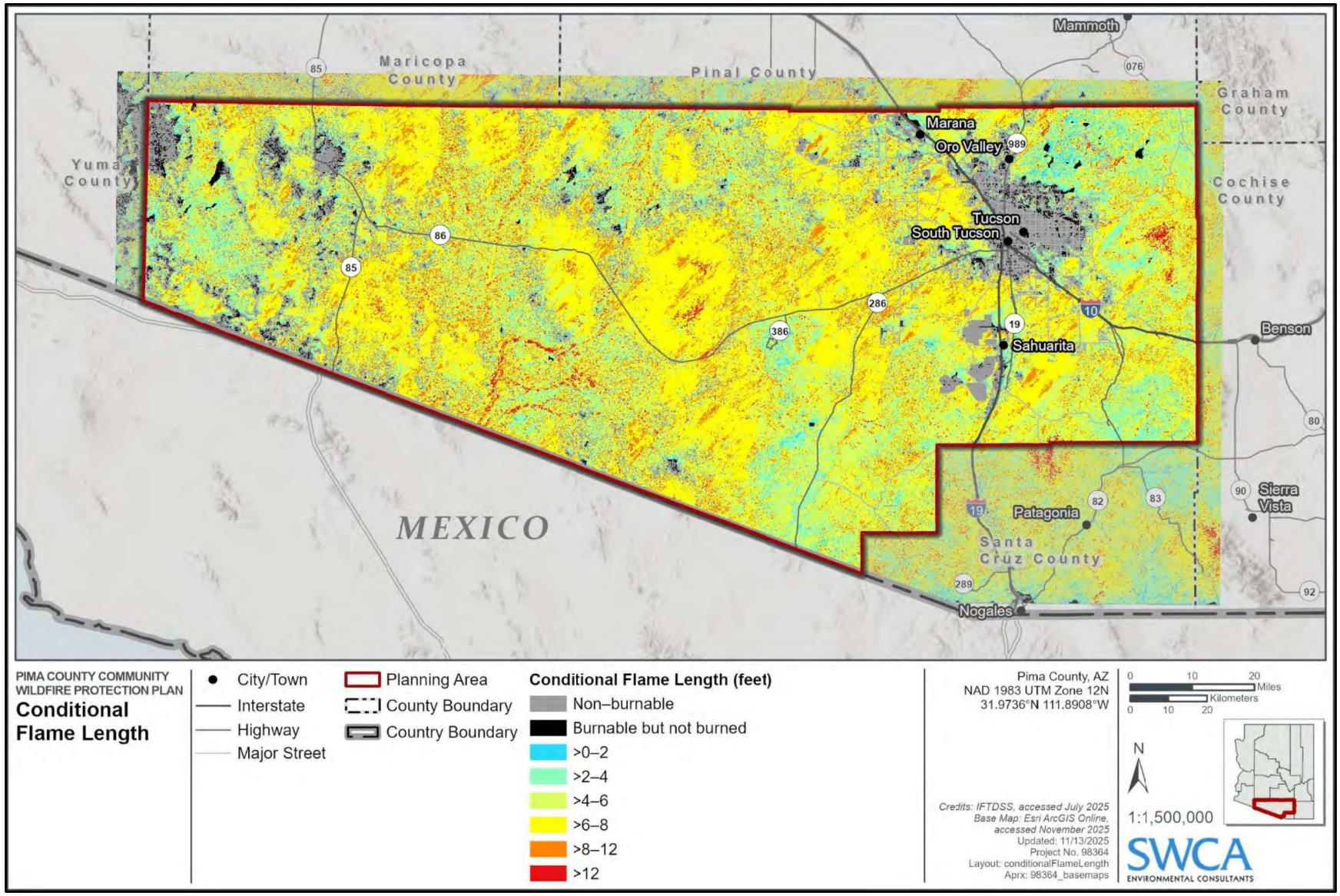


Figure 3.4. Flame length in the Pima County CWPP planning area.

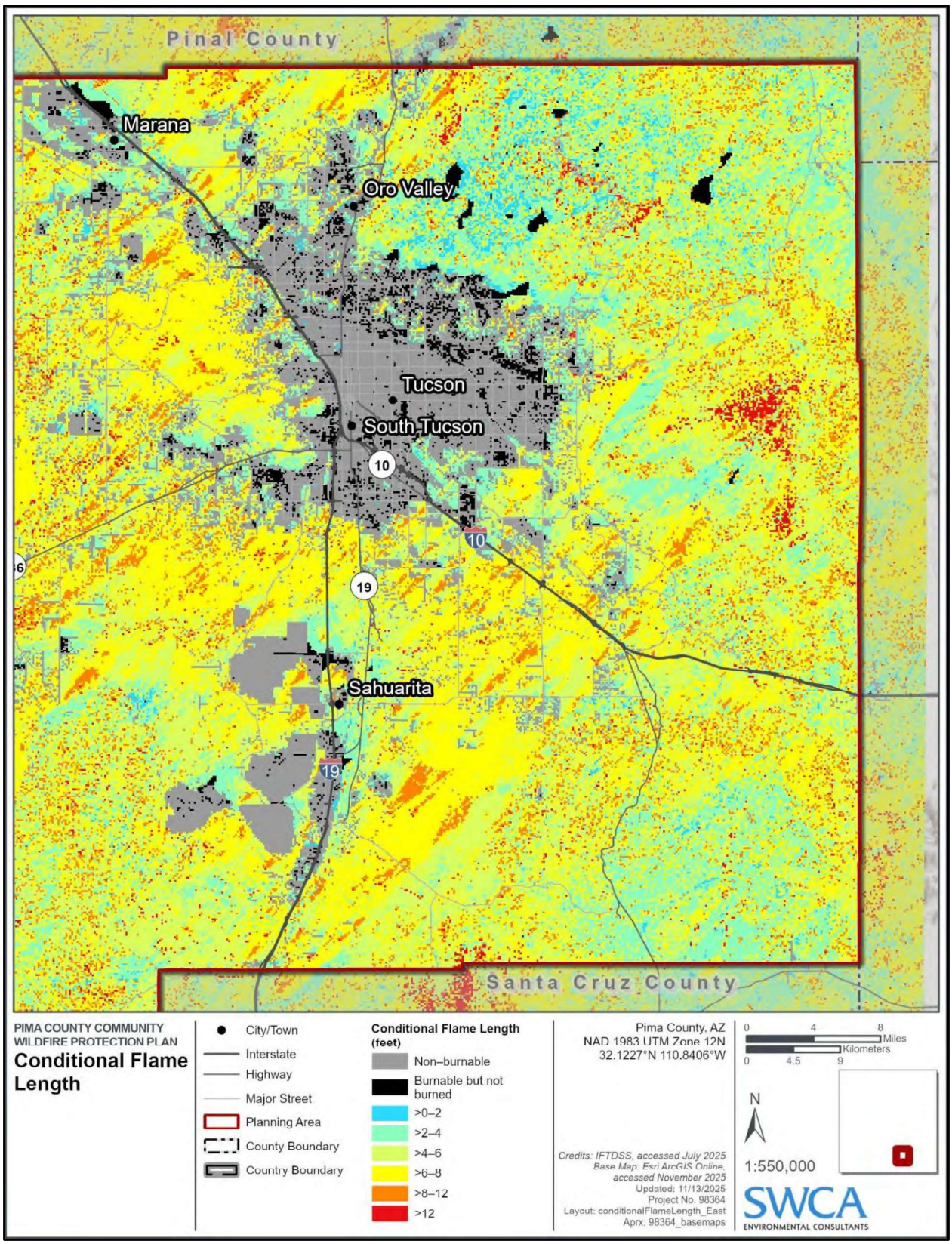


Figure 3.5. Flame length in the eastern Pima County CWPP planning area.

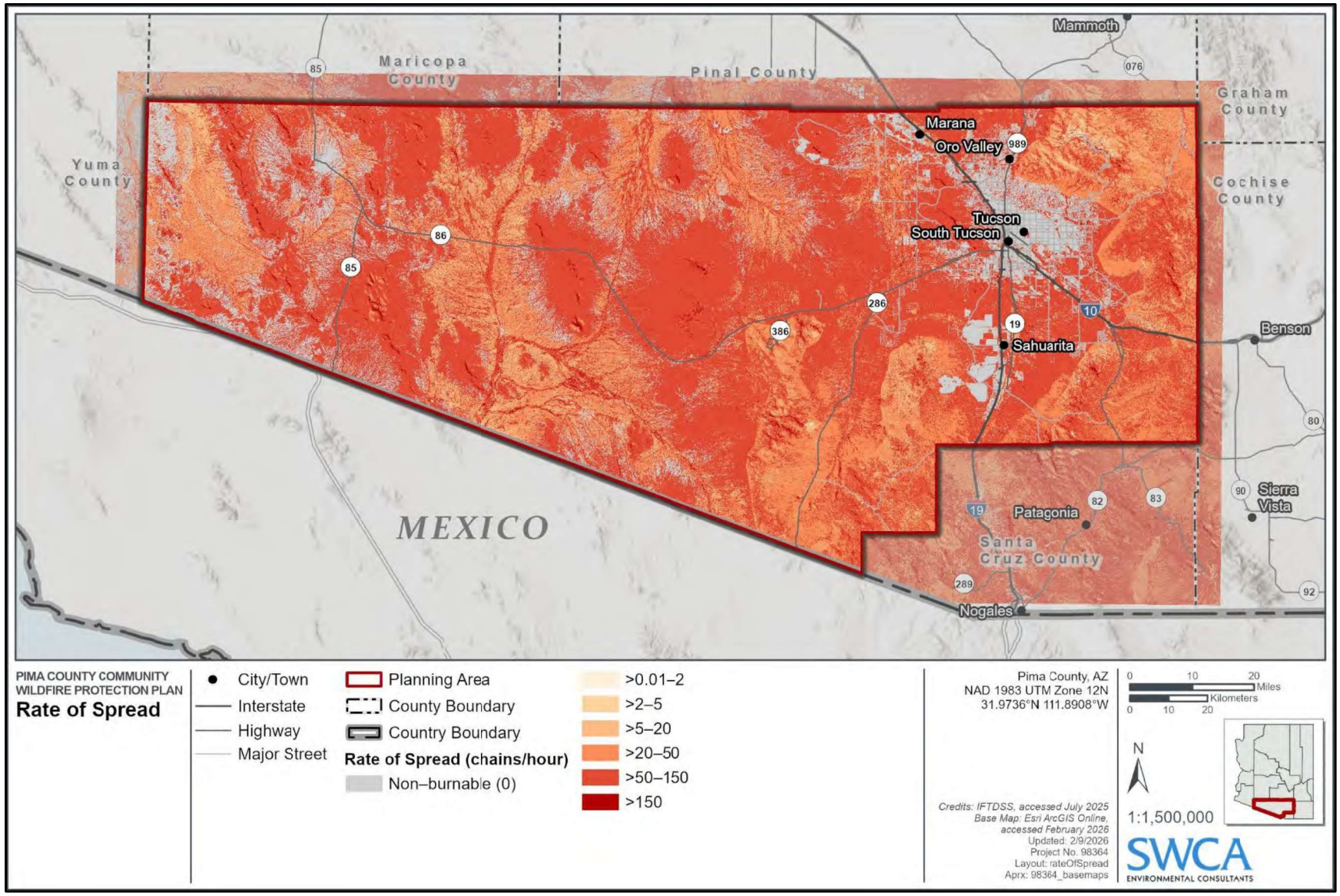


Figure 3.6. Rate of spread in the Pima County CWPP planning area.

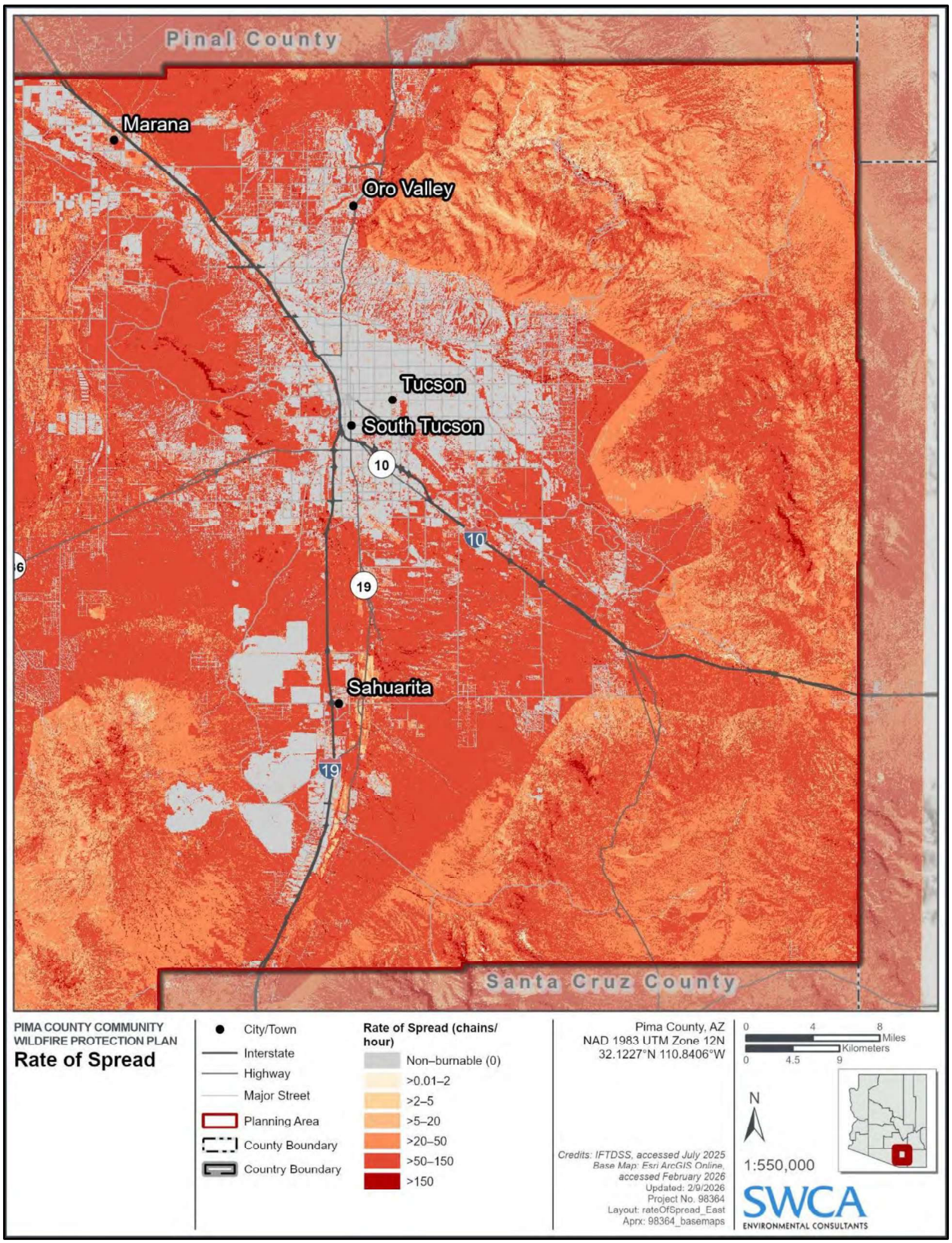


Figure 3.7. Rate of spread in the Eastern Pima County CWPP planning area.

Measuring Vulnerability

Infrastructure

The infrastructure dataset (Figures 3.8 and 3.9) for the QWRA was developed through a comprehensive process that combined data from critical infrastructure inventories (e.g., Esri), community assessments, and Core Team input. This dataset was further supplemented with HVRA data acquired from the Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data. The identified infrastructure HVRAs encompass critical energy and communication assets essential to community function. These include turbines, power plants, substations, transmission lines, pipelines, and communication towers.

Fire probability and flame length outputs were buffered, according to asset type, into areas classified as *unburnable* near these assets. Turbines, substations, power plants, and communication towers were each assigned a buffer of 0.5 mile. Transmission lines and pipeline lines were buffered by 0.11 mile. Frequently, a non-burnable space exists between HVRAs and adjacent fuels; adding this buffer effectively classifies the HVRAs adjacent to fuels as *burnable* features. Though the fire spread models do not simulate structure burning (*urban* fuels show as *unburnable*), this allows the risk to be projected into the most threatened developments on the edge of the WUI.

Figures 3.8 through 3.11 demonstrate the distribution of critical infrastructure throughout the planning area, with Figures 3.9 and 3.11 showing a more detailed view of the eastern portion of the county.

Buildings

The building footprint data provided by Pima County uses the Microsoft Building Footprints (see Figure 3.8) dataset, which was used to identify the locations and extents of structures, including residences and businesses, across the planning area. This dataset, created using artificial intelligence algorithms applied to high-resolution satellite imagery, provides detailed polygonal representations of buildings. Incorporating these data into the QWRA allows for accurate mapping of structures across the landscape and helps assess the exposure of built environments to wildfire risks.

Since the model typically classifies the immediate areas around buildings as *unburnable*, we applied a 0.5-mile buffer around building footprints. This approach ensures that the analysis treats the adjacent wildland areas extending into the urban environment as *burnable*, rather than automatically excluding them due to proximity to buildings. In other words, we are not extending urban areas into wildlands; instead, we are allowing the model to more accurately assess wildfire risk at the WUI by including wildland outputs within the urban buffer zone.

Response Functions

Response functions measure the susceptibility of HVRAs to wildfire, indicating how fire affects these resources based on fire intensity (IFTDSS 2025f). Defined by experts, response functions assign a relative value change score ranging from -100 to +100, where -100 represents significant loss and +100 denotes substantial benefit. The response functions assigned to each HVRA are based on flame length classes, which represent different levels of fire intensity. Generally, the greater the flame length, the higher the intensity and the flame's impact to structures and HVRAs. Response function classes for this modeling exercise range from -10 in low-intensity fire to -95 for extremely intense fire. Beneficial response functions, which typically apply for fire-adapted habitats or vegetative communities, were not used for this analysis.

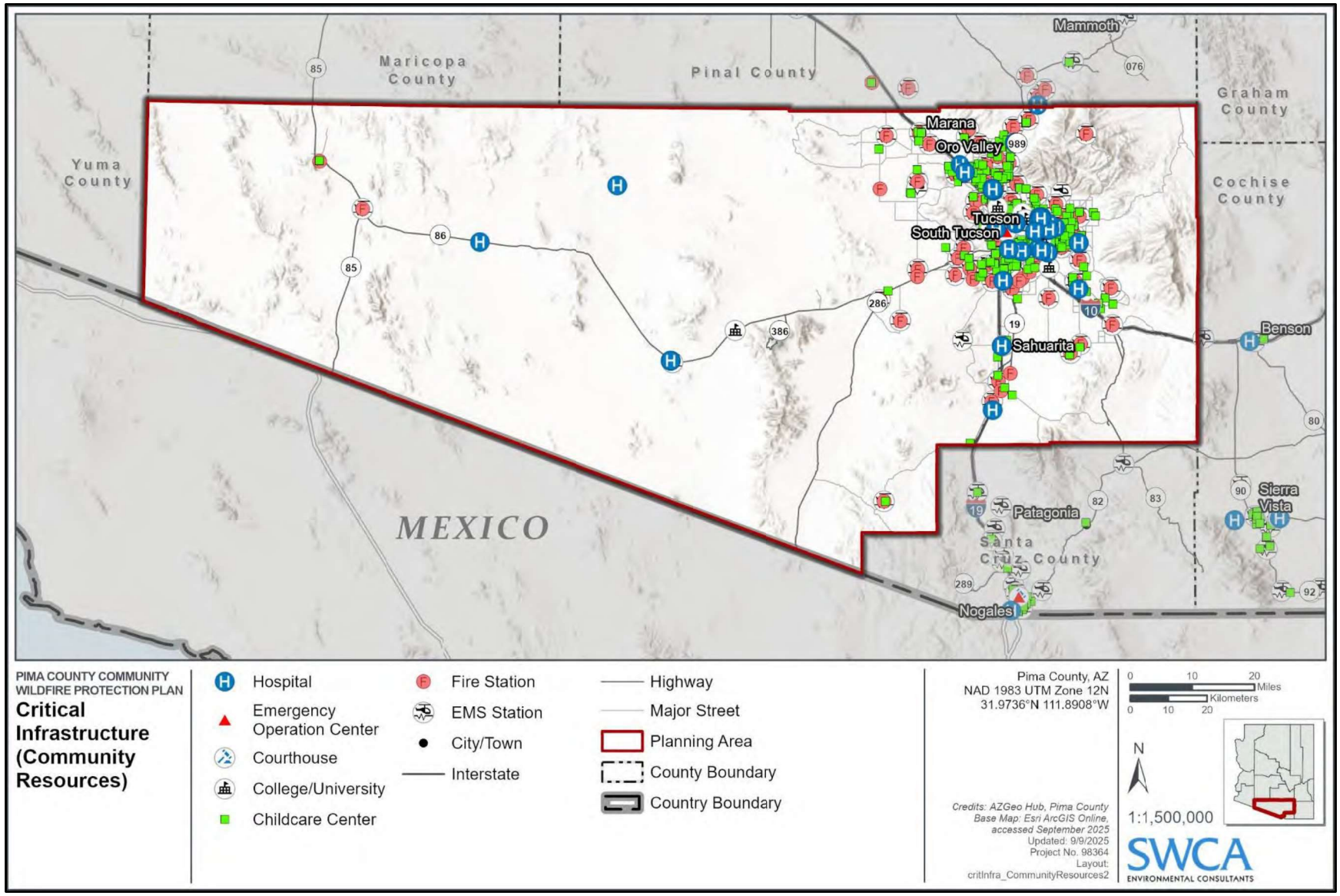


Figure 3.8. Pima County CWPP planning area QWRA input – HVRA: Critical Infrastructure (Community Resources 1).

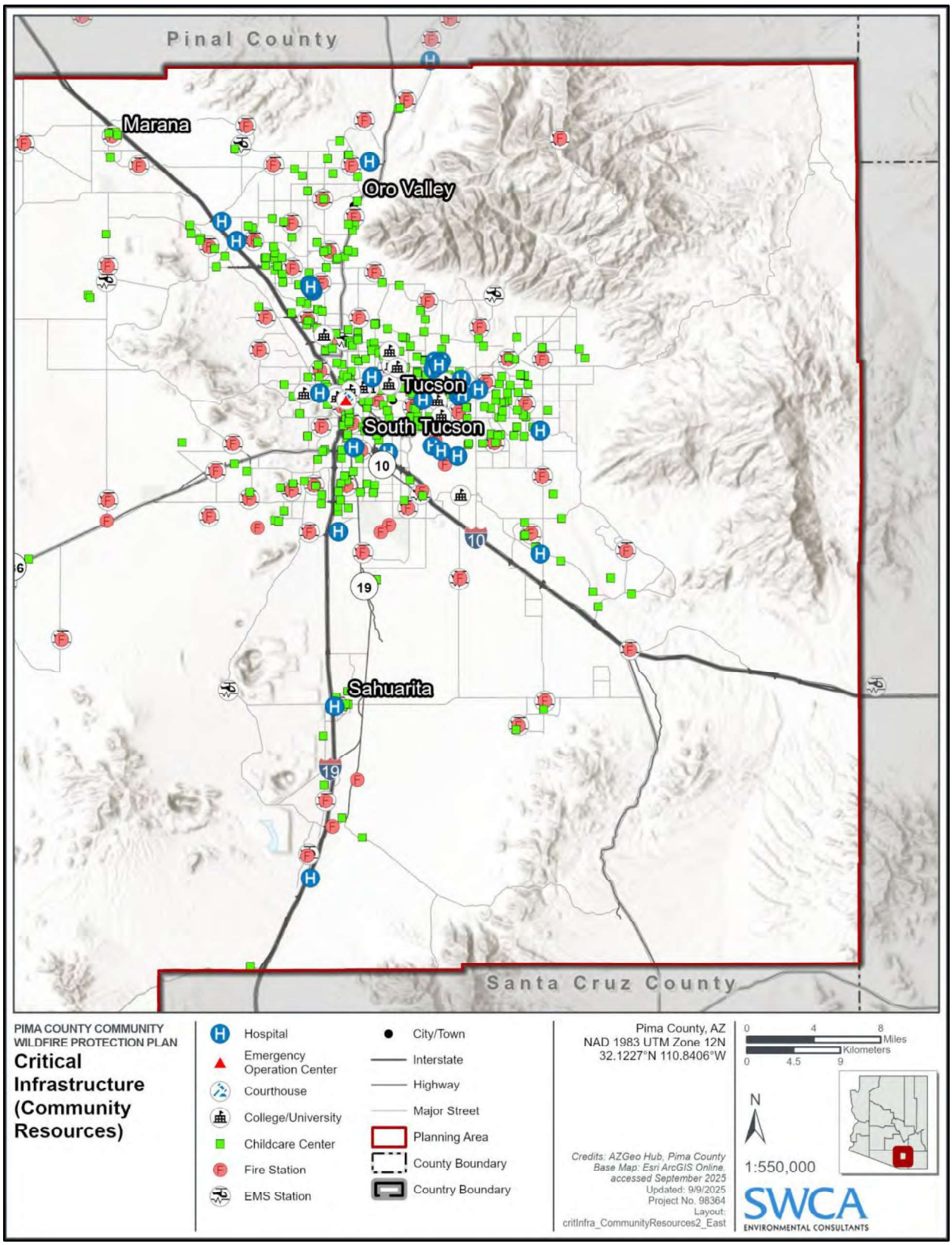


Figure 3.9. Pima County CWPP planning area QWRA input – HVRA: Critical Infrastructure in the eastern portion of the county (Community Resources 1).

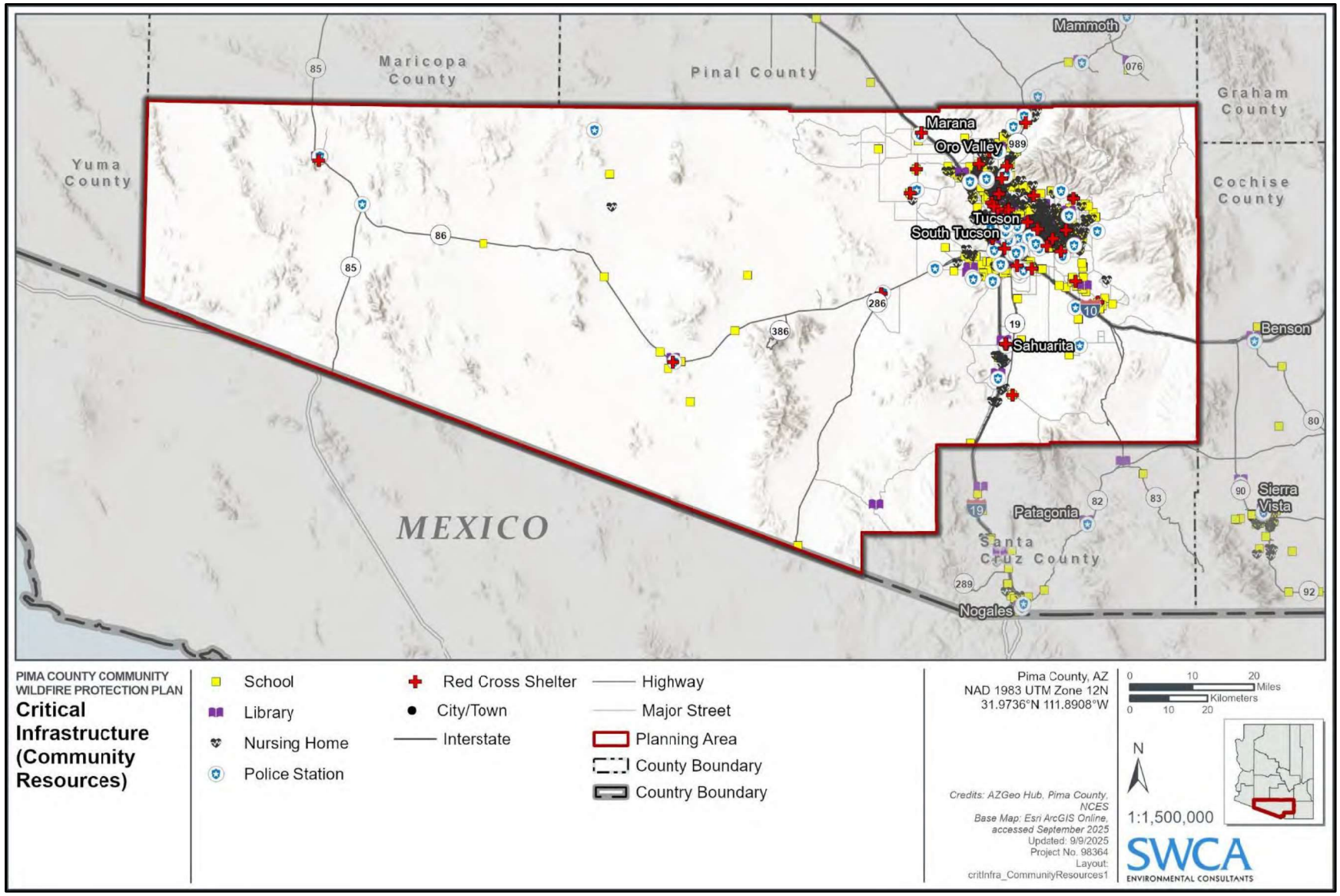


Figure 3.10. Pima County CWPP planning area QWRA input – HVRA: Critical Infrastructure (Community Resources 2).

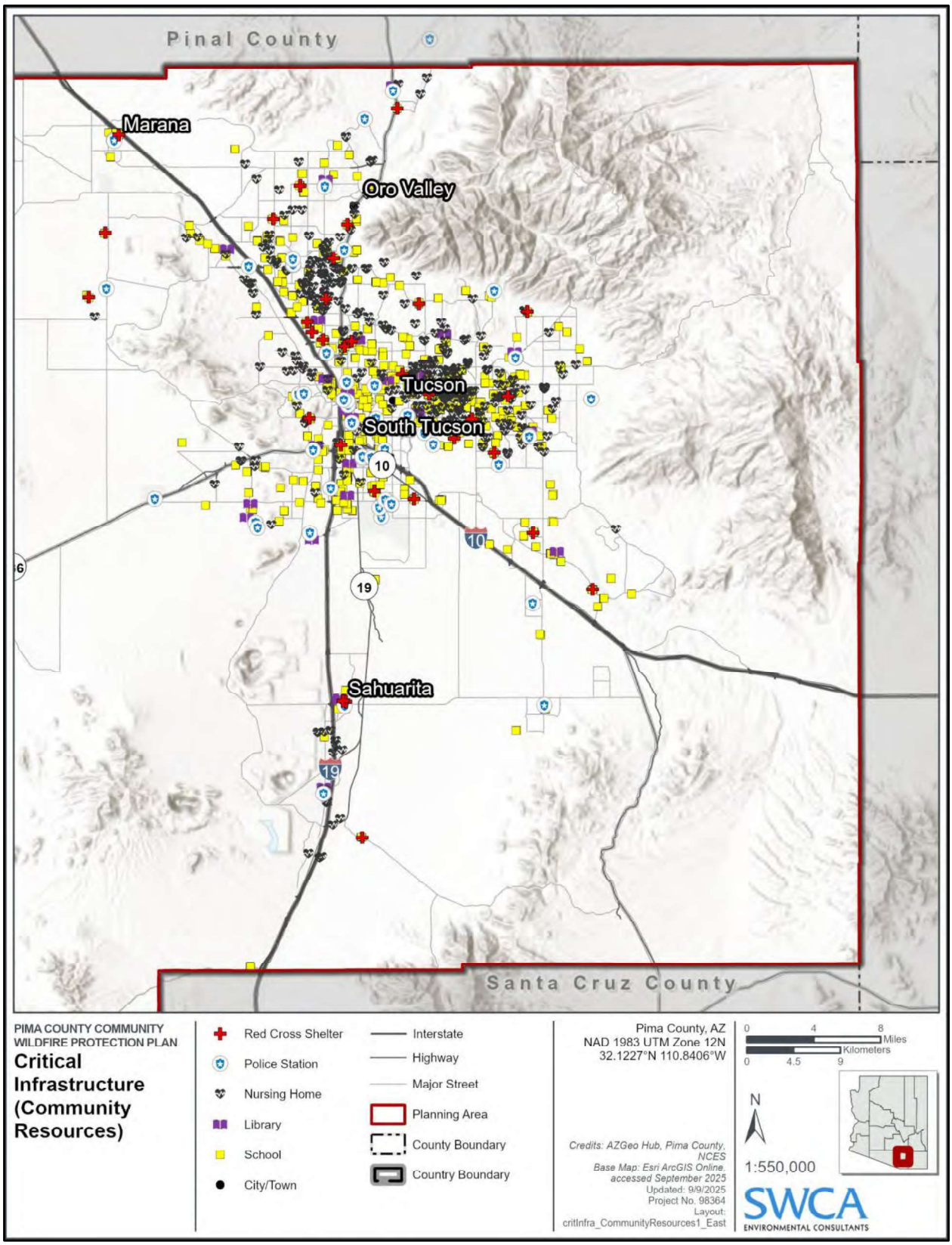


Figure 3.11. Pima County CWPP planning area QWRA input – HVRA: Critical Infrastructure in the Eastern Portion of Pima County(Community Resources 2).

By understanding the exposure of assets to wildfire and applying a level of susceptibility to these assets, we can quantify their overall vulnerability, allowing for a more comprehensive assessment of risk to critical infrastructure and buildings.

Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment Results

Wildfire risk (expected wildfire risk to structures and critical infrastructure) in Pima County varies significantly by geographic region, with distinct patterns emerging between the eastern and western portions of the county (Figure 3.12).

It should be noted this wildfire risk map highlights developed areas/infrastructure and their immediate surroundings, with the highest risk zones forming rings or clusters of "risk". Blank areas on the map are not free of wildfire hazard (e.g., fuels, ignition potential) but rather free of susceptible or exposed assets and therefore free of *risk*.

Wildfire risk in the western portion of Pima County is largely associated with its remote, rural character. Most of this region displays sparse wildfire risk, but there are notable pockets of high to very high risk concentrated in intermix communities—areas where development is interspersed or surrounded with wildland vegetation. These high-risk zones are often found near highways and scattered developed areas, reflecting the vulnerability of structures within or adjacent to natural landscapes. The overall pattern in the west is one of isolated risk clusters surrounded by vast expanses of low-risk territory, underscoring the importance of targeted mitigation for these intermix communities.

In contrast, the eastern portion of Pima County (Figure 3.13), which includes the Tucson metropolitan area, exhibits a distinct urban-wildland gradient in wildfire risk. The dense urban core of Tucson is characterized by a ring of low risk, primarily due to reduced flammable vegetation and concentrated development. However, as one moves outward toward the WUI, wildfire risk increases significantly, with high and very high-risk zones appearing to the south and west of Tucson, north of Oro Valley, west of Marana, and to the east of Sahuarita. Beyond these interface zones, additional wildland areas and remote towns also register elevated risk, particularly where vegetation and topography create favorable conditions for wildfire spread. This pattern highlights how both proximity to natural fuels and the presence of development shape the distribution of wildfire risk in the east.

Wildfire risk at the base of the Catalina Mountains is comparatively lower than might be anticipated. This reduced risk is primarily attributable to the area's position downslope of wildland fuels and downwind from the non-burnable urban core of Tucson. In the QWRA, urban developments are considered non-burnable, further decreasing the likelihood of wildfire spread into this area. Prevailing winds in the region typically come from the southwest, placing the Catalinas downwind from Tucson's urban core. These winds tend to push upslope and away from the base of the Catalinas, resulting in a lower probability of wildfire occurrence here relative to surrounding regions. Although the risk is not absent, these factors collectively contribute to a reduced wildfire threat at the base of the Catalina Mountains.

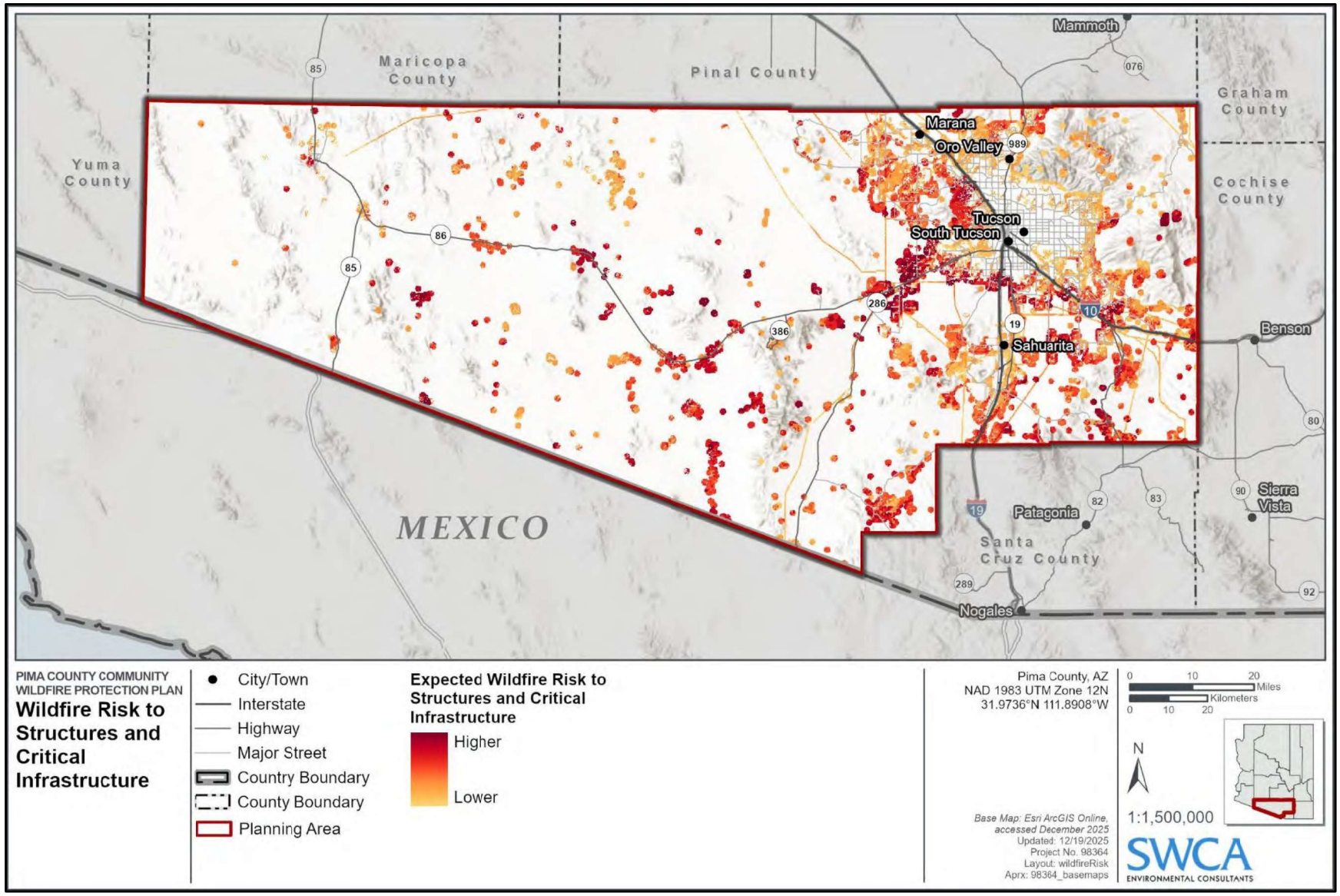


Figure 3.12. Wildfire risk to structures and critical infrastructure in the Pima County CWPP planning area.

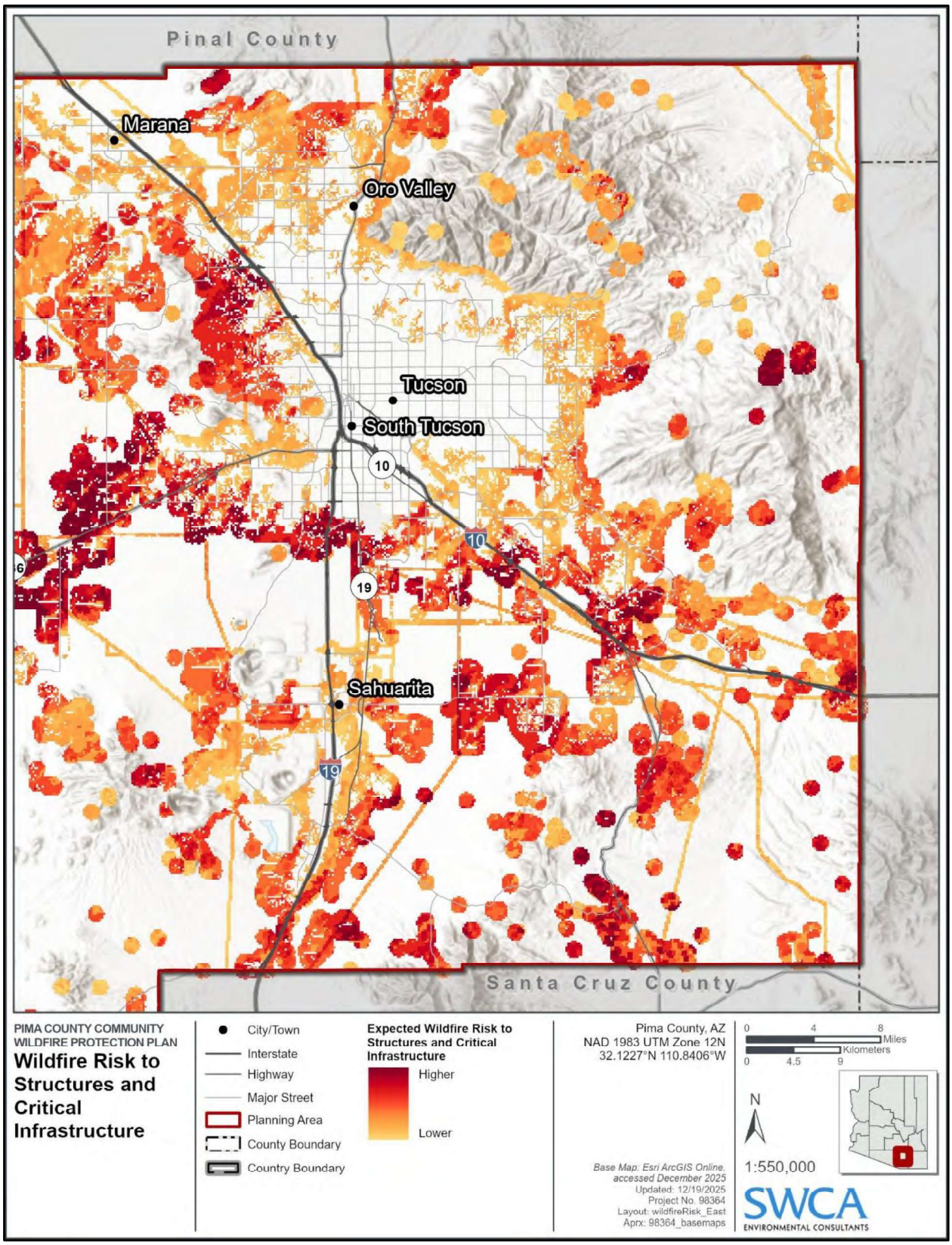


Figure 3.13. Wildfire risk to structures and critical infrastructure in the eastern Pima County CWPP planning area.



CHAPTER 4 – MITIGATION STRATEGIES

This chapter provides wildfire mitigation project recommendations, implementation guidance, and potential funding sources for each recommended action. As a non-regulatory document, recommendations in the CWPP are not required to be implemented. Recommendations are put forward to provide suggestions on actions that will mitigate wildland fire risk. It is at the discretion of Pima County representatives, land managers, homeowners, and stakeholder groups to determine when or if a recommendation will be implemented. Alignment with local planning documents should be considered. Appropriate subject matter experts, lessons learned documentation, and the best available science should be included in decision-making regarding project planning, implementation, and maintenance.

This plan has been aligned with the Cohesive Strategy and its Phase III Western Regional Action Plan by adhering to the nationwide vision:

> *"To safely and effectively extinguish fire, when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and collectively, learn to live with wildland fire."* (Forests and Rangelands 2023:Page 7).

Thus, CWPP recommendations have been structured around the three main goals of the Cohesive Strategy: restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes, fire-adapted communities, and wildfire response. Many of the recommendations listed can be implemented at the homeowner or community level. Projects requiring large-scale support can be prioritized based on the QWRA.

The Pima County CWPP aligns with Arizona requirements by prioritizing fuel reduction projects within the WUI and other areas at risk, alongside outlining improvements in training, equipment, and community education. These efforts directly support the goals of the Cohesive Strategy by focusing on creating resilient lands, supporting fire-adapted communities, and enhancing wildfire response (Forests and Rangelands 2023). Recommendation matrices (Tables 4.1, 4.3, and 4.4) throughout this chapter serve as an action plan for implementation, with recommendations specifically aligned to the strategies in the 2020 Arizona Forest Action Plan where possible and necessary (AZ DFFM 2020).

The recommendations presented in this CWPP were not developed through individual project submissions from each lead agency. Instead, they were informed by notes and discussions captured during an in-person Core Team workshop and subsequently refined through follow-up meetings with additional Core Team members. SWCA further developed and organized these recommendations based on their understanding of local priorities, several Core Team reviews of priorities and projects identified in the Pima County WMP, and input provided through internal SWCA subject matter expert review.

Table 4.4 provides key information on various funding sources for mitigation projects, highlighting the applicable Cohesive Strategy goal(s) for each funding source. This allows lead agencies that are seeking funding to better understand which sources are best suited for their projects. Whether the focus is on creating resilient landscapes, fostering fire-adapted communities, or enhancing wildfire response, this resource will help identify the relevant funding opportunities to support initiatives. Additional information on these funding sources is provided in Table 4.5.



GOAL 1: RESILIENT LANDSCAPES

Recommendations for Restoring and Maintaining Resilient Landscapes in Pima County

Restoring and maintaining resilient landscapes in Pima County requires a focus on vegetation management and hazardous fuel reduction. Resilient landscapes are those that are healthy, diverse, and capable of withstanding and recovering from disturbances, such as wildfires, climate change, invasive species, and insect infestations. Hazardous fuel reduction treatments are a vital tool for enhancing wildfire mitigation and promoting landscape resilience. These treatments are particularly important for increasing the safety and effectiveness of wildfire response efforts, controlling invasive plant species, and managing unnaturally dense or overgrown vegetation. When properly implemented and maintained, hazardous fuel reduction supports overall ecosystem health and resilience.

In developing and implementing hazardous fuel reduction and vegetation management strategies, planned treatments within Pima County should be consistent with the jurisdiction's regulatory and policy framework for conservation and resource protection while recognizing the land management authorities, regulations, and management strategies for the pertinent jurisdictions within the county. This includes alignment with the Sonoran Desert Conservation Plan, which guides the County's efforts to balance economic growth with the preservation of natural and cultural resources, and the Multi-Species Conservation Plan (MSCP), which ensures compliance with the Endangered Species Act by providing landscape-level protection for native species and their habitats (Pima County 2002, 2025j). Additionally, all activities must adhere to Pima County Board of Supervisors Policy 3.17, which establishes guidelines for the protection and documentation of archaeological, historical, and other cultural resources on County lands, and Policy 3.20, which requires the County to maintain and protect the intrinsic natural, biological, and cultural values of County Conservation Lands (Pima County 2008; Pima County 2020). These foundational plans and policies ensure that vegetation management and fuel reduction treatments are carried out in a manner that not only supports wildfire mitigation and landscape resilience, but also preserves the region's unique ecological, cultural, and historical assets for current and future generations.

General project recommendations for fostering landscape resilience within the planning area are provided in Table 4.1. These recommendations were developed collaboratively with Core Team members, stakeholders, and the public to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach.

A strategic approach to hazardous fuels reduction is essential to reduce the threat that high-intensity wildfires pose to lives, property, and other critical assets. Key components of an effective fuels management strategy include prioritizing mitigation in areas that demonstrate extreme fire behavior, decreasing structural ignitability (e.g., hardening at risk structures and infrastructure), creating defensible space, providing safe evacuation routes, and maintaining roadways for firefighting access, especially in areas near communities and within WUI zones. Using a variety of treatment methods often enhances the overall effectiveness of fuels management. Targeted fuels reduction should also occur around critical

natural infrastructure (e.g., utility assets, rights-of-way [ROWs]) to reduce radiant heat exposure, ember intrusion, and the potential loss of operability during wildfire events.

Although fuels treatments often occur separately on private and public lands, coordinated efforts across property boundaries are crucial for achieving comprehensive wildfire risk reduction. Collaboration among landowners, land managers, and other stakeholders significantly increase resilience across the region. These collaborative relationships are identified within the Land Ownership/Lead Agency column of Table 4.1.

Wildfire is a natural and enduring part of Pima County's ecosystem, having shaped the landscape for centuries. Recognizing wildfire as an inherent feature of the environment underscores the importance of preparation. By taking proactive steps to foster healthy and resilient landscapes, residents, local agencies, and organizations in Pima County can better protect homes, assets, values, and communities from the impacts of catastrophic fires.

Table 4.1 provides a detailed list of recommendations for creating resilient landscapes throughout the county.

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Table 4.1. Recommendations for Creating Resilient Landscapes (hazardous fuels reduction)

Priority levels are as follows: H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M ,L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
RL-1	Ongoing, Planned, and Proposed	H	0–2 years	**Invasive Species Control** Remove fire-prone invasive grasses and plants that increase wildfire risk.	Areas containing invasive species, such as buffelgrass and fountain grass.	Pima County WMP, USFS, BLM, Arizona State Land Department, University of Arizona, conservation non-governmental organizations, and private landowners.	• Map invasive grass infestations using field surveys and remote sensing. • Organize volunteer removal events and contract crews. • Apply targeted herbicide treatments where appropriate. • Monitor regrowth and adapt methods as needed. • Partner with universities and conservation groups for research and outreach. • Integrate invasive species control with broader fuel management planning. • Educate the public on identification and reporting. • Target defunct golf courses and abandoned/vacant lots.	Reduce fire risk and restore native ecosystems.	Monitor treated sites biannually. Repeat treatments as needed. Map progress and adapt strategies. Track ecological recovery and fire occurrence.
RL-2	Proposed	H	0–5 years	**Cross-Boundary Fuel Planning** Coordinate fuel reduction projects across agency and property boundaries.	Borders between jurisdictions.	Pima County WMP, USFS, BLM, Arizona State Land Department, and tribal governments.	• Host regular coordination meetings with all stakeholders. • Develop shared fuel treatment priorities and project lists. • Jointly fund and implement cross-boundary projects. • Share GIS data and fire modeling results. • Identify gaps and overlaps in treatment coverage. • Coordinate prescribed burns and mechanical treatments. • Report progress and outcomes to all partners.	Increase the effectiveness of fuel reduction and wildfire mitigation across landscapes.	Review cross-boundary projects annually. Adjust priorities based on new fire data and outcomes. Form joint monitoring teams for ongoing evaluation. Document lessons learned and best practices.
RL-3	Proposed	M	0–2 years	**Post-Treatment Reporting and Assessment of Contractor-Completed Projects** Conduct formal reporting and field assessments of fuels and invasive species treatments completed by contractors to document effectiveness, gaps, and maintenance needs.	Countywide, prioritizing completed contractor treatments.	Pima County WMP in coordination with Tucson Bird Alliance and other partner organizations.	• Conduct field assessments of completed treatments. • Document treatment effectiveness, incomplete work, and maintenance needs. • Address constraints related to completing fuel reduction outside herbicide application season. • Identify equipment needs (e.g., needle trucks, vehicles) and incorporate into grant funding requests, including capital equipment up to allowable limits. • Identify responsible agencies for long-term maintenance.	Ensure completed treatments meet wildfire risk reduction objectives and inform future project planning.	Conduct assessments after treatment completion. Track maintenance needs and schedule follow-up treatments. Maintain records of completed assessments. Monitoring methods must be feasible for under-resources organizations.
RL-4	Ongoing, Planned, and Proposed	H	0–5 years	**Timber Stand Fuel Reduction** Reduce wildfire risk by reducing hazardous fuel loading and continuity in forested areas near communities using mechanical and manual techniques.	Forested WUI areas near Mount Lemmon.	Pima County WMP, USFS, AZ DFFM, and private landowners.	• Identify hazardous forest stands using existing risk assessments and geographic information system (GIS) mapping products. • Conduct mechanical thinning and mastication to reduce fuel loads. • Conduct hand thinning and piling to reduce fuel loads. • Increase average canopy base height. • Remove excess biomass through pile burning or off-site disposal. • Prioritize treatments near communities and critical infrastructure. • Coordinate implementation with landowners and agencies. • Document all treatment locations and activities in a centralized GIS database. • Integrate these efforts with cross-boundary fuel planning initiatives. • Use prescribed fire in appropriate ecological contexts. • Engage property owners and offer technical assistance. • Integrate ladder fuel reduction with defensible space programs.	Reduce wildfire intensity and spread in dense forest areas adjacent to communities. Reduce the risk of crown fire transition, protecting homes and infrastructure.	Conduct annual post-treatment fuel load surveys. Perform follow-up thinning as needed. Use remote sensing and field checks to monitor effectiveness. Adjust treatment strategies based on monitoring data and fire occurrence.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M ,L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
RL-5	Planned and Proposed	H	0–3 years	**Right-of-Way Fuels and Invasive Species Treatments** Implement fuels and invasive species treatments along rights-of-way to reduce ignition risk and support transportation and utility infrastructure.	Utility ROWs and associated corridors.	Pima County WMP in coordination with utility providers and partner agencies.	• Identify priority right-of-way corridors using ignition history, traffic volume, and evacuation function. • Conduct field inventories and GIS analysis to assess vegetation density, invasive species presence, and fuel continuity along corridors. • Implement mechanical vegetation removal and targeted invasive species treatments appropriate to corridor function and surrounding land use. • Coordinate treatment design and timing with utility maintenance and roadway operations. • Address National Environmental Policy Act and National Historic Preservation Act compliance requirements prior to implementation. • Document treatment locations, methods, and outcomes in a centralized GIS database. • Integrate right-of-way treatments with adjacent fuels mitigation and ingress and egress projects.	Reduce roadside ignition risk, improve evacuation safety, and protect critical transportation and utility infrastructure.	Inspect treated corridors every 2–3 years. Re-inventory invasive species presence and fuel continuity to guide retreatment. Track maintenance needs and treatment history in GIS.
RL-6	Proposed	M	3–5 years	**Weed Washing and Equipment Cleaning Infrastructure** Establish and use vehicle and equipment washing facilities to reduce the spread of invasive species during fuels and vegetation treatment activities.	Pima County Mission Road Complex and other priority operational sites.	Pima County Conservation Lands and Resources	• Install and operate weed washing stations for vehicles and equipment. • Prioritize use on Pima County lands and near critical infrastructure. • Incorporate equipment cleaning requirements into contractor operations. • Coordinate with Conservation Lands and Resources where fuels work aligns with conservation priorities.	Reduce the spread of invasive species associated with treatment and maintenance activities.	Monitor use of washing stations. Inspect compliance during operations.
RL-7	Propsoed	H	0–5 years	**Mechanical, Prescribed Fire, and Roadside Fuels Treatments in Priority Areas** Implement a combination of mechanical treatments, roadside fuel breaks, and prescribed fire in priority landscapes to reduce wildfire risk and protect watersheds.	Golden Ranch Road, Arivaca, Altar Valley, Ruby Road, Oro Valley, Experimental Range, Madera Canyon, and State lands.	Pima County WMP, U.S. Department of the Interior, Regional Roads, AZ DFFM, Arizona Department of Transportation, State Trust Lands, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department.	• Focus treatments on state lands and areas with cross-boundary coordination opportunities. • Implement mechanical roadside treatments and fuel breaks. • Conduct prescribed burns where appropriate, accounting for ecological and wildlife constraints. • Address contractor availability limitations and National Environmental Policy Act clearance needs, including for aerial herbicide application. • Coordinate financing through the Healthy Forest Initiative and similar programs.	Reduce wildfire risk, protect watersheds, and improve landscape resilience.	Monitor treated areas annually. Conduct maintenance treatments as required, including herbicide follow-up where needed.
RL-8	Proposed	M	2–5 years	**Cross-Boundary Fuels Treatments and Intergovernmental Coordination** Expand cross-boundary fuels treatments through formal coordination mechanisms across jurisdictions.	Front range of the Catalinas; Rincons; Southeast County, including Sonoita, Altar Valley, and Empire Gulch.	Pima County WMP, Flood Control District, Parks, and State Lands.	• Identify priority cross-boundary treatment areas using CWPP risk assessments, fire history, and fuel continuity analysis. • Coordinate project scoping and implementation timelines across jurisdictions and landowners. • Develop and use Intergovernmental Agreements to enable fuels treatments on State Trust Lands. • Align fuels treatments with watershed protection, flood control, and conservation priorities where applicable. • Share spatial data, treatment plans, and implementation lessons learned among partners. • Document cross-boundary treatment extents and outcomes in GIS.	Increase the effectiveness of fuels mitigation by reducing treatment gaps and improving continuity across ownership boundaries.	Review cross-boundary treatment coverage periodically. Identify and address gaps in treatment continuity over time. Update coordination mechanisms and Intergovernmental Agreements as priorities evolve.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M ,L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
RL-9	Proposed	M	0–3 years	**Private Landowner and Homeowner Fuels Mitigation Support** Expand community-based fuels mitigation support and outreach for private landowners and homeowners.	Communities countywide, with a focus on high-risk areas.	Pima County WMP in coordination with Alter Valley Conservation Alliance and regional partners.	• Identify communities with elevated wildfire risk and limited mitigation capacity using CWPP risk assessments. • Conduct chipper days and provide roll-off dumpsters to support fuels and debris disposal. • Implement targeted outreach through mailers, electronic communication, and coordination with elected official caucuses. • Provide community-based mitigation resources with dedicated outreach budgets. • Coordinate with regional departments and partners to align messaging and program delivery. • Track participation and treatment types by community to inform future outreach.	Increase private landowner participation in wildfire mitigation and reduce hazardous fuel accumulation around homes and communities.	Track participation rates and volume of fuels removed. Evaluate outreach effectiveness by community and program type. Adjust outreach strategies and resource allocation over time.
RL-10	Proposed	H	3–5 years	**Ingress and Egress-Focused Fuels Mitigation and Risk Identification** Identify and implement fuels mitigation projects in areas with limited ingress and egress where evacuation challenges and potential structure loss are highest.	High-risk communities countywide, including Mount Lemmon and other areas with constrained access and evacuation routes.	Pima County WMP in coordination with partner agencies.	• Identify communities with limited ingress and egress using CWPP risk assessments, road network data, and fire history. • Prioritize fuels treatments along evacuation routes, access roads, and areas where fire spread could compromise evacuation. • Develop fuels mitigation projects specifically intended to reduce exposure along ingress and egress corridors. • On Mount Lemmon, focus on maintaining existing vegetation treatments rather than expansion. • Use mechanical treatments and slash pile burning where appropriate and avoid prescribed burning in areas with bighorn sheep concerns. • Identify and share available tools and resources for ingress and egress and evacuation risk modeling to support future planning efforts.	Improve evacuation safety, reduce risk to residents and responders, and prioritize fuels mitigation where life safety concerns are greatest.	Reassess ingress and egress conditions periodically. Update project priorities as road conditions, development patterns, or evacuation planning changes. Monitor treated corridors to ensure continued effectiveness. Document number of linear miles addressed before and after photo-documentation. Record incidents to track reduction of ignition in areas treated over time.
RL-11	Ongoing, Planned, and Proposed	H	0–3 years	**Invasive Species Treatments in Major Watercourses** Reduce wildfire spread potential by treating invasive vegetation within major watercourses and washes.	Santa Cruz River, Rillito Creek, Cañada del Oro, Altar Wash, Cienega Wash, Tanque Verde Creek, Pantano Wash, and other major watercourses.	Pima County WMP; City of Tucson; Town of Oro Valley; Town of Marana; State Trust Lands, in partnership with Tucson Bird Alliance.	• Identify priority invasive species and high-risk reaches within riparian corridors that contribute to continuous fuel beds. • Conduct field inventories to assess invasive vegetation density, continuity, and proximity to infrastructure and communities. • Implement primarily manual removal methods, with limited targeted chemical treatment where appropriate and permitted. • Coordinate treatment efforts across jurisdictions and landowners to ensure continuity along watercourses. • Integrate invasive species treatments with flood control, watershed health, and riparian habitat management objectives. • Document treatment locations, methods, and outcomes in GIS. • Provide education about riparian area guidance for floods that follow fires and Regional Flood Control District information.	Reduce wildfire spread pathways associated with riparian corridors while supporting watershed and riparian system health.	Monitor treated reaches annually for regrowth and post-flood redistribution of invasives. Schedule repeat treatments as necessary. Update GIS records to track treatment coverage and effectiveness.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M ,L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
RL-12	Planned and Proposed	M	0–5 years	**Invasive Grass Monitoring and Data-Driven Fuels Treatment Prioritization** Monitor invasive grass distribution and structure and use this data to guide fuels treatment prioritization.	Countywide, with emphasis on the southeast portion of the county near Sonoita, Altar Valley, Empire Gulch, and other grass-dominated areas.	Pima County WMP in coordination with the University of Arizona, AZ DFFM, and partner agencies.	• Compile and maintain spatial datasets identifying invasive grass species, including cheatgrass, brome, buffelgrass, and fountain grass. • Assess grass structure, continuity, and proximity to structures, infrastructure, and evacuation routes. • Include a dedicated monitoring and data management fee within fuels and invasive species project budgets. • Use monitoring results to identify locations where grass crop conditions warrant fuels treatment or support delaying treatment. • Develop fuels treatment projects based on invasive grass extent, structure, and seasonal conditions. • Integrate monitoring outputs into CWPP project prioritization and annual work planning.	Improve targeting and timing of fuels treatments in grass-dominated systems and reduce wildfire spread driven by invasive grasses.	Update invasive grass data sets on a regular cycle. Reassess grass structure following wet seasons or disturbance events. Adjust treatment priorities based on updated monitoring results.
RL-13	Proposed	H	0–5 years	**Insurance Transparency and Risk Communication** Improve transparency and communication around insurance considerations related to wildfire risk and mitigation.	Countywide	Pima County WMP in coordination with state agencies and insurance stakeholders.	• Share publicly available information with residents on how wildfire mitigation actions may influence insurance availability, eligibility, or premiums based on guidance from insurers, regulators, and industry publications. • Coordinate with regional and state partners to track emerging insurance trends related to wildfire risk. • Integrate insurance considerations into homeowner outreach materials where appropriate. • Encourage legislative policy consideration for transparency in insurance coverage.	Improve public understanding of wildfire risk, mitigation benefits, and insurance implications.	Review insurance-related outreach content periodically. Update materials as insurance market conditions change.
RL-14	Propsoed	H	0–2 years	**Kitt Peak National Observatory Wildfire Defensible Space Requirements** Implement defensible space and vegetation management requirements to reduce wildfire risk to observatory infrastructure and personnel.	Kitt Peak National Observatory	Tohono O'odham Nation	• Enforce Zone 0–3 defensible space standards around all structures • Maintain no-fuel zones around buildings, LPG tanks, fuel storage, and generators • Conduct vegetation thinning, pruning, and fuel reduction per zone requirements • Review and approve specimen tree removals through EHS, KPNO Directorate, and Tribal Natural Resources as applicable • Provide guidance and oversight for vegetation maintenance activities.	Reduce structure ignition potential, improve firefighter safety, and enhance wildfire resilience of critical scientific infrastructure.	Conduct annual reassessment of exempt or retained specimen trees
RL-15	Planning	H	0–2 years	**Invasive Species Treatment on Abandoned Agricultural Areas Throughout the Altar Valley** Invasive plant species and hazardous fine fuels will be treated in fallow agricultural lands to reduce wildfire risk and limit the spread of fire toward nearby communities.	Altar Valley, Sopori Wash	Pima County, AZ DFFM, Arizona State Land Department, private landowners, City of Tucson	• Identify abandoned or fallow agricultural fields where invasive grasses and tumbleweed have accumulated and created continuous fine fuel beds. • Prioritize treatment areas near communities and southwest (upwind) of developed areas based on prevailing wind patterns that may carry fire toward populated areas. • Map invasive species concentrations using field surveys, aerial imagery, and partner reporting. • Implement mechanical removal, mowing, targeted herbicide treatments, or integrated vegetation management to reduce invasive plant density. • Focus treatments on high-risk species, including tumbleweed (Russian thistle), yellow bluestem, buffelgrass, stinknet, and Lehmann lovegrass. • Coordinate with landowners and land management agencies to obtain site access and treatment permissions. • Establish treatment buffers between invasive fuel beds and nearby communities, structures, and infrastructure.	Reduce wildfire risk to communities by decreasing the extent and continuity of invasive fine fuels on abandoned agricultural lands and limiting wind-driven fire spread toward populated areas.	Conduct periodic monitoring of treated fields to evaluate treatment effectiveness and reinvasion rates. Adjust treatment frequency and methods based on monitoring results and invasive species response.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M ,L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
RL-16	Proposed	H	0–3 years	**Brush Removal on Ranch Lands within the Altar Valley** Brush reduction treatments will be implemented on priority ranchlands to reduce hazardous fuel buildup and support wildfire mitigation across large privately managed landscapes.	Ranchlands within the Altar Valley	Private ranch landowners, Altar Valley Fire Safe Council, AZ DFFM, Pima County	• Use priority treatment maps developed by the Altar Valley Fire Safe Council to identify high-risk brush accumulation areas. • Coordinate with participating ranch landowners to plan and schedule treatment activities on private lands. • Prioritize treatment in areas where dense shrub or woody vegetation increases wildfire intensity and threatens nearby communities or infrastructure. • Implement mechanical brush removal, mastication, selective thinning, or other fuel reduction techniques appropriate to site conditions. • Focus initial treatments on high-hazard areas, such as Crucero Ranch, where brush accumulation has been identified as a significant wildfire concern. • Create strategic fuel breaks and reduced-fuel zones that align with existing roads, fence lines, and natural barriers to slow wildfire spread. • Integrate fuel treatments with ongoing ranch management activities where it is feasible to improve landscape sustainability. • Coordinate with fire agencies to ensure treatments support suppression access and defensible space near ranch structures.	Reduce hazardous brush fuels within and adjacent to the WUI while improving landscape-scale wildfire resilience across privately managed ranchlands.	Evaluate treated areas periodically to determine if maintenance treatments or additional brush reduction are necessary. Update priority treatment locations as vegetation conditions and wildfire risk change.
RL-17	Proposed	H	0–2 years	**Roadside Hazardous Fuels Management /Invasive Species Treatment in Road Corridors** Targeted vegetation management will occur along road corridors to reduce invasive fuels, improve evacuation safety, and limit wildfire spread along transportation routes.	Countywide, particularly within areas of concern and along Highway 286	Arizona Department of Transportation, Pima County, Altar Valley Fire Safe Council	• Identify roadside corridors where invasive grasses and tumbleweed accumulate and create continuous fine fuels capable of carrying wildfire along roadways. • Prioritize treatment along evacuation routes, including Highway 286 and other critical access roads serving rural communities. • Target invasive species including tumbleweed (Russian thistle), yellow bluestem, buffelgrass, stinknet, and Lehman lovegrass. • Conduct mechanical mowing, roadside clearing, targeted herbicide treatments, or integrated vegetation management to reduce fuel loads.	Reduce wildfire spread and intensity along road corridors while improving safety for evacuation and emergency response operations.	Inspect priority roadside corridors annually to assess invasive species regrowth and fuel conditions. Coordinate ongoing maintenance with transportation agencies to maintain reduced fuel loads along evacuation routes.
RL-18	Proposed	M	0–2 years	**Qualified Vendor List** Establish a county-supported list of pre-qualified vendors capable of completing hazardous fuels reduction and home hardening work to assist homeowners, communities, and land managers in implementing wildfire mitigation measures.	Pima County	Pima County WMP, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, local fire agencies, AZ DFFM, contractor and industry representatives, community wildfire mitigation partners	• Develop criteria and minimum qualifications for vendors seeking county certification to perform hazardous fuels reduction and home hardening work. • Define eligible service categories, such as defensible space creation, invasive species removal, vegetation thinning, debris removal, and structural hardening improvements. • Establish a formal certification and application process for vendors and contractors seeking inclusion on the list. • Verify contractor licensing, insurance, safety practices, and relevant experience in wildfire mitigation or vegetation management. • Maintain a publicly accessible list of certified vendors available to homeowners, landowners, and partner agencies. • Clearly communicate that the list represents qualified vendors but does not constitute endorsement or recommendation by the County. • Coordinate with local fire districts and wildfire mitigation programs to share the vendor list during outreach and defensible space initiatives.	Increase accessibility of home hardening and hazardous fuels reduction services for homeowners and land management agencies, helping accelerate wildfire mitigation across communities.	Require vendors to re-qualify and verify credentials every 3 years to remain on the approved list.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M ,L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
RL-19	Proposed	M	Ongoing	**Sentinel Peak Park and Tumamoc Hill Hazardous Vegetation Removal** Remove hazardous invasive vegetation, primarily buffelgrass, to protect native Sonoran Desert plants, reduce wildfire risk, and maintain the ecological and cultural value of these iconic Tucson landmarks.	Sentinel Peak Park ("A" Mountain) and Tumamoc Hill, Tucson	City of Tucson (Sentinel Peak Park, University of Arizona and Pima County Conservation Lands and Resources(CLR) (Tumamoc Hill), Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum, community volunteers, contractors	• Identify and map areas with significant buffelgrass and other hazardous invasive vegetation. • Use manual removal methods for Sentinel Peak Park, engaging volunteers and community groups for invasive plant pulls. • Apply targeted herbicide treatments for buffelgrass on Tumamoc Hill, using contractors trained to avoid archaeological resources and protect native species. • Schedule treatments during periods when buffelgrass is most susceptible (e.g., monsoon season when green). • Educate the public about the impacts of invasive species and the importance of restoration efforts.	Reduce wildfire risk, protect native plants, such as saguaros and palo verde, and maintain the ecological, recreational, and cultural importance of Sentinel Peak Park and Tumamoc Hill.	Monitor treated areas for regrowth of buffelgrass and other invasive species. Conduct annual maintenance and retreatment as needed. Adjust treatment strategies based on observed regrowth and restoration progress.
RL-20	Proposed	H	0–2 years	**Green Waste Removal and Chipping Program** Provide regular opportunities for residents to dispose of yard waste and hazardous vegetation.	Pima County	Pima County, municipalities, waste management providers, and fire districts.	• Schedule recurring green waste collection events aligned with seasonal needs. • Establish community chipping sites in accessible and high-risk areas. • Offer free or low-cost disposal options to reduce participation barriers. • Promote the program through coordinated local outreach channels. • Track participation levels and waste volumes collected. • Integrate the program with defensible space and fuel reduction efforts. • Partner with waste management services to support program logistics.	Reduce available fuels and encourage defensible space maintenance.	Track volume of waste processed annually. Conduct annual program reviews. Number of residences who used the service Survey resident satisfaction and adapt the program as needed. Monitor for reductions in fire risk indicators and an increase in community participation.

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management Hazardous Fuels Projects

These hazardous fuels reduction projects are designed to reduce wildfire intensity and spread by strategically modifying vegetation structure and composition across priority landscapes. Methodology/project description: Projects will employ a combination of mechanical treatment (Grubbing and/or mastication), hand treatment (chainsaws and/or mowers), and herbicide (hand, machine, and/or drone application). Treatment methods will be selected based on vegetation type, fuel loading, terrain, and access constraints. Each project will follow a multi-year treatment framework that includes initial implementation, post-treatment monitoring, and follow-up maintenance treatments as needed to address regrowth and changing site conditions. Prior to implementation, project areas will be evaluated for wildlife habitat considerations, potential erosion risks, and cultural or archaeological resources. If any of these concerns arise, mitigation options will be determined.

These projects aim to slow wildfire spread and reduce fire intensity by removing invasive and native species. Removal may be working toward eradicating invasive grasses and forbs to allow native species to return or "pruning" wood species to provide a shaded fuel break with a more mosaic landscape appearance. See Table 4.2 for AZ DFFM's current and planned hazardous fuel reduction projects, along with Figures 4.1 and 4.2 for AZ DFFM's proposed hazardous fuel reduction projects and locations.

Table 4.2. AZ DFFM Hazardous Fuels Reduction Projects

Project Description	Location	Status	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
SaddleBrooke/ Big Wash	Catalina	Planning	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Sonoita Vista	Hwy 83	Planning	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Quail Creek	South of Tucson	Planning	Vegetation perimeter fuel break	Monitor growth of vegetation and invasive species. Conduct biannual maintenance by means of thinning and herbicide.
Elephant Head	Green Valley	Planning	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Cienegas	East of Sonoita	Planning	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Sahuarita Road	Sahuarita	Planning	Right away, vegetation management roadside fuel break	Monitor growth of vegetation and invasive species. Conduct biannual maintenance by means of thinning and herbicide.
Florida Canyon	Green Valley	In Progress	Vegetation management, grazing management, fuel management within the research station, and potential spread beyond	Monitor growth of vegetation and invasive species. Conduct biannual maintenance by means of thinning and herbicide.
Orphan Butte	South of Tucson	Monitoring	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.

Project Description	Location	Status	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
Yellow Jacket	Arivaca	Monitoring	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Sapo Tank	Arivaca	Monitoring	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Yellow Neon	South of Tucson	Monitoring	Invasive removal	Monitor growth of vegetation and invasive species. Conduct biannual maintenance by means of thinning and herbicide.
Ranchos Pequenos	Hwy 83	Planning	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.
Spirit Dog	Catalina	Monitoring	Remove hazardous vegetation	To be determined.

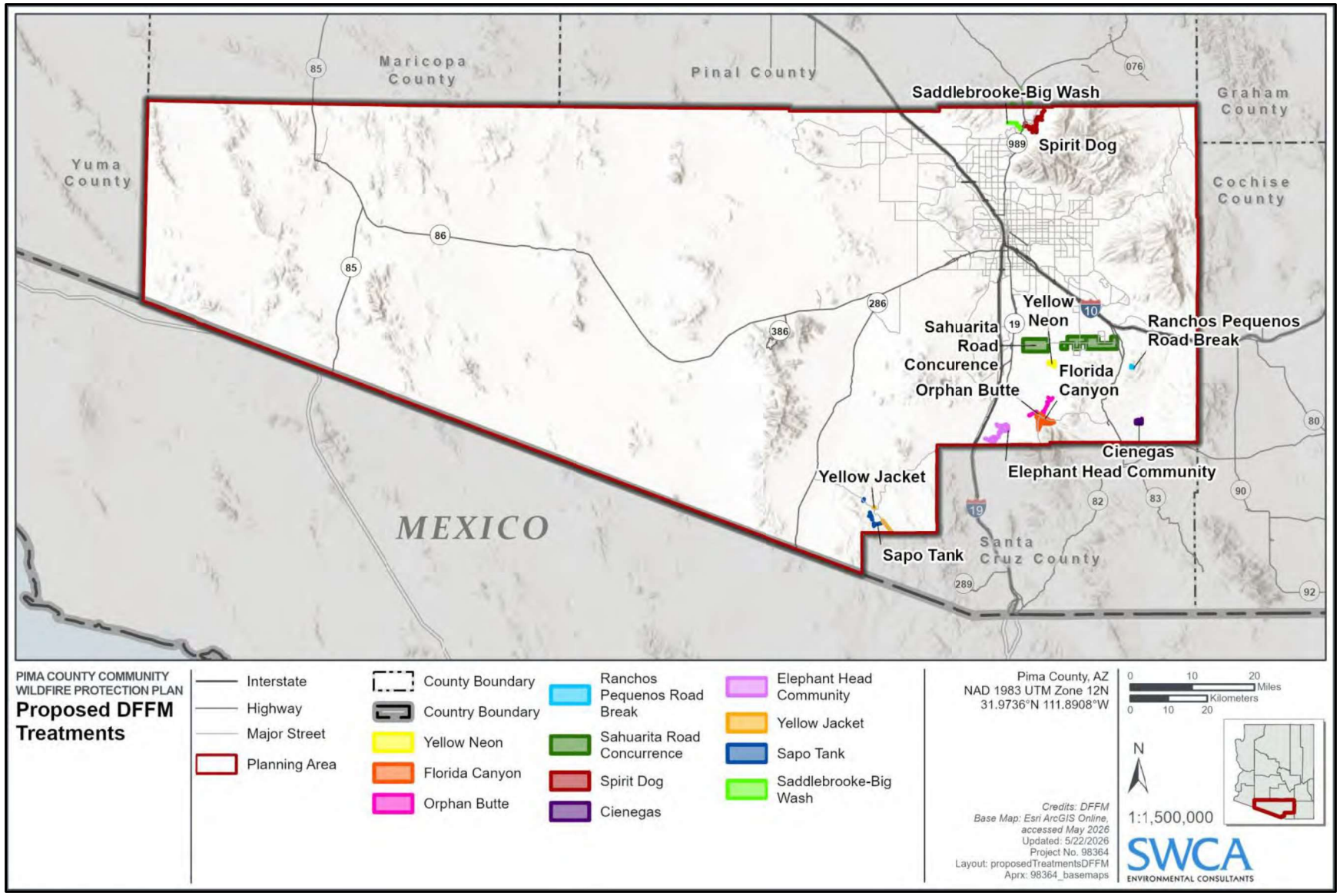


Figure 4.1. Overview of AZ DFFM's proposed hazardous fuel reduction projects in Pima County.

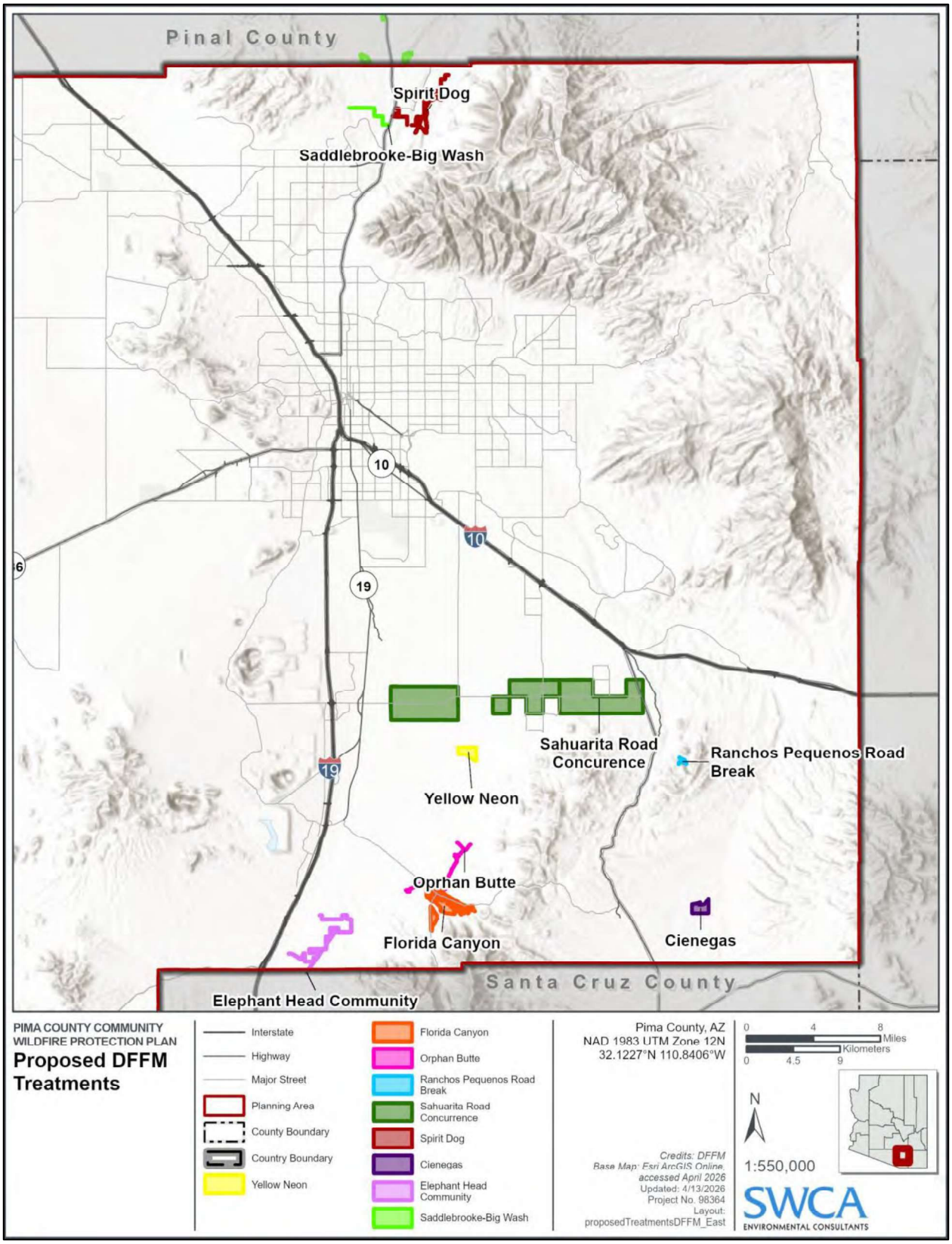


Figure 4.2. AZ DFFM's proposed fuel reduction projects in eastern Pima County.

Areas of Concern

Areas of Concern (AOCs) are collaboratively identified locations where land managers and residents are currently considering, or should consider implementing mitigation measures to protect life, property, and other valued resources. As shown in Figures 4.3 and 4.4, AOCs are predominantly associated with drainage and riparian corridors, transportation corridors, and the WUI. Drainage and riparian areas tend to concentrate fuels and can channel fire movement across the landscape, increasing the potential for rapid fire spread. Transportation corridors serve as frequent ignition sources and are also critical access and evacuation routes that may be compromised during wildfire events. WUI and abutting wildland areas with continuous, fire-prone vegetation provide conditions conducive to large or fast-moving fires, particularly under extreme weather conditions.

It is recommended that treatments within AOCs be tailored to site-specific conditions, with the goal of protecting valued resources and reducing the potential for extreme fire behavior, such as high flame lengths or elevated fireline intensity (see Appendix D for detailed information on fuel treatment options). Because wildfire does not respect jurisdictional boundaries, effective mitigation requires coordination and implementation of projects across ownership and administrative borders.

AOCs were delineated by Pima County's interdisciplinary Core Team using results from the comprehensive Quantitative Wildfire Risk Assessment (QWRA; see Chapter 3), along with evaluations of fuel loading and continuity, past fire and ignition history, structure locations, and local knowledge. While residents within AOCs should prioritize fuel treatments within the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ), reducing fuels beyond the HIZ is also advisable for properties located within the WUI. See Chapter 6 for a list of recommended homeowner actions.

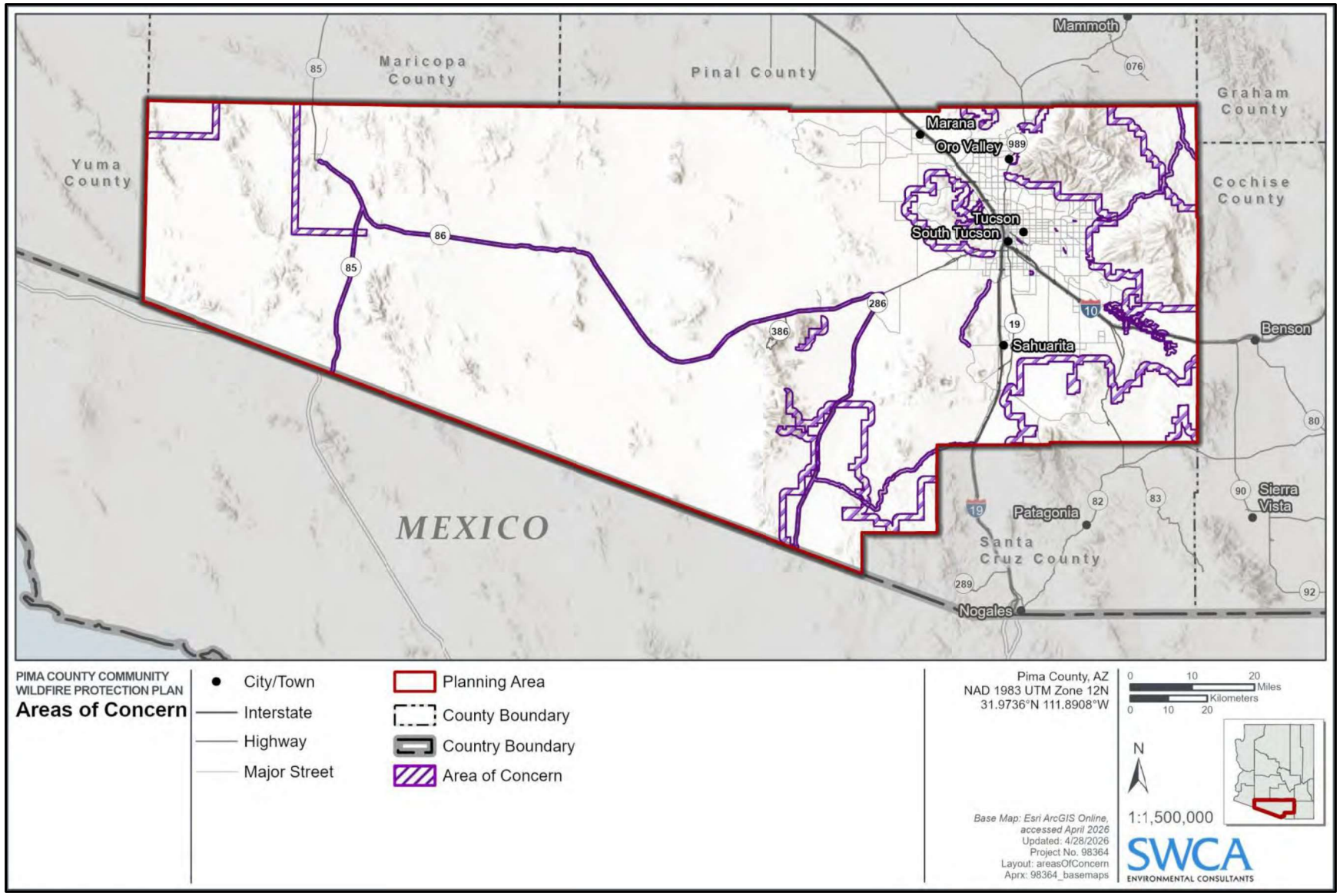


Figure 4.3. Areas of Concern throughout Pima County.

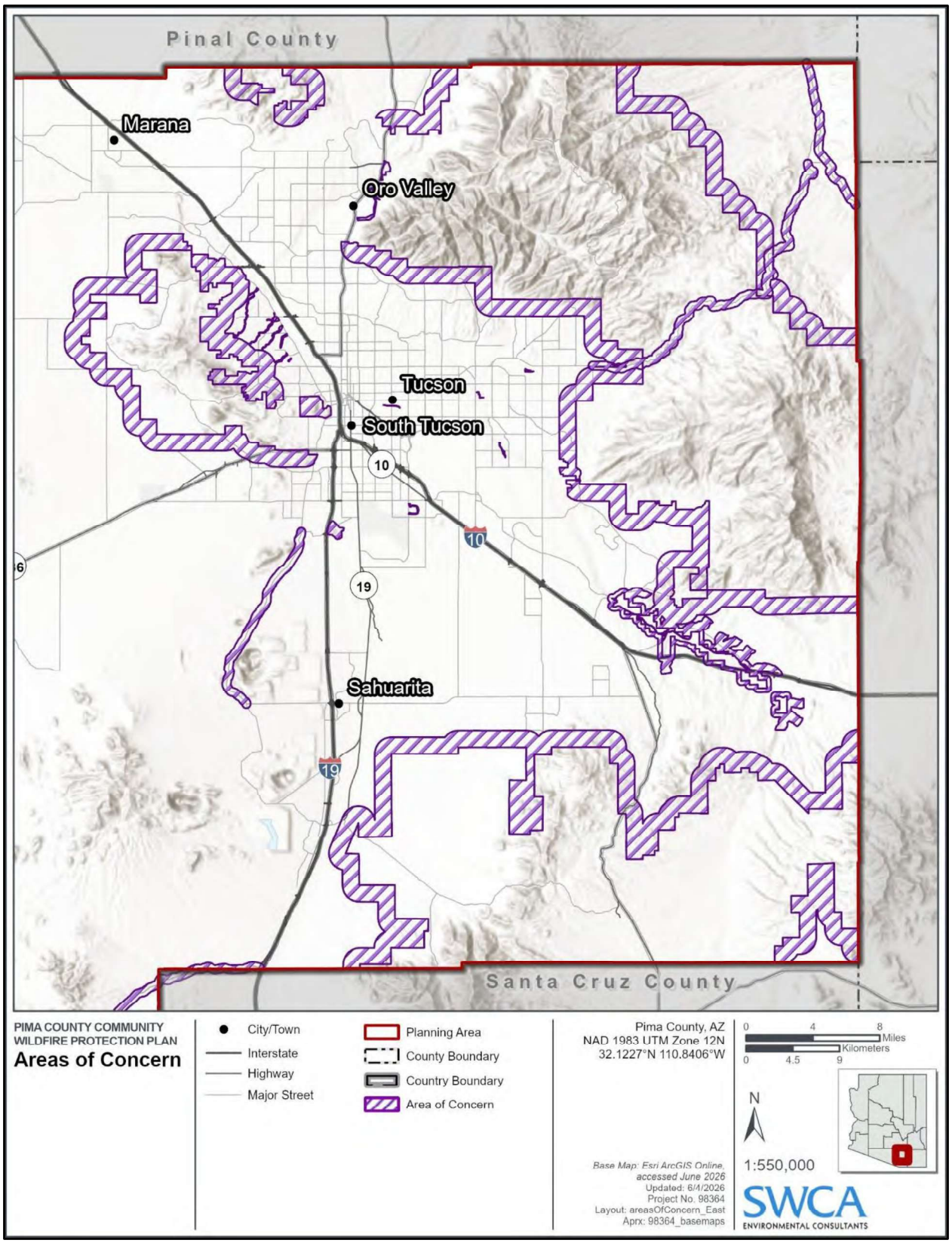


Figure 4.4. Areas of Concern throughout Eastern Pima County



GOAL 2: FIRE-ADAPTED COMMUNITIES

Recommendations for fire-adapted communities include public education and outreach actions and actions to reduce structural ignitability.

Creating fire-adapted communities in Pima County benefits from a two-pronged approach: robust public education and outreach and practical actions implemented by both private landowners and public agencies to reduce the ignitability of structures. Wildfire has long been a natural and recurring force in the county's ecosystem, which has shaped the landscape for centuries. Recognizing wildfire as an expected part of life in Pima County underscores the importance of both community engagement and proactive preparation. By integrating education, outreach, and structural mitigation, residents can better protect their homes, properties, and neighborhoods from the threat of wildfire.

Recommendations for Public Education and Outreach

Public education is central to wildfire preparedness in Pima County. Although many residents in the WUI understand the risks posed by wildfires, ongoing engagement is critical to ensure that the entire community remains informed and prepared. Educational initiatives may include raising awareness about local fire agency needs, offering workshops on home hardening, fire-resistant landscaping, organizing community cleanups for vegetation management, and promoting programs that provide financial assistance for treatments on private lands. Building trust and improving communication between private property owners and land management agencies is essential for maintaining existing vegetation management programs and implementing new ones throughout the WUI.

Exposure to mitigation programs (e.g., Firewise) can empower more communities to adopt wildfire prevention principles. Workshops that explain Firewise concepts and their practical application help residents understand how to protect their homes. Additional educational strategies further support public safety. It is especially important during fire season to communicate fire danger ratings, restrictions, and ignition prevention measures through signage, social media, and public meetings. Collaboration with local fire agencies, government entities, and community organizations ensures that residents receive consistent and effective messaging. A robust public education platform can increase public understanding of evacuation protocols, the importance of defensible space, and home-hardening measures. Such a platform can also inform residents about updates to fire codes, property inspections, and available resources for wildfire preparedness. Additionally, residents are encouraged to stay informed and regularly check for outreach and updates from their utility service providers regarding important issues to ensure that they receive timely information and can take appropriate precautions as needed.

Improving communication between private property owners and local land management agencies will be crucial in building trust and ensuring more effective fire mitigation practices across public and private lands. These key relationships are identified in the Land Ownership/Lead Agency column of Table 4.3.

Please see Chapter 6 for a comprehensive list of local, statewide, and national educational resources.

Table 4.3 lists public education recommendations to be implemented in the county.

Recommendations for Reducing Structural Ignitability

Reducing the ignitability of structures is a critical component of wildfire mitigation in Pima County. Although fuels reduction treatments on public lands are important, their effectiveness is limited if homeowners do not also take action on their own properties. The risk of home ignition remains high and firefighter safety is compromised when mitigation is lacking on private land.

The HIZ is critically important in wildfire safety because research shows that the materials and maintenance of a home, along with the vegetation and combustibles within 100 feet (or 200 feet on slopes), are the biggest factors in whether a home ignites from wildfire embers or small flames. By actively managing and reducing flammable materials close to the home—especially within the first 0–5 feet—residents can significantly increase their home's chances of surviving a wildfire. By prioritizing the HIZ residents address the primary sources of wildfire ignition, such as embers and small surface flames, and take the most impactful steps to protect their property from wildfire damage (NFPA 2025). Local fire agencies should encourage positive change in homeowner behavior and ensure all properties contribute to community safety.

Actions on the landscape alone are not enough; homeowners must be informed and motivated to take responsibility for their own properties. Effective public education and engagement is crucial to the widespread implementation of firesafe practices, which will ultimately contribute to lowering the ignition potential of homes and building stronger community wildfire resilience.

Table 4.3 provides a list of community-based recommendations to reduce structural ignitability.

Homeowners Insurance

Insurance is a primary concern for residents in wildfire-prone areas, especially as coverage and affordability have become more challenging in recent years. Although this CWPP offers recommendations for mitigating wildfire hazards at the county scale, it is not used by private insurance companies to determine risk for individual properties. The CWPP's QWRA is designed to guide broad-scale community mitigation efforts through collaboration among government entities, landowners, and the public. States and insurance companies have clarified that wildfire risk assessments and associated maps in planning documents, such as CWPPs, do not influence insurance rates or coverage decisions. Instead, insurers rely on their own internal, proprietary data and methods, which reflect more frequently updated and detailed risk factors (USDA 2023).

Despite this distinction, homeowners can take meaningful steps to improve their insurability and reduce wildfire risk. The Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) Wildfire Prepared Home program provides science-based guidance for proactive wildfire preparation, beginning at the home and extending outward. Although the IBHS Wildfire Prepared Home designation is not currently available in Arizona, the program offers valuable insights and strategies. Effective implementation of mitigative action can significantly lower wildfire risk and strengthen a property's resilience to ember ignition and fire spread (IBHS 2025).

To support residents, education and outreach efforts should prioritize insurance-related information and promote resources, such as the IBHS Wildfire Prepared Home Program. Sharing actionable guidance through community meetings, social media, and direct communications ensures that homeowners are equipped to make informed choices that protect their homes and support their ability to obtain and maintain insurance coverage. For additional information and resources, residents are encouraged to visit Wildfire Prepared.

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Table 4.3. Recommendations for Creating Fire-Adapted Communities (public education and structural ignitability)

Priority levels are as follows: H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
FAC-1	Ongoing	H	0–2 years	**Defensible Space Assessments** Expand programs to assess and improve defensible space around homes.	Residential WUI	Pima County WMP, local fire agencies, AZ DFFM, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, homeowner associations, and private landowners.	• Educate staff and volunteers using standardized defensible space criteria. • Offer incentives and educational materials to encourage defensible space improvements. • Track assessments results and follow-up actions in a centralized system. • Integrate assessments with home hardening and wildfire outreach programs. • Report assessment statistics and trends to community leaders. • Target high-risk areas for focused assessments and outreach.	Improve defensible space and reduce home loss risk.	Conduct assessments annually or biannually. Use data to target outreach and follow-up. Monitor fire outcomes in assessed areas. Adjust the program based on metrics and reporting of efficacy.
FAC-2	Proposed	M	0–5 years	**Fire-Resistant Construction and Retrofit** Promote fire-resistant building materials and retrofits in new and existing homes.	WUI, new developments	Pima County WMP, participating municipal building departments, homeowner associations, and private landowners.	• Promote the use of fire-resistant materials in new and existing homes. • Offer grants or incentives to support homeowner retrofits. • Update and enforce building codes requiring fire-resistant construction. • Conduct training and workshops for builders and contractors. • Target outreach and incentives to high-risk neighborhoods. • Document retrofits and compliant construction through permitting systems. • Partner with insurance providers to encourage mitigation actions.	Reduce home ignitability and improve community resilience.	Track retrofit rates and code compliance. Periodically audit new construction and retrofits. Assess home loss rates after wildfire events. Review and update building codes as needed.
FAC-3	Ongoing and Proposed	H	0–3 years	**Structural Ignitability Reduction Education** Educate homeowners on reducing the combustibility of their homes and outbuildings.	Pima County	Pima County WMP, local fire agencies, and county departments.	• Develop educational campaigns focused on reducing structural ignitability. • Host community workshops and webinars for homeowners. • Partner with local media and community organizations for outreach. • Highlight best practices and local success stories. • Conduct pre- and post-campaign surveys to assess effectiveness. • Integrate education with defensible space and wildfire preparedness programs. • Track participation and knowledge gains over time.	Increase homeowner knowledge and action to reduce fire risk.	Survey the effectiveness of outreach annually. Track participation rates. Adjust messaging based on feedback and outcomes. Monitor for increased compliance and reduced losses.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
FAC-4	Proposed	H	0–3 years	**Invasive Species Awareness, Education, and Treatment Facilitation** Comprehensive community engagement to increase understanding of invasive species, their wildfire risks, and available treatment options.	Pima County	Pima County WMP, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, Regional Flood Control District, Pima County CLR, and municipal agencies.	• Develop a centralized wildfire/invasives Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) that will be available online and as a printable PDF in English and Spanish, which will cover prevention, mitigation, and response. • Create an interactive map showing high-risk areas, treatment sites, and resources; enable public submission of questions and requests. • Expand University of Arizona Cooperative Extension outreach: Contract for additional training sessions (field and classroom), develop multilingual educational materials, and collaborate with local fire jurisdictions for post-fire recovery education. • Host seasonal workshops/webinars and distribute materials via trusted messengers, local media, and community partners. • Identify and prioritize neighborhoods with low wildfire/invasive awareness using surveys, incident data, and outreach metrics; target these areas for intensive engagement. • Integrate invasive species messaging into broader wildfire mitigation campaigns and defensible space programs. • Educate developers on the reducing invasive plant species spread via construction equipment and in areas with soil disturbance.	Increase community knowledge of invasive species risks, boost participation in treatment programs, and reduce wildfire risk through coordinated education and outreach.	Annual surveys of awareness and engagement. Track FAQ usage, map interactions, and training attendance. Monitor treatment requests and invasive spread. Review contract deliverables and outreach effectiveness annually. Update materials and strategies as needed.
FAC-5	Proposed	M	0–3 years	**Wildfire Risk Awareness Prioritization** Systematic identification of communities with low wildfire risk awareness for targeted education and project prioritization.	Pima County	Pima County WMP, local fire agencies	• Analyze historical outreach participation, fire incident reports, and defensible space compliance data. • Conduct resident surveys and focus groups to assess baseline awareness. • Use GIS mapping to visualize engagement gaps and overlay with wildfire risk zones. • Develop prioritized outreach plans for low-awareness areas, including tailored messaging and intensive follow-up. • Coordinate with local organizations to leverage existing community networks. • Track improvements in awareness and engagement over time for adaptive management.	Ensure resources and education reach the most vulnerable and least-engaged communities, improving overall wildfire preparedness.	Conduct annual review of outreach data and survey results. Update prioritization maps and outreach plans. Monitor changes in engagement and preparedness metrics. Report findings to stakeholders for program refinement.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements

FAC-6	Proposed	M	0–2 years	**Interagency Wildfire Communication Coordination**
				Regular coordination meetings among agency public information officers to unify wildfire messaging and outreach strategies. Create countywide calendar outlining wildfire prevention, mitigation, and response activities for agencies and the public.
					Pima County	Pima County WMP, Pima County Communications, PCOEM, University of Arizona Cooperative Extension, invasives group, local fire protection services, and partner agencies.	• Schedule quarterly coordination meetings with agency public information officers and communications staff through the Desert Fire Invasives Collaborative.
							• Develop and maintain unified talking points, bilingual messaging, and infographics for wildfire safety.
							• Plan and execute joint social media campaigns, press releases, and public service announcements (PSAs) aligned with wildfire season and major events. Address cross-jurisdictional communication gaps and ensure consistent messaging.
							• Provide training for agency staff on effective public communication and engagement.
							• Evaluate campaign reach and effectiveness using analytics and public feedback.
							• Develop an annual digital calendar in coordination with partner agencies to synchronize outreach and maximize participation. The calendar should include:
							  ○ Key dates for prevention campaigns, training sessions, fuel reduction events, and grant deadlines.
							  ○ Printed copies available to agencies, neighborhoods, and community groups.
							  ○ Annual updates based on feedback and emerging priorities.
							•
								Increase consistency, reach, and impact of wildfire safety messaging across jurisdictions.
								Improve coordination of wildfire prevention efforts and ensure timely, well-attended activities.
									Track number and reach of coordinated posts/PSAs.
									Conduct annual review of engagement analytics.
									Solicit feedback from agencies and residents.
									Adjust strategies based on effectiveness and emerging needs.
									Track calendar use and participation in scheduled activities.
									Annual review and update of calendar.
									Solicit feedback from partners and participants.

FAC-7	Ongoing, Planned, and Proposed	H	0–3 years	**Firewise Principles Education Expansion** Broad-based education campaign to promote Firewise principles and defensible space best practices.	Pima County	Pima County WMP, Pima County Communications, PCOEM, AZ DFFM, local fire agencies, and University of Arizona Cooperative Extension.	• Develop comprehensive, multilingual Firewise educational materials (print, digital, video). • Organize community workshops, demonstration days, and neighborhood walk-throughs. • Partner with University of Arizona Cooperative Extension and local fire departments for technical expertise. • Offer incentives (e.g., recognition, small grants) for participation and compliance. • Target outreach to high-risk and previously non-compliant neighborhoods. • Integrate Firewise education into existing programs (e.g., home hardening, rebate initiatives). • Track participation, compliance rates, and fire incident outcomes in educated areas.	Improve defensible space compliance, reduce wildfire risk, and foster a culture of shared responsibility.	Annual program reviews. Track participation and compliance rates. Monitor fire outcomes and defensible space improvements. Adjust materials and outreach methods as needed.
FAC-8	Proposed	M	0–2 years	**Multilingual Wildfire Materials Development** Creation and distribution of wildfire prevention and mitigation materials in multiple languages to increase accessibility.	Pima County	Pima County Communications and University of Arizona Cooperative Extension.	• Translate all key outreach materials (FAQs, guides, flyers, PSAs) into Spanish and other prevalent languages. • Distribute materials through community organizations, schools, and local media. • Ensure printable resources for outreach in low-connectivity and underserved areas. • Host bilingual workshops and webinars. • Evaluate material effectiveness through feedback and engagement metrics. • Update translations and content annually.	Expand reach of wildfire education and ensure equitable access to information for diverse populations.	Track distribution and engagement by language. Survey effectiveness and adjust materials. Monitor outreach in underserved communities. Conduct annual review and content updates.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
FAC-9	Proposed	M	0–3 years	**Brush/Bulky Waste Voucher Program** Waived-fee vouchers for residents to dispose of vegetation and bulky waste at approved drop-off sites.	Pima County	Pima County WMP, Public Works, and partner agencies	• Establish partnerships with public and private disposal sites. • Distribute vouchers to eligible residents via mail, online, and community events. • Target high-risk, low-income, and underserved households. • Promote program through targeted outreach and Firewise education. • Track voucher redemption, defensible space improvements, and dump data. • Promote program in conjunction with green waste and chipping initiatives. • Track voucher usage, volume collected, and site participation. • Address illegal dumping through targeted outreach and enforcement. • Review and refine program annually based on feedback and performance metrics.	Reduce illegal dumping, facilitate fuel reduction, and increase community participation in wildfire mitigation. Increase defensible space compliance, reduce home loss risk, and promote equitable access to mitigation resources.	Track voucher usage and volume processed. Monitor site participation and community feedback. Conduct annual review and program adjustments. Monitor for budget overruns and misuse. Survey participant satisfaction.
FAC-10	Proposed	H	0–2 years	**Education on Emergency Notification Systems** Provide countywide public education to increase awareness of wildfire emergency notification systems, specifically geared towards wildfire response.	Countywide	Pima County, municipalities, fire districts, PCOEM	• Develop public education campaigns explaining how emergency notification systems work and how residents can enroll in alerts. • Provide guidance on the types of alerts residents may receive (e.g., evacuation notices, fire updates, shelter information). • Conduct outreach through community meetings, social media, local media, schools, and neighborhood organizations. • Create multilingual materials and accessible resources, explaining alert systems and recommended actions when alerts are received. • Coordinate with local jurisdictions to promote consistent messaging about emergency alerts and preparedness. • Encourage residents to test their alert subscriptions and maintain up-to-date contact information.	Increase public awareness and understanding of wildfire alert systems and encourage residents to enroll in and respond appropriately to emergency notifications.	Periodically update educational materials and outreach strategies. Track community participation in alert systems and public engagement. Evaluate public awareness after outreach campaigns or wildfire events and adjust messaging as needed.
FAC-11	Proposed	M	0–2 years	**Increased Staffing for the Altar Valley Fire Council** Acquire funding for increased staffing for the Altar Valley Fire Council	Altar Valley	Altar Valley Fire Safe Council	• The Altar Valley Fire Safe Council has identified a need for additional staff members to facilitate project and program coordination with county, state, and federal agencies for the purposes of reducing hazardous fuels, conducting public outreach, and building working relationships with homeowners and landowners in the Altar Valley. • Additional staffing will allow for the implementation of cross-boundary fuels reduction projects.	Reduce wildfire risk and prevent wildland fire ignitions in the Altar Valley area.	Track staffing levels, roles, and responsibilities to ensure adequate capacity for project coordination and outreach.
FAC-12	Proposed	H	0–2 years	**Hazardous Fuels Public Outreach Campaign** Develop a project outreach campaign targeting specific communities delineated via a geospatial exercise	Countywide	Pima County WMP, Fire agencies	• Create a layer denoting the location of invasive species and conduct an analysis to understand how zip codes overlap with areas of invasive species. • Conduct outreach in specific zip codes prioritized for reducing hazardous fuels created by the presence of invasive species. • This analysis would be available to all jurisdictions in Pima County	Prioritize outreach for treating invasive species and reducing the spread of invasive species that contribute to increased wildfire risk.	Update invasive species spatial datasets periodically to ensure outreach targeting reflects current conditions. Track outreach activities by zip code, including events, materials distributed, and partner participation. Evaluate outreach effectiveness using participation rates, treatment adoption, or follow-up engagement in targeted communities.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
FAC-13	Ongoing, Planned, and Proposed	M	0–2 years	**Fire Prevention Public Outreach** Develop public education materials and strategies to reduce wildland ignitions	Countywide	Pima County WMP, fire agencies	• Provide stickers and signs near gas stations and along roads asking people to stow chains and to not throw smoking devices from vehicles. • Provide the public with examples of how dragging chains can start wildland fires. • Create a Sonoran Desert–focused mascot for increasing wildfire risk awareness similar to the USFS Smokey Bear. • Create an outreach campaign for providing guidance on how to safely and constructively report wildland ignitions originating in houseless population encampments. • Provide guidance, tools, and resources to houseless populations to prevent negligent wildland fire ignitions during periods of heighted wildfire risk.	Reduce the number of roadside ignitions and ignitions in the WUI, subsequently decreasing the likelihood of catastrophic wildfire in the WUI.	• Periodically assess ignition data (e.g., roadside ignitions) to evaluate whether outreach messaging is reaching high-risk audiences. • Update educational materials and messaging to reflect emerging wildfire risks and prevention strategies.

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GOAL 3: SAFE, EFFECTIVE, RISK-BASED WILDFIRE RESPONSE

Recommended actions that jurisdictions could undertake to improve wildfire response.

Effective wildfire response in Pima County depends upon a combination of strong fire agency capabilities and an engaged, well-prepared community. Pima County addresses emergencies, including wildfires, through an all-hazards emergency management framework coordinated by the PCOEM. The Pima County Emergency Operations Plan (PCOEM 2025) establishes the structure for coordinating preparedness, response, and recovery activities among county departments while coordinating with municipalities, tribal governments, non-governmental organizations, and state and federal partners using the National Incident Management System, Incident Command System, and an Emergency Support Function (ESF) structure. Wildfires are identified in the Pima County Emergency Operations Plan as one of the most prevalent hazards affecting Pima County. When incidents exceed local capabilities, coordinated response and resource support may occur through the activation of the Pima County Emergency Operations Center (PCOEM 2025).

Strengthening wildfire response capabilities remains an important component of community resilience in Pima County. As wildfire risk continues to affect the region's diverse landscapes and communities, coordinated response, effective resource deployment, and strong interagency collaboration are essential. Continued efforts to enhance preparedness, improve coordination among response partners, and ensure adequate resources can help support timely and effective response operations while protecting life, property, and the environment.

Table 4.4 provides recommendations for improving capacity, procuring resources, and enhancing firefighting capabilities.

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Table 4.4. Recommendations for Safe and Effective Wildfire Response

Priority levels are as follows: H = High, M = Medium, L = Low

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
WR-1	Proposed	M	0–3 years	**Ingress and Egress Assessment and Improvement** Comprehensive evaluation and enhancement of evacuation routes in wildfire-prone areas.	All WUI communities	Pima County WMP, local law enforcement agencies, municipal public works	• Map and assess current ingress/egress routes using GIS and field surveys. • Identify bottlenecks, hazards, and areas with limited access. • Coordinate with emergency services and transportation agencies to prioritize improvements. • Incorporate findings into emergency response plans and outreach materials.	Improve evacuation safety and readiness and reduce risk to life and property during wildfire events.	Track improvements and incident outcomes. Solicit resident feedback on evacuation experiences. Update emergency plans and outreach as needed.
WR-2	Proposed	H	0–2 years	**Evacuation Planning** Develop and distribute evacuation plans, placards, and signage for high-risk communities.	High-risk communities	Pima County Sheriff, Pima County Department of Transportation, local fire agencies, local law enforcement, dispatch centers, PCOEM	• Develop community-specific evacuation plans using wildfire risk data, access constraints, and population needs. • Distribute evacuation placards and clear instructions to residents in high-risk areas. • Conduct drills and tabletop exercises with response agencies and community partners. • Update evacuation plans annually or following major wildfire incidents. • Partner with schools, businesses, and local organizations to support evacuation readiness. • Publish evacuation zones online and provide printed copies where needed.	Improve preparedness	Review and update plans annually. Track drill participation rates. Survey residents post-evacuation.
WR-3	Proposed	H	0–5 years	**Personnel and Staffing** Increase firefighting and prevention capacity through recruitment and training.	Countywide	Local fire agencies	• Assess firefighting, prevention, and support staffing needs based on wildfire risk and service demands. • Apply for grants and funding to support staffing increases and retention. • Recruit and train additional career, reserve, and volunteer personnel. • Partner with local colleges, training programs, and the military to expand recruitment pipelines. • Develop career pathways and advancement opportunities to improve retention. • Track staffing levels, certifications, and deployment capacity in a centralized system. • Integrate workforce development with ongoing training and readiness programs. • Expand access to classroom-based NWCG wildland fire courses. • Provide NWCG training focused on WUI and suburban wildfire response.	Increase firefighting and prevention capacity.	Conduct annual staffing reviews. Evaluate performance and adjust recruitment strategies. Track retention and turnover rates. Monitor effectiveness in fire response and prevention.
WR-4	Proposed	H	0–5 years	**Equipment Upgrades** Modernize firefighting equipment to enhance response effectiveness and safety.	Countywide	Local fire agencies	• Inventory existing firefighting equipment and identify capability gaps. • Pursue funding for new or upgraded apparatus, tools, and protective equipment. • Install or enhance water sources and delivery systems where needed. • Conduct regular equipment maintenance, testing, and inspections. • Train personnel on safe and effective use of new equipment. • Document equipment upgrades and replacement schedules. • Track equipment performance during wildfire incidents.	Improve firefighting effectiveness and safety.	Perform regular equipment inspections and maintenance. Review equipment performance annually. Replace or upgrade equipment as needed. Track equipment usage and incident outcomes.

Project ID	Status	Priority (H, M, L)	Timeline for Action	Project Description	Location	Project Partners	Methodology/Approach	Serves To:	Monitoring/Maintenance Requirements
WR-5	Proposed	H	0–5 years	**Regional Taskforce Workshops** Facilitate workshops for regional wildfire mitigation taskforces to share best practices, coordinate projects, and strengthen partnerships.	Countywide, cross-jurisdictional	Pima County, USFS, BLM, State Lands, tribal governments, and municipalities.	• Organize annual workshops focused on wildfire mitigation and coordination. • Invite local, state, federal, and tribal partners. • Share project updates, challenges, and best practices. • Document workshop outcomes and action items. Integrate feedback into CWPP updates and implementation.	Foster collaboration, disseminate best practices, and align mitigation efforts.	Track workshop participation. Document outcomes. Review action item completion. Solicit feedback for future sessions.
WR-6	Proposed	M	2–5 years	**Evaluation of Technologies for Wildfire Early Detection** Explore new technologies to implement for early wildfire detection.	Countywide, with focus on high-risk and remote areas	Pima County WMP, local fire agencies, PCOEM	• Evaluate available technologies capable of supporting early wildfire detection and situational awareness. • Identify and assess potential deployment sites in high-risk or remote areas to improve early detection coverage. • Assess opportunities to integrate detection data with existing emergency response and wildfire detection systems. • Coordinate with fire agencies to evaluate operational workflows and response applications.	Identify effective technologies and deployment strategies to support early wildfire detection and enhance situational awareness for emergency response.	Review emerging technologies and integration opportunities periodically and update deployment strategies as needed.
WR-7	Proposed	M	0–3 years	**Panoramic Cameras in Remote Areas** Install panoramic cameras in remote, high-risk areas to improve wildfire detection and monitoring capabilities.	Remote WUI, rural zones	Pima County WMP, USFS, BLM	• Identify high-risk locations suitable for camera installation. • Procure and install panoramic camera systems. • Integrate camera feeds with emergency operations centers. • Develop protocols for monitoring and alerting. • Evaluate system coverage and performance.	Improve early wildfire detection, enhance monitoring, and support rapid response.	Conduct annual system inspections. Track detection incidents. Review technology upgrades and update coverage as needed.
WR-8	Proposed	M	2–5 years	**Install Heliwells** Heliwell installations to support aerial firefighting operations and improve water supply access.	Countywide, strategic wildfire response zones (e.g., Northern Altar Valley)	Pima County WMP, local fire agencies, PCOEM, Tohono O'odham Nation, Altar Valley Fire Safe Council	• Identify priority heliwell locations based on wildfire risk and access needs. • Pursue grants, partnerships, and cost-sharing opportunities. • Coordinate installation with landowners and agencies. • Track heliwell use and effectiveness during incidents and implement improvements or relocations as needed.	Enhance aerial firefighting capacity, improve water supply logistics, and reduce response times.	Monitor heliwell usage. Review maintenance needs annually. Track incident outcomes. Update funding and installation strategies.

FUNDING SOURCES

Table 4.5. Funding Sources

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Community Wildfire Defense Grant Program	USFS	Provides funding to help at-risk communities and tribes plan for and reduce wildfire risk. The program supports development or updates of CWPPs and implementation of wildfire mitigation projects, such as hazardous fuels reduction and defensible space treatments in the WUI.	RL	FAC	WR
Action, Implementation, and Mitigation Grant	Coalitions and Collaboratives/ USFS	Goal is to enhance community resilience and restore fire-adapted ecosystems. Grants range from $10,000 to $75,000 for 1-year projects and require a 100% match (cash or in-kind).	RL	FAC	WR
Funding for Fire Departments and First Responders	Department of Homeland Security, USFA	Includes grants and financial assistance for fire departments and first responders, such as the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and National Fire Academy Training Assistance.			WR
Regional Catastrophic Preparedness Grants	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	Provides funding to increase collaboration and capacity in regard to catastrophic incident response and preparation.			WR
Arizona EMPG	Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs	Provides funding to sustain and enhance comprehensive, all-hazard emergency preparedness systems across Arizona. The EMPG is a reimbursement grant that covers up to 50% of eligible costs, provided they are reasonable, allowable, allocable, and necessary under the grant program.			WR
Fire Management Assistance Grant	FEMA	Provides financial aid to states, local, and tribal governments for mitigating, managing, and controlling fires on public or private forests and grasslands that pose a threat of major disaster.	RL	FAC	WR
Fire Prevention and Safety Grants	FEMA	Supports projects that enhance the safety of the public and firefighters, targeting high-risk populations and mitigating high incidences of death and injury through education campaigns and prevention programs.		FAC	WR

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response	FEMA	Helps fire departments increase the number of frontline firefighters. The goal is for fire departments to increase their staffing and deployment capabilities and ultimately attain 24-hour staffing, thus ensuring that their communities have adequate protection from fire and fire-related hazards.			WR
Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants	FEMA	Provides funding to states, local governments, territories, and tribal nations for long-term projects and planning that reduces future disaster risk, including mitigation measures that can improve wildfire resilience and reduce community vulnerability before disasters occur.	RL	FAC	
Rural Fire Capacity	AZ DFFM	Offers up to $10,000 a year for wildland fire management and prevention activities, such as training, equipping, and organizing rural fire departments. The fire department must serve a community with a population of less than 10,000, and at least 80% of the department's firefighting personnel must be volunteers.			WR
Hazard Fuels Mitigation Grants	AZ DFFM	Support projects that reduce hazardous forest fuels and protect communities at risk of wildland fire.	RL		
Healthy Forest Initiative	AZ DFFM	Offers $60,000 to $500,000 in grant opportunities to advance on-the-ground projects to reduce hazardous vegetation for fire prevention, infrastructure protection, and forest and watershed restoration.	RL		
TREE Resource and Enhancement	AZ DFFM	Assists currently recognized Tree City U.S. communities and Tree Campus U.S. campuses with the management, improvement, or conservation of community trees, with awards of up to $1,500 to $5,000. Projects eligible for funding include tree planting, tree inventory, removal or pruning of hazardous trees, review/development of tree ordinances, and training of volunteers and city/county employees to best care for our community forests.	RL	FAC	
Invasive Plant Grant	AZ DFFM	Provides grants to support the prevention, control, and eradication of nonnative invasive/noxious plants that have encroached into Arizona's lands and waters, with awards often ranging from $10,000 to $200,000.	RL		
Community Challenge Grant	AZ DFFM	Encourages and promotes citizen involvement in supporting long-term, sustainable urban and community forestry programs at the local level, providing grants of $15,000 to $50,000.	RL	FAC	

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Livestock Operator Fire and Flood Assistance Grant Program	Arizona Department of Agriculture	A grant of up to $250,000 is available for funding private, non-governmental infrastructure projects that take place on private lands or lands leased from the state or federal government by private individuals.	RL	FAC	
Off-Highway Vehicle Fund Emergency and Mitigation Grant	Arizona State Parks and Trails	Support emergency trail repair, trail or support facilities damaged by weather or fire, trail repair on segments that pose hazardous riding conditions, trash removal, dust mitigation, vandalism to trail or support facilities, and toilet facility repair with up to a $10,000 to $100,000 reimbursement grant.		FAC	WR
State Fire Assistance/Wildland Urban Interface Grant	AZ DFFM	Focuses on hazard fuels reduction, information and education, and community and homeowner action, providing up to $250,000 for a project.		FAC	
Post-Wildfire Infrastructure Assistance Program	AZ DFFM	Assist in infrastructure repairs to physical systems, operational structures, and facilities needed for the use of urban, rural, agricultural, cultural, and natural resources. Awards will be limited to a minimum of $5,000 and a maximum of $500,000 per award.			WR
Mitigation Grant Programs	Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs	Supports the timely completion of projects that make Arizona's communities more resilient to disasters by reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing preparedness.	RL	FAC	
Emergency Response Fund	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality	An annual fund of $132,800 was established to provide safety equipment to first responders who encounter potential hazardous materials incidents. The fund is designed to help first responders, particularly those in rural and underserved areas, secure scenes and prevent hazardous materials incidents from escalating.			WR
2024 American Rescue Plan Act Grant	AZ DFFM	Provides approximately $5 million in funding to support Arizona's rural Fire Districts. The grant aims to improve fire protection and prevention capabilities by enabling the purchase of capital equipment. Fire districts may apply for up to $400,000 in grant funding with no match required.			WR
Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)	Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	Stimulates the development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies on private lands, leveraging federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection. The CIG requires a 50/50 match between the agency and the applicant.	RL	FAC	

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Emergency Watershed Protection Program	USDA NRCS	Provides technical and financial assistance to help communities address immediate threats to life and property caused by natural disasters, such as floods, wildfires, and windstorms.	RL	FAC	
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	NRCS	Helps producers install measures to protect natural resources while ensuring sustainable production on their farms, ranches, and working forest lands.	RL	FAC	
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act	Multiple	Allocated funding through various departments for infrastructure projects, including, but not limited to, roads, bridges, and major projects; passenger and freight rail; highway and pedestrian safety; public transit; broadband; ports and waterways; airports; water infrastructure; power and grid reliability and resiliency; resiliency, including funding for coastal resiliency, ecosystem restoration, and weatherization; clean school buses and ferries; electric vehicle charging; addressing legacy pollution by cleaning up Brownfield and Superfund sites and reclaiming abandoned mines; and Western Water Infrastructure.	RL	FAC	WR
Tribal Lands Landscape Scale Restoration Grants	First Nations Development Institute	Supports a series of grants focused on controlling and protecting food systems, water, languages, traditional ecological knowledge, and land. They support landscape restoration grants funded through the USFS to support priority forest landscapes at a high wildfire risk.	RL	FAC	
Advancing Tribal Nature-Based Solutions	First Nations Development Institute	Focuses on hazard fuels reduction, information and education, and community and homeowner action. Federally and state-recognized Tribal Governments, Native-controlled 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, Native 7871 Organizations, and fiscally sponsored Native community organizations are eligible.	RL	FAC	
Assistance to Firefighters Grants	FEMA	Assist fire departments in attaining critical resources, such as training and equipment.			WR
America's Ecosystem Restoration Initiative	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Streamline funding for conservation and restoration work to build watershed and forest resilience. The program emphasizes restoration of rivers, coasts, wetlands, grasslands, and forests to protect from drought, flooding, and wildfire.	RL	FAC	

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Specific U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Grant Programs	EPA	Various grant programs are listed on this site. Examples of grants include Multipurpose Grants to States and Tribes, Environmental Education Grants, and Environmental Justice Grants.	RL		
Urban and Community Forestry Program, National Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Cost Share Grant Program	USFS	USFS funding will provide for Urban and Community Forestry Programs that work with local communities to establish climate-resilient tree species to promote long-term forest health. The other initiative behind this program is to promote and carry out disaster risk mitigation activities, with priority given to environmental justice communities.	RL	FAC	
Firewise Communities	Multiple	Many different Firewise Communities activities are available to help homes and whole neighborhoods become safer from wildfire without significant expense. Community cleanup days, awareness events, and other cooperative activities can often be accomplished through partnerships among neighbors, local businesses, and local fire departments at little or no cost.		FAC	
The National Fire Plan	U.S. Department of Interior and USDA	Many states are using funds from the National Fire Plan to provide funds through a cost-share with residents to help them reduce the wildfire risk to their private property. These actions are usually in the form of thinning or pruning trees, shrubs, and other vegetation and/or clearing the slash and debris from this kind of work.	RL	FAC	
Federal Excess Personal Property	USFS	The Federal Excess Personal Property program refers to USFS-owned property that is on loan to State Foresters for the purpose of wildland and rural firefighting. Most of the property originally belonged to the DOD. Once acquired by the USFS, it is loaned to State Cooperators for firefighting purposes. The property is then loaned to the State Forester, who may then place it with local departments to improve local fire programs.			WR
Emergency Conservation Program	USDA Farm Service Agency	Assists farmers and ranchers in repairing damage to farmlands caused by natural disasters and installing methods for water conservation during severe drought.	RL		WR

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Emergency Forest Restoration Program	USDA Farm Service Agency	Provides financial assistance to non-industrial private forest owners to help restore forest health after natural disasters, supporting activities such as debris removal, tree planting, and erosion control.	RL		
Wildland Urban Interface Grant Program	Council of Western State Foresters/USFS	Provides funding for wildfire hazard mitigation in areas where wildlands meet human development. Only State Foresters are eligible to apply for these grants. In Arizona, the AZ DFFM is the sole eligible applicant. While communities and property owners may partner with DFFM on project proposals, all applications must be submitted directly by the State Forester to the Council of Western State Foresters/Western Forestry Leadership Coalition. This ensures a streamlined process and helps avoid confusion regarding applicant eligibility.	RL	FAC	
Community Wildfire Preparedness Day Grant	NFPA and State Farm	A wildfire risk reduction project, specifically on Wildfire Community Preparedness Day (the first Saturday in May), on which the NFPA provides between $500 to $10,000 to homeowners, Nonprofits, Fire Departments, and Community leaders.	RL	FAC	
Globe Gear Giveaway	Mine Safety Appliances (MSA) Safety, DuPont Personal Protection, and the National Volunteer Fire Council	The Globe Gear Giveaway supports state-of-the-art turnout gear and helmets. n 2025, MSA Safety will donate a total of 52 sets of Globe® turnout gear and MSA Cairns® helmets (four per department) to 13 all-volunteer or mostly-volunteer fire departments in the U.S. and Canada.			WR
Matching Awards Program	National Forest Foundation	Provide funds for direct on-the-ground projects benefitting America's National Forests and Grasslands. By pairing federal funds provided through a cooperative agreement with the USFS with non-federal dollars raised by award recipients, the Matching Awards Program measurably multiplies the resources available to implement stewardship projects that benefit the National Forest System.	RL		
Public Safety Foundation	Firehouse Subs	Provides lifesaving equipment, prevention education tools, scholarships and continued education, and disaster relief to fire departments, law enforcement, EMS, public safety organizations, nonprofits, and schools. Award ranges from $15,000 to $50,000.			WR

Funding Source	Agency/ Organization	Summary	Applicable Cohesive Strategy Category		
			Resilient Landscapes (RL)	Fire-Adapted Communities (FAC)	Wildfire Response (WR)
Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Grant Program	Western Forestry Leadership Coalition	The Landscape Scale Restoration Competitive Grant program proposal is only available to the State Forester and must be designed to achieve one or more of the following objectives: reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfires; improve fish and wildlife habitats, including habitats for threatened and endangered species; maintain or improve water quality and watershed functions; mitigate invasive species, insect infestation, and disease; improve important forest ecosystems; measure ecological and economic benefits, including air quality, soil quality, and productivity; and take other actions as determined by the USFS. Application eligibility is only open to state forests (e.g., AZ DFFM).	RL		
Fire Grand Challenge	Conservation X Labs	Provides up to $130,000 in support for applicants proposing innovations to restore appropriate fire regimes in Western landscapes. Funded projects should scale locally appropriate, economically feasible stewardship practices that protect biodiversity, cultural resources, and ecosystem health throughout the fire cycle. Solutions should proactively manage fire risk, promote transparency, and integrate diverse knowledge and data to ensure timely, actionable information is accessible to practitioners..	RL	FAC	

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CHAPTER 5 – MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Effective wildfire risk reduction requires planning, implementation, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation (AZ DFFM 2024a). In Pima County, CWPP implementation will involve regular assessment of project progress and outcomes to inform future priorities and ensure the plan remains responsive to changing community needs.

The CWPP uses the ArcGIS Hub platform for digital mapping, which includes a project tracking application and a public-facing dashboard. This system makes it easier for Pima County to monitor the progress of CWPP goals, improve transparency, and streamline data management. Local agencies and state agencies can also provide technical assistance or guidance in maintaining and optimizing these digital tools. Designating a representative from the county or Core Team to serve as map coordinator to manage updates, ensure data accuracy, and oversee accessibility for practitioners, policymakers, and the public is an important step for effective CWPP implementation and tracking. For additional information, reference the Hub Site and Project Tracking Application section below.

The Pima County CWPP Core Team is a collaborative, community-based group that can support or guide the implementation of the mitigation actions recommended in the CWPP. These efforts will be supported by recent work to expand the science around wildfire in the Sonoran Desert and empower communities in their work to implement mitigation solutions (SWFSC 2025a). Another effort taken toward this goal in Pima County was the formation of a Wildfire Executive Working Group, which consists of county officials, to develop a WMP for the county and guide its implementation (Pima County 2025a). Participation in and the efforts conducted by this group may be extended into the monitoring and evaluation of actions recommended in the CWPP. A critical part of the monitoring and evaluation process is engaging the local community in these efforts to ensure that community needs, resources, and knowledge are kept at the center of increasing community resilience through the implementation and adaptation of CWPP efforts (Northern Arizona University 2025).

In Pima County, an annual review process involving community members and key stakeholders could be structured as a Wildfire Summit that provides updates on CWPP implementation, highlights lessons learned from the previous year, and supports community input on priorities for the coming year. This forum could also serve as a venue to align CWPP implementation with development of the County's WMP, allowing the WMP to function as the annual action plan that documents completed mitigation efforts and outlines priority actions for the upcoming year. The review could include quantitative metrics, such as acres treated for invasive species or number of Firewise-designated communities, as well as qualitative assessments of community resilience and preparedness. Regular feedback from local partners and residents will allow the CWPP team to refine approaches, making the CWPP a living document that evolves with the community's needs and resources.

Table 5.1 outlines monitoring strategies to assess the progress of various CWPP goals, including measures for wildfire risk reduction, community outreach, economic impacts, and ecosystem resilience. These strategies incorporate both locally relevant quantitative metrics, such as acres treated by fuel type or the number of outreach events conducted, and qualitative observations that track progress in community education, agency collaboration, and emergency preparedness.

Table 5.1. Recommended Monitoring Strategies

Strategy	Task/Tool	Lead	Remarks
Photographic record (documents pre- and post-fuels reduction work, evacuation routes, workshops, classes, field trips, changes in open space, treatment type, etc.)	Record GPS coordinates and establish repeatable photo monitoring points (photograph in four cardinal directions). Store photographs in a protected archival location and on the CWPP hub site.	Core Team member	Relatively low cost; repeatable over time; used for programs and tracking objectives
Number of acres treated (by fuel type, treatment method)	GPS/geographic information system (GIS)/fire behavior prediction system, CWPP hub site, and project tracking application	Core Team member	Evaluating costs, potential fire behavior
Record areas most impacted by invasive species and drought and delineate the WUI	GPS/GIS/modeling systems, CWPP hub site, and project tracking application	Core Team member	Developing data followed by evaluation over time
Number of HIZs/defensible space treated to reduce structural ignitability	GPS, CWPP hub site, and project tracking application	Homeowner	Structure protection
Number of residents/citizens participating in any community prevention programs	Meetings, media interviews, articles	Core Team member	Evaluate shifts in community attitudes and engagement in events/programs Annual lessons learned review encouraged among stakeholders
Education outreach: Number and kinds of involvement	Workshops, classes, field trips, signage, CWPP hub site	Core Team member	Evaluate objectives Annual lessons learned review encouraged among stakeholders
Number of Firewise-designated communities	County records	Core Team member	Evaluate objectives Annual lessons learned review encouraged among stakeholders
Coordinated planning and funding opportunities across the county	Regional collaboration, grants to remove invasive species, and conduct community outreach	Core Team member	Evaluate objectives and gaps in regional planning efforts
Emergency management: increased MyAlert registration	media, and community outreach	Core Team member	Evaluating costs and objectives
Codes and policy changes driven by CWPP	Qualitative	Core Team	Codes and policy changes
Incorporation of the CWPP into other planning documents	Qualitative	Core Team	Integration into other planning documents

Strategy	Task/Tool	Lead	Remarks
Number of stakeholders	Added or dropped	Core Team	CWPP changes
Wildfire acres burned, human injuries/fatalities, infrastructure loss, environmental damage, suppression, and rehabilitation costs	Wildfire records	Core Team	Compare with 5- or 10-year averages

FUELS TREATMENT MONITORING

It is important to evaluate whether fuels treatments have accomplished their defined objectives and which ongoing adaptive maintenance strategies are required.

The strategies outlined in this section consider the following variables:

- Do the priorities identified for treatment reflect the goals stated in the plan? Monitoring protocols can help address this question.
- Can there be ecological consequences associated with fuels work? Items to consider include soil movement and/or invasive species encroachment post-treatment. Relatively cost-effective monitoring may help reduce long-term costs and consequences.
- Vegetation will grow back; thus, fuel break maintenance and fuels modification both in the HIZ and at the landscape scale require periodic assessment. Monitoring these changes can help decision makers identify appropriate treatment intervals.
- Monitoring for all types of fuels treatment is recommended. For example, in addition to monitoring mechanical treatments, it is important to carry out comprehensive monitoring of burned areas to establish the success of pre-fire fuels reduction treatments on fire behavior, as well as monitoring for ecological impacts, repercussions of burning on wildlife, and effects on soil chemistry and physics. Adaptive management is a term that refers to adjusting future management based on the effects of past management. Monitoring is required to gather the information necessary to inform future management decisions. Economic and legal questions may also be addressed through monitoring. In addition, monitoring activities can provide valuable educational opportunities for students.

The most important part of choosing a fuels project monitoring program is selecting a method appropriate to the people, place, and type of project. Monitoring for each fuels reduction project would be site-specific, with timelines and methods determined based on project goals, past best practices, landscape conditions, and responsible parties. Monitoring schedules may be adjusted to address site-specific needs. Several levels of monitoring activities meet different objectives, vary in time intensity, and are appropriate for different groups of participants, including the following:

Minimum – Level 1: Pre- and Post-Project Photographs

Appropriate for many individual homeowners who conduct fuels reduction projects on their properties.

Moderate – Level 2: Multiple Permanent Photo Points

Permanent photo points are established by marking a fixed location (e.g., with rebar or a wooden post) and recording its GPS coordinates. From this point, photographs are taken in consistent directions at regular intervals for long-term comparison. Ideally, this process would continue over

several years. This approach might be appropriate for more enthusiastic homeowners or agencies conducting small-scale, general treatments.

High – Level 3: Basic Vegetation Plots

A series of plots can allow monitors to evaluate vegetation characteristics, such as species composition, percentage of cover, and frequency. Monitors can then record site characteristics, such as slope, aspect, and elevation. Parameters would be assessed pre- and post-treatment. The monitoring agency should establish plot protocols based on the types of vegetation present and the level of detail needed to analyze the management objectives. This method is appropriate for land managers or other personnel monitoring fuel treatments on desert landscapes and forested land.

Intense – Level 4: Basic Vegetation Plus Dead and Downed Fuels Inventory

The protocol for this level would include the vegetation plots described above, but would add more details regarding fuel loading. For the limited forest ecosystems in Pima County, crown height or canopy closure might be included for live fuels. Dead and downed fuels could be assessed using other methods, such as Brown's transects (Brown 1974), an appropriate photograph series (Smith 2000), or fire monitoring (Fire Effects Monitoring and Inventory System) plots. This method is ideal for foresters or university researchers tracking vegetation changes in forested lands. These methods are geared toward forest ecosystems over desert ecosystems, but a similar assessment process may be applied to desert landscapes. In the context of the Sonoran Desert, this may constitute assessing shifts in the composition of native and invasive species in an area given shifts in precipitation and wildfire events.

HUB SITE AND PROJECT TRACKING APPLICATION

The Pima County CWPP hub site serves as an interactive web-based tool and central platform for the Core Team and stakeholders to access and share project updates, timelines, and homeowner resources. The Pima County Project Tracking Application, housed on the CWPP hub site, is designed to be used by local land managers to collaboratively track and manage project progress in a streamlined and efficient manner. It supports both planned and implemented projects while providing real-time updates to the public and facilitating multiagency coordination.

The tracking system is designed for internal use by the Core Team and partner agencies, with a public-facing dashboard that enhances transparency. The system offers the following features:

- Project database
- Project entries and sub-entries into the database
- Funding tracking
- Milestone and goal tracking
- Project constraint/opportunity tracking
- Project progress tracking
- Agency delegation
- Ability to attach images or other files to project records
- Spatially delineated project locations/working areas

Externally, the project tracking application will display relevant information to the public in an easy-to-navigate dashboard. The dashboard may contain project information, such as acres treated, dollars spent, homes assessed, and public outreach events conducted. The monitoring strategies outlined in Table 5.1 can be applied to completed and proposed mitigation projects in conjunction with the project tracking application.

Maintenance and updating of the project tracking application is intended to align with the County's WMP implementation process. Under this approach, information from participating agencies and project partners may be compiled and entered as part of the annual WMP update, allowing progress from multiple teams to be consolidated through a coordinated process rather than managed independently by individual contributors. Final roles and responsibilities for maintaining the tracker will be confirmed as part of CWPP implementation and annual coordination efforts.

IMPLEMENTATION

The 2026 Pima County CWPP makes recommendations for prioritized fuels reduction projects, measures to reduce structural ignitability, and methods with which to carry out public education and outreach. Implementation projects need to be tailored to the specific project and will be unique to the location, depending on available resources and regulations. As aforementioned, on-the-ground implementation of the recommendations in the 2026 Pima County CWPP planning area will require development of an action plan and assessment strategy for completing each project. This step will identify the roles and responsibilities of the people and agencies involved, as well as funding needs and timetables for completing the highest priority projects (SAF 2004). Information pertaining to funding is provided in Chapter 4 (see Funding Sources section).

CWPP EVALUATION

CWPPs are intended to reduce wildfire risk to a community and the surrounding environment; however, over time, communities change and expand, vegetation grows back, and the desert landscape and wildlands evolve. As such, the risk from wildfire to communities is constantly changing. The plans and methods to reduce risk must be dynamic to keep pace with the changing environment. An evaluation of the CWPP (Figure 5.1) involves gathering information about implementation progress and outcomes, and then assessing whether the plan's strategies are effectively reducing wildfire risk. This process helps determine if current approaches are on track to meet desired outcomes or if adjustments are needed.

TIMELINE FOR UPDATING THE CWPP

The HFRA allows for maximum flexibility in the CWPP planning process, permitting the Core Team to determine the time frame for updating the CWPP; however, Arizona minimum requirements require that the Core Team review the CWPP annually to determine if changes are needed. The Core Team should complete a formal revision on the fifth anniversary of signing and every five years thereafter. Furthermore, due to the dynamic nature of wildfire mitigation and the natural landscape, there are several factors that may warrant a plan update before the 5-year mark. Core Team members are encouraged to reconvene every year to review the project list, discuss project successes, strategize regarding project implementation funding, and determine whether there is a need for plan revision. The CWPP project tracking application is designed to be used as a tool for this review process.

In support of CWPP implementation, the County's WMP is intended to function as an annual reporting and planning mechanism. The WMP may be used to summarize mitigation actions completed during the previous year, document progress toward CWPP goals, and identify priority actions and funding needs for the upcoming year. Information developed through the WMP update process can then be used to inform the CWPP annual review, project tracking updates, and determination of whether formal CWPP revisions are needed.

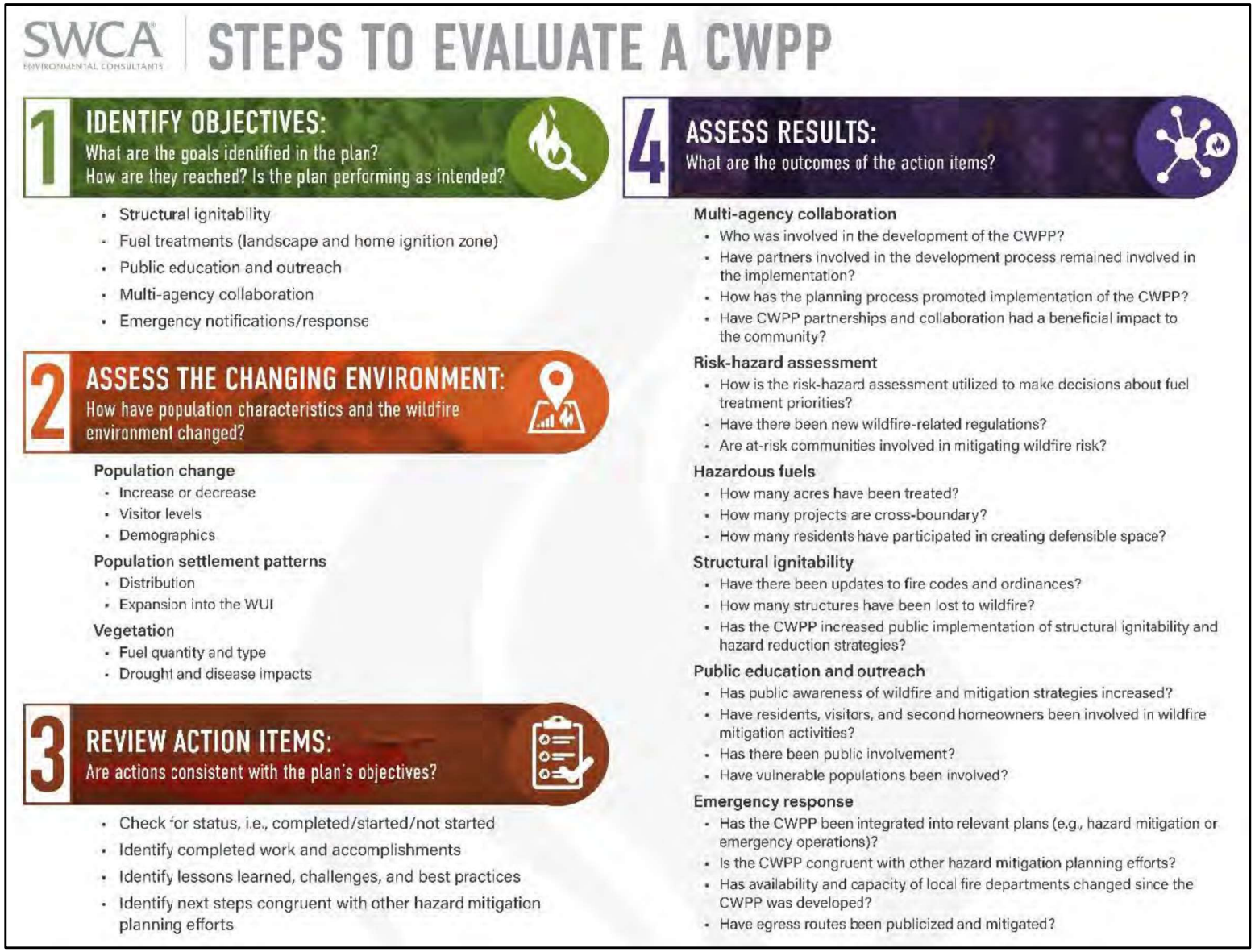


Figure 5.1. Steps to evaluate a CWPP, including identifying objectives, assessing changing conditions, reviewing action items, and evaluating outcomes.

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CHAPTER 6 – HOMEOWNER ACTIONS

Community wildfire resilience begins at home, where homeowners and occupants can take proactive steps in safeguarding their properties and protecting the lives of residents, emergency responders, and other valued resources. The risk of wildfire damage can be reduced through practical measures, such as home hardening—which aims to reduce a home's ignitability—and creating defensible space throughout the property and within the HIZ, preventing the likelihood of flames and embers reaching and igniting structures.

Home hardening and creating defensible space is perhaps the fastest, most cost-effective, and most reliable means of reducing the risk of loss of life and property. Although fire agencies can be valuable in providing guidance and assistance, retrofits to homes and creating defensible space is the responsibility of the individual homeowner.

Various financial assistance options are available to Pima County and Arizona homeowners, including cost-sharing programs, grants, and technical assistance. These programs are designed to alleviate the financial burden of implementing wildfire mitigation practices, making it more feasible for property owners to take proactive measures.

The following sections include comprehensive guidance on creating defensible space; using local, state, and national resources; and preparing a household for potential evacuation. Financial constraints and the complexity of mitigation can often pose significant obstacles for homeowners; therefore, several resources and recommendations are included, with varying levels of effort, to support these actions. By taking these actions, one can not only protect their own property but also contribute to the broader effort of ensuring community safety and resilience in the face of wildfire threats.

HOME HARDENING

Much of the Southwest is considered a high-hazard fire environment due to the combination of heavy fuel accumulation, dry weather patterns, and human development in fire-prone ecosystems. Homes within these landscapes can become fuel during a wildfire if proper preparation is not taken (Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group [AICG] 2021).

Homes are often lost during wildfires due to wind-driven embers. Embers generated from burning vegetation or structures can travel more than 1 mile ahead of the main fire front and ignite vulnerable parts of a home or nearby fuels. Because of this, actions that reduce ember entry and remove combustible materials near the structure are essential for increasing wildfire resilience (AICG 2021).

Table 6.1 provides examples of different home-hardening investments.

Table 6.1. Homeowner Actions for Reducing Structural Ignitability at Varying Investment Levels

Limited Investment
Check fire extinguishers and have a 100-foot hose ready.
Maintain defensible space; work with neighbors on fuel mitigation.
Ensure house numbers are clearly visible from the street.
Keep wood fences free of combustibles; use noncombustible connectors.
Store propane, grills, and firewood away from structures.
Keep a 5-foot perimeter around the home clear of combustibles.
Remove debris from under decks; enclose when possible.
Stack firewood at least 30 feet from the house.
Prioritize mitigation, starting on the windward side of the property.
Keep gutters clear of debris to prevent ember collection.
Maintain and repair roofs to close gaps and replace damaged shingles.
Use a NOAA weather alert radio for fire weather updates.
Moderate Investment
Choose noncombustible landscaping materials and keep flammable plants trimmed and spaced.
Limb trees 6 feet from the ground and maintain 18-foot crown spacing in the HIZ.
Clear vegetation around sheds, garages, and outbuildings to prevent ignition.
Maintain clear, accessible driveways for evacuation and emergency response.
Add a gravel turnaround for fire response vehicles.
Install a roof irrigation system.
High Investment
Install fire-resistant xeriscaping.
Screen vents with ⅛–1/16 inch noncombustible mesh.
Enclose open spaces under manufactured homes with noncombustible skirting.
Build a noncombustible barrier between the home and wildland fuels.
Install fire-resistant soffits and under-eave vents.
Upgrade exterior windows and skylights to tempered or multi-layered glass.
Replace the roof with Class A fire-resistant materials.
Upgrade exterior walls with fire-resistant materials.
Relocate propane tanks underground.

Note that the level of investment and average costs will vary by action item based on a multitude of factors, including location, structure complexity, quality of materials, applicable building codes and regulations, and the scope of work. In unincorporated areas of Pima County, residential construction and retrofit requirements are governed by Pima County Code Title 15 (Buildings and Construction). Homes within incorporated jurisdictions may be subject to additional or different municipal building codes, and property owners are encouraged to confirm applicable requirements with their local jurisdiction.

Upgrading Components to Reduce Structural Ignitability

Roof

The roof is one of the most vulnerable components of a home during wildfire because it presents a large surface area that can ignite from wind-blown embers. Roofing materials, such as untreated wood shake and shingles, are particularly susceptible to ignition. Replacing these materials with fire-resistant roofing types, including fiberglass-reinforced asphalt shingles, metal, slate, or tile, significantly improves a home's resistance to wildfire (AICG 2021). Figure 6.1 shows an example of a combustible wood shake roof compared with a fire-resistant roof material designed to reduce the likelihood of ignition from wind-blown embers. Homeowners should also routinely remove plant debris, such as pine needles, leaves, branches, and bark from the roof.

Openings in roof coverings can allow embers to enter and ignite the structure. These openings should be plugged with noncombustible materials. Installing an approved spark arrester on chimneys can help prevent sparks and embers from escaping and igniting nearby fuels (AICG 2021).



Figure 6.1. Examples of an untreated wood shake roof (Class B) that can accumulate flammable debris (left) and a less-ignitable metal roof filled with noncombustible insulation (Class A) (right).
Source: IBHS (2024).

Rain Gutters

Rain gutters can accumulate plant debris, such as leaves and pine needles, which can ignite if embers land in them. Homeowners should keep gutters free of debris during fire season and may consider installing gutter covers to reduce debris buildup and maintenance requirements (AICG 2021). Figure 6.2 shows an example plant debris accumulating in rain gutters, creating an ignition hazard when exposed to wind-blown embers.

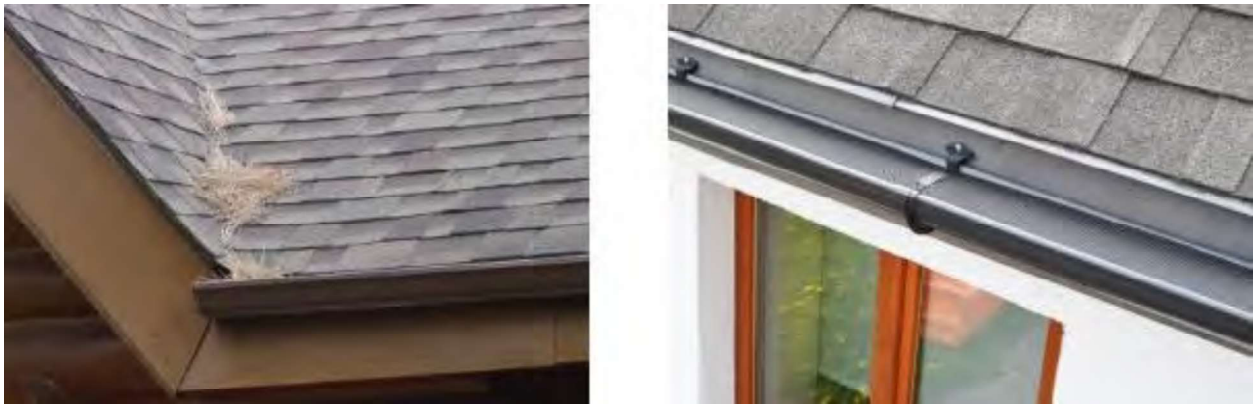


Figure 6.2. Examples of an uncovered gutter at risk of ignition (left) due to flammable tree debris and a less-ignitable gutter (right) with a noncombustible gutter guard.
Source: IBHS (2024).

Attic, Eave, and Foundation Vents

Attic, eave, and foundation vents can allow embers to enter the home. To reduce this risk, vents should be covered with 1/8-inch wire mesh or replaced with vent types designed to prevent ember entry (AICG 2021). During a wildfire threat, temporary coverings, such as pre-cut plywood or layered aluminum foil may provide additional protection. Figure 6.3 shows a comparison of vent screening types, highlighting the use of 1/8-inch wire mesh to reduce the likelihood of ember entry into the structure.



Figure 6.3. Examples of a bad vent (left) with ¼-inch mesh that is ineffective at preventing ember incursion and a good vent (right) that has ⅛-inch mesh to help prevent embers from entering the home.
Source: Wildfire Partners (2024).

Walls, Siding, and Coatings

Gaps or deteriorated siding materials can allow embers to lodge and ignite structural components. Filling gaps in siding and trim with caulk and replacing materials that are in poor condition can reduce ignition potential (AICG 2021).

Windows

Windows can break from heat exposure, allowing embers and hot gases to enter the home. Replacing single-pane windows with multi-pane tempered glass windows improves resistance to wildfire exposure. Plastic skylights should be replaced with double-pane glass skylights that include at least one pane of tempered glass (AICG 2021).

Fences and Decks

Decks and adjacent outdoor areas can accumulate combustible materials, such as leaves, pine needles, and other debris. Homeowners should regularly remove debris from deck surfaces, from gaps between deck boards, and from the area beneath decks. Combustible materials should not be stored under decks, and metal flashing can be installed between the deck and the home to reduce ignition risk (AICG 2021).

Wooden fences that connect directly to homes can act as a pathway for fire to reach the structure. Maintaining fences in good condition and incorporating a noncombustible section or gate for at least 5 feet near the house can reduce the potential for fire to spread to the home (AICG 2021). Figure 6.4 shows how a wooden fence connected directly to a structure can act as a pathway for fire to spread to the home.



Figure 6.4. Example of combustible back-to-back fencing ignited by the fuels between and around them.
Source: IBHS (2024).

DEFENSIBLE SPACE

> The Casualty Actuarial Society compared the impact of individual and community-level mitigation on individual homeowner risks. They found that "the model indicates that all mitigation measures reduce the individual risk, but individual home mitigation—which individual homeowners' control—can have a bigger impact than any community mitigation alone."
> (Casual Actuarial Society 2022)

Effective defensible space consists of creating an essentially fuel-free zone adjacent to the home, a treated secondary zone that is thinned and cleaned of surface fuels, and (if the parcel is large enough) a transitional third zone that connects to wildland areas (Figure 6.5). These components work together in a proven and predictable manner. Zone 1, the immediate zone (0–5 feet from main structure), keeps fire from burning directly to the home; Zone 2, the intermediate zone (5–30 feet from main structure), reduces the adjacent fire intensity and the likelihood of torching, crown fire, and ember production; and Zone 3, the extended zone (30–100 feet from main structure), does the same at a broader scale, reducing fire momentum by maintaining a more natural, historic condition (see Figure 6.5). Defensible space actions are described as general recommendations for homeowners; however, residents are encouraged to seek site-specific recommendations from local wildfire experts. Experts can assess homes on an individual basis to maximize the quantity of native vegetation maintained and preserved in an area while still creating an area of defensible space for fire mitigation. The AZ DFFM provides free home risk assessments (see State Resources section below for more information).

In Pima County, vegetation management decisions may need to balance wildfire risk reduction with other environmental considerations. Vegetation, particularly riparian vegetation, plays an important role in flood mitigation by reducing flow velocities and anchoring soil, thus preventing erosion related flood damage. In some locations, maintaining riparian vegetation for its flood protection benefits may be necessary even as wildfire risk reduction is pursued. Some riparian vegetation and native plants in Pima County are protected; therefore, prior to disturbance of vegetation along washes and in flood-prone areas, property owners should consult with the Pima County Regional Flood Control District to ensure compliance with riparian habitat protection rules. This coordination can help identify defensible space treatments that reduce wildfire risk while maintaining important flood protection functions.

For a more in-depth description of each HIZ (immediate, intermediate, and extended), including the purpose and treatment recommendations for each HIZ, please refer to Table 6.2 below. These guidelines do not constitute authorization to conduct vegetation treatment beyond property boundaries. Vegetation treatment on adjacent parcels should only occur with the express permission of the property owner.

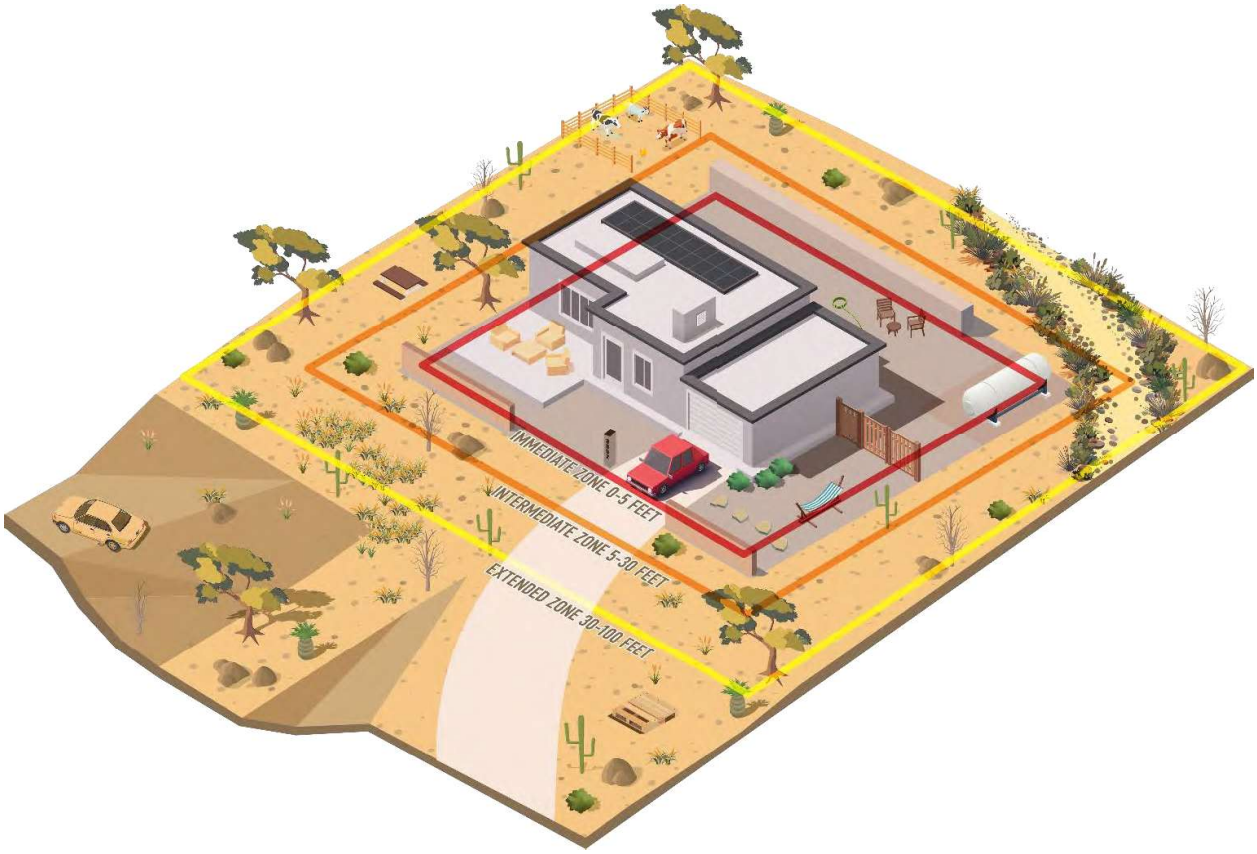


Figure 6.5. Defensible space zones provide clearance between a structure and adjacent fuels.

Table 6.2. Description and Treatment Recommendations for each HIZ

Zone	Distance from Structure	Primary Objective	Purpose of Treatment	Key Recommendations
Immediate Zone (Zone 1)	0–5 feet	Prevent direct flames and embers from reaching the home	Minimize the chance of flames or embers igniting the home by reducing all nearby flammable materials	• Use fire-resistant materials, such as gravel, stone, or concrete in this zone. • Remove all flammable vegetation, mulch, and debris from around the home's perimeter. • Regularly clean pine needles, leaves, and debris from roofs, gutters, and decks. • Store firewood, propane tanks, and other combustibles well outside this area. • Prune tree branches that overhang the roof or are within 10 feet of the chimney.

Zone	Distance from Structure	Primary Objective	Purpose of Treatment	Key Recommendations
Intermediate Zone (Zone 2)	5–30 feet	Reduce fire intensity as it approaches the home	Create breaks in vegetation to slow down the fire's spread and reduce its strength before it reaches the house	• Mow grass to keep it under 4 inches tall. • Thin trees to ensure at least 10 feet of space between their outer branches. • Remove smaller plants beneath trees to prevent fire from spreading upward into the canopy. • Prune lower branches to 6 to 10 feet from the ground, or one-third of the tree's height. • Remove dead or dying trees and highly flammable shrubs, such as juniper, to prevent them from fueling the fire.
Extended Zone (Zone 3)	30–100 feet	Maintain lower fire intensity and improve forest health	Thin trees and manage forested areas to keep fires from intensifying and promote a healthier, more resilient landscape	• Keep at least 6 to 10 feet of space between tree crowns to slow the fire's spread. • Prune lower branches and remove ladder fuels to prevent fire from climbing into the treetops. • Use slash treatment methods, such as piling and burning, mulching, or removing, to manage dead vegetation. • Thin trees and vegetation to create natural openings, helping to slow the fire's movement. • Collaborate with neighbors to create defensible space beyond the property line if needed.

LOCAL RESOURCES

Pima County Defensible Space and Wildfire Mitigation Resources

The Pima County Department of Development Services and Pima County Office of Emergency Management provide guidance and resources to help residents reduce wildfire risks on their properties (PCOEM 2025). Homeowners can access county-specific defensible space recommendations, including vegetation thinning, pruning, and fuel reduction strategies, particularly in high-risk areas, such as Mt. Lemmon. These guidelines emphasize creating defensible zones around structures and maintaining fire-resistant landscaping to slow or stop the spread of wildfire (PCOEM 2025). In addition, the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension offers tailored publications, such as *Creating Wildfire-Defensible Spaces for Your Home and Property*, which provide step-by-step instructions and zone-specific treatments for Arizona landscapes (University of Arizona Cooperative Extension 2024).

The Pima County Wildfire Resources page contains practical information landowners can take to harden their homes, improve defensible space, and contribute to broader community fire safety.

In addition to guidance and education, Pima County implements defensible space and vegetation management activities through its Pima County WMP. These efforts may include defensible space chipping events, roll-off container requests, and brush and bulky voucher programs designed to support homeowner mitigation actions. Implementation of these activities is coordinated through existing County mechanisms, including the Regional Flood Control District Master Agreement, with funding identified through Board of Supervisors–approved budgets.

Pima County Conservation Lands Resources

Pima County Conservation Lands and Resources, including conservation lands managed by the County, provide opportunities for cross-hazard planning that considers wildfire risk, flood protection, and ecological values. Conservation-focused guidance and land management practices may be particularly relevant for properties adjacent to protected open space, riparian corridors, or conservation lands. Homeowners and land managers are encouraged to coordinate with County conservation programs when mitigation actions intersect with protected or sensitive lands.

Pima County Burn Permit Program

The Pima County Department of Environmental Quality (PDEQ) administers burn permits for residents seeking to conduct open burning on their property (PDEQ 2025). This program ensures that outdoor burning is performed safely and in compliance with air quality regulations. By regulating debris burning and encouraging safe disposal alternatives, the burn permit program helps reduce accidental ignitions and ensures that fire use is properly managed. Homeowners can apply online for open burning permits, which cover activities such as vegetation debris burning, and must also file post-burn reports. Educational materials are available in both English and Spanish to increase accessibility (PDEQ 2025).

University of Arizona Community Collaborative and Tucson Bird Alliance

The University of Arizona Community Collaborative and the Tucson Bird Alliance provide education, technical resources, and community-based expertise related to native vegetation, habitat conservation, and ecological stewardship in Pima County. These organizations may be valuable resources for homeowners and communities seeking to implement wildfire mitigation actions while maintaining native plant communities, riparian habitat, and wildlife values.

Golder Ranch Fire and Life Safety Division

Golder Ranch Fire District has a dedicated Fire Prevention Division that provides fire code development, education, fire code compliance, inspections, investigations, wildfire mitigation, and prevention services. The division is staffed by a fire marshal, deputy fire marshals, inspectors, investigators, and administrative personnel. For more information visit: https://grfdaz.gov/fire-life-safety/.

Tucson Electric Power Wildfire Safety Program

Tucson Electric Power (TEP) operates a wildfire safety program that addresses the risks of utility-caused ignitions and educates customers about potential outages during high wildfire danger (TEP 2025). As part of this initiative, TEP conducts routine vegetation management, clearing trees and brush within 10 feet of power lines, and may implement Public Safety Power Shutoffs in select areas during extreme fire conditions. Customers can check whether their address is in a Public Safety Power Shutoffs area, sign up for outage alerts, and review wildfire preparedness resources on TEP's wildfire safety webpage (TEP 2025). This program helps protect communities by reducing fire hazards near utility lines and preparing residents for wildfire season power interruptions.

Southwest Gas

Southwest Gas maintains emergency preparedness and wildfire response procedures designed to protect public safety and maintain the reliability of natural gas service during wildfire events. Through its Emergency Plan Manual and related safety programs, Southwest Gas implements prevention measures, system patrols, and operational planning to reduce wildfire related risks to natural gas infrastructure. These efforts include coordination with fire agencies and emergency managers.

Southwest Gas also conducts ongoing outreach and coordination with public safety partners, including its Annual Emergency Responder Liaison Meeting, which brings together firefighters, emergency managers, and other response agencies to review gas safety practices, emergency coordination procedures, and response protocols during incidents affecting natural gas infrastructure.

Santa Rita Fire District Fire Prevention Department

The Santa Rita Fire District (SRFD) Fire Prevention Department serves Sahuarita and Green Valley, covering 55 square miles and over 55,000 residents. The SRFD focuses on fire and life safety through education, engineering, and enforcement, offering commercial inspections, fire investigations, water system reviews, hazardous materials mitigation and planning, code review, and public education (SRFD 2025).

The SRFD enforces the 2024 International Fire Code and helps residents understand its regulations. Additionally, the SRFD has its own outdoor burning code, which aligns with International Fire Code standards for all outdoor fires within the district (SRFD 2025).

Northwest Fire District Fire Prevention Services Division

The NWFD Fire Prevention Services Division serves the towns of Marana and Oro Valley and numerous unincorporated communities northwest of Tucson Metro area, covering over 155 square miles.
The division focuses on the development of fire prevention programs, including engineering and plan reviews, fire and life safety inspections, active code enforcement, fire investigations, and public education. The district's Fire Marshal operates as the division chief with assistance from 11 highly trained individuals dedicated to serving the district's mission—"saving lives, protecting property, and caring for the community" (NWFD 2025).

Tucson Fire Department Prevention Division

The TFD Prevention Division serves the City of Tucson, covering 241 square miles and a population of 556,854 residents. The Fire Prevention Division promotes public safety by enforcing the adopted fire code through extensive inspection, enforcement, reporting, and fire investigations. The division is staffed by a fire marshal, deputy fire marshals, fire inspectors, fire investigators, and administrative support staff (TFD 2026).

Pima County Regional Flood Control District

The Pima County Regional Flood Control District is developing guidance focused on balancing wildfire mitigation and flood protection objectives, particularly in riparian areas. This guidance is intended to help landowners and communities identify vegetation management approaches that reduce wildfire risk while preserving the flood protection and ecological functions of riparian habitat. Once finalized, this guidance may serve as an additional resource for defensible space planning in flood-prone areas.

Current resources are also available from the Pima County Flood Control District.

STATE RESOURCES

Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management – Firewise Program

The AZ DFFM administers the Firewise USA program in Arizona, providing technical support and guidance to homeowners and communities interested in reducing wildfire risk (AZ DFFM 2025a). Through this program, neighborhoods and homeowner associations can receive recognition as Firewise USA sites by implementing defensible space practices, fire-resistant landscaping, and community action plans. As of 2024, five communities have obtained Firewise USA recognition, including Canoa Hills Townhomes, Catalina Del Sol, Canoa Estates, Desert Hills 2, and Portillo Hills II. The AZ DFFM serves as the state liaison, offering training, outreach materials, and staff support to residents working toward Firewise certification (AZ DFFM 2025a). Participation in the Firewise USA program not only improves the safety of individual homes but also strengthens community-wide resilience to wildfire.

Arizona Living with Wildfire Guide

The AZ DFFM publishes *Living with Wildfire: Homeowner's Firewise Guide for Arizona*, a comprehensive manual designed to help residents reduce wildfire risk on private property (AZ DFFM 2021). The guide describes defensible space zones, vegetation management strategies, ignition-resistant building materials, and landscaping options suitable for Arizona's desert and forest ecosystems. It also outlines evacuation readiness steps and the importance of community coordination in wildfire preparedness (AZ DFFM 2021). This resource is widely distributed across Arizona and is considered the state's primary homeowner guide for wildfire safety.

Arizona State Fire Assistance and Wildland–Urban Interface Grant Program

The Arizona State Fire Assistance and WUI Grant Program, managed by the AZ DFFM, provides funding to local governments, fire departments, and community organizations for wildfire mitigation projects (AZ DFFM 2025b). These projects may include hazardous fuel treatments, defensible space programs, and homeowner outreach campaigns. Although the grants are not awarded directly to individual homeowners, residents often benefit when their communities or fire districts receive funding to implement projects that include private parcel treatments (AZ DFFM 2025b). By encouraging local partnerships, this grant program expands resources available for landowners and helps integrate private property actions into broader landscape-level mitigation.

Arizona Interagency Wildfire Prevention

The State of Arizona maintains the Wildfire Resources Portal, a centralized website offering wildfire education, preparedness, and response tools for residents (Arizona Wildfire Resources 2025). The portal provides timely updates on wildfire activity, statewide fire restrictions, home-hardening tips, and guidance on defensible space creation. It also connects homeowners with partner agencies and funding opportunities for fuel reduction and community fire mitigation projects (Arizona Wildfire Resources 2025). This site is a one-stop shop for homeowners and landowners looking for state-specific wildfire information.

Southwest Ecological Restoration Institute

The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institute (SWERI) is a collaborative resource gathering cross-boundary fuels treatment data to help land managers, policy makers, and researchers understand fuel treatment effects on the landscape. SWERI is recognized for operating through three universities: Northern Arizona University, Colorado State University, and New Mexico Highlands University. The institute is working on identifying emerging management questions and gaps, developing applied research, and collaborating with decision makers to develop actionable solutions (SWERI 2025).

Currently, SWERI is undertaking a new project to provide a map of national wildfire and treatment effectiveness assessment through the ReSHAPE database, also called the Treatment and Wildfire Interagency Geodatabase. The project focuses on gathering information on fuel treatments and wildfires from the Department of Interior and USFS with future aspirations to add cross-boundary fuel treatment data in hopes to address reducing catastrophic wildfire risk (SWERI 2025).

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), provides financial and technical assistance to landowners for conservation practices that reduce wildfire hazards and improve forest health (NRCS 2025). Eligible landowners in

Arizona can apply for cost-share funding to implement practices, such as hazardous fuel reduction, thinning, pruning, and post-fire erosion control. EQIP contracts are tailored to each property, with NRCS conservation planners working alongside landowners to identify priority treatments and develop implementation schedules (NRCS 2025). By participating in EQIP, homeowners and landowners can offset treatment costs while improving the resilience of their property and surrounding landscapes.

Community Wildfire Defense Grant

The Community Wildfire Defense Program prioritizes communities with high wildfire hazard potential and low capacity to fund mitigation efforts. Although the program is federally funded through the USFS, it is administered at the state level. In Arizona, the program is coordinated through the AZ DFFM, which serves as the State Forester for application intake and review. Eligible applicants submit proposals through the state rather than directly to the federal government.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grants

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs, including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) and Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities, which fund projects that reduce disaster risk, including wildfire hazards (FEMA 2025). These grants are typically applied for by state, tribal, or local governments, but homeowner actions, such as defensible space or structure hardening, can be included within community-wide applications. Funding is cost-shared, with FEMA covering up to 75% of eligible project costs. Homeowners can benefit when their county or fire district incorporates residential treatments into larger grant proposals.

Bureau of Land Management Wildfire Prevention Resources

The BLM provides wildfire prevention and land stewardship resources to private landowners adjacent to or near BLM-managed public lands (BLM 2025a). These resources include fire restriction updates, community outreach, and coordination on hazardous fuel reduction projects along the WUI. Arizona residents, especially those living near BLM-managed lands, can benefit from collaborative fuel treatments and educational programs aimed at reducing wildfire risk across jurisdictional boundaries.

National Fire Protection Association/Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety Resources

Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety

Protect Your Home

- Critical Home Preparation
- Exterior Home Upgrades

- Create a Wildfire Resistant Yard
- Home Preparation Checklist
- Wildfire Prepared Home (free online assessment)
- Homeowner Articles and Testimonies
- Applications for Wildfire Prepared Certifications

Prepare for Evacuation

- Prepare Your Home for Evacuation
- Home Evacuation Steps

MISCELLANEOUS

- Wildfire Evacuation Checklist
- The following resources may also provide helpful information for funding opportunities:
    - Western Forestry Leadership Coalition
        - Western Forestry Leadership Coalition funding opportunities are generally coordinated through State Foresters. In Arizona, applicants and interested communities should coordinate with the AZ DFFM regarding eligibility, application pathways, and alignment with state priorities.
    - USDA Information Center
    - USFS Fire Management website
    - NFPA
    - NIFC, Fire Prevention, Education, and Mitigation
    - USFA
    - Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Resources

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation/ Acronym	Definition
4WD	four wheel drive
°F	degrees Fahrenheit
ADEQ	Arizona Department of Environmental Quality
AICG	Arizona Interagency Coordinating Group
AIM	Action, Implementation, & Mitigation Grant
amsl	above mean sea level
ANPL	Arizona Native Plant Law
AOC	Area of Concern
ARS	Arizona Revised Statute
AWD	all wheel drive
AZ DFFM	Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management
AZ WRAP	Arizona Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal
AZDA	Arizona Department of Agriculture
AzEIN	Arizona Emergency Information Network
BAER	Burned Area Emergency Response
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BP	burn probability
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CFL	conditional flame length
CFRA	Cooperative Fire Rate Agreement
CIG	Conservation Innovation Grants
Cohesive Strategy	National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy
county	Pima County
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CWMS	Certified Wildfire Mitigation Specialist
CWPP	community wildfire protection plan
DEMA/EM	Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs and Emergency Management
DOD	Department of Defense
EMPG	Emergency Management Performance Grant
EMS	emergency medical services
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program

Abbreviation/ Acronym	Definition
ERF	Emergency Response Fund
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ESF	Emergency Support Function
EWP	Emergency Watershed Protection
FAL	Fire Apparatus Listing
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FMAG	Fire Management Assistance Grant
FRI	fire return interval
FSA	Farm Service Agency
GIS	geographic information system
GNA	Good Neighbor Authority
HAZMAT	hazardous materials
HFRA	Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003
HIFLD	Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data
HIZ	home ignition zone
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program
HOA	Homeowners Association
HVAC	heating, ventilation, and air conditioning
HVRA	highly valued resource or asset
IBHS	Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety
IFTDSS	Interagency Fuel Treatment Decision Support System
IPM	integrated pest management
ISO	Insurance Services Office
LANDFIRE	Landscape Fire and Resource Management Planning Tools
LBP	Landscape Burn Probability
MAP	Matching Awards Program
MJHMP	Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan
MFRI	mean fire return interval
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
NIFC	National Interagency Fire Center
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NPS	National Park Service
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NVFC	National Volunteer Fire Council

Abbreviation/ Acronym	Definition
NWCG	National Wildfire Coordinating Group
NWFD	Northwest Fire District
PCOEM	Pima County Office of Emergency Management
PDEQ	Pima County Department of Environmental Quality
PPE	personal protection equipment
QWRA	quantitative wildfire risk assessment
RAWS	remote automated weather station
RHH	Regulated Riparian Habitat
ROW	right-of-way
SAF	Society of American Foresters
SAFER	Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response
SERRP	State Emergency Response and Recovery Plan
SRFD	Santa Rita Fire District
SWCA	SWCA Environmental Consultants
SWERI	Southwest Ecological Restoration Institute
SWFSC	Southwest Fire Science Consortium
TEP	Tucson Electric Power
TFD	Tucson Fire Department
TREE	Tree Resource and Enhancement
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USFA	U.S. Fire Administration
USFS	U.S. Forest Service
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VCC	Vegetation Condition Class
VFD	volunteer fire department
WMP	Wildfire Mitigation Plan
WUI	wildland–urban interface

GLOSSARY

Aspect: Cardinal direction toward which a slope faces in relation to the sun (NWCG 2024).

Active Crown Fire: A crown fire in which the entire fuel complex is involved in flame, but the crowning phase remains dependent on heat released from surface fuel for continued spread. An active crown fire presents a solid wall of flame from the surface through the canopy fuel layers. Flames appear to emanate from the canopy as a whole rather than from individual trees within the canopy. Active crown fire is one of several types of crown fire and is contrasted with **passive crown fires**, which are less vigorous types of crown fire that do not emit continuous, solid flames from the canopy (SWCA).

Biomass: Organic material. Also refers to the weight of organic material (e.g., biomass roots, branches, needles, and leaves) within a given ecosystem (Wooten 2021).

Canopy: The more or less continuous cover of branches and foliage formed collectively by adjacent trees and other woody species in a forest stand. Where significant height differences occur between trees within a stand, formation of a multiple canopy (multi-layered) condition can result (SWCA).

Chain: Unit of measure in land survey, equal to 66 feet (20 meters) (80 chains equal 1 mile). Commonly used to report fire perimeters and other fireline distances. Popular in fire management because of its convenience in calculating acreage (example: 10 square chains equal one acre) (NWCG 2024).

Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP): A planning document that seeks to reduce the threat to life and property from wildfire by identifying and mitigating wildfire hazards to communities and infrastructure in the WUI. Developed from the HFRA, a CWPP addresses issues such as wildfire response, hazard mitigation, community preparedness, or structure protection (SWCA).

Contain: A tactical point at which a fire's spread is stopped by and within specific containment features, constructed or natural; also, the result of stopping a fire's spread so that no further spread is expected under foreseeable conditions. For reporting purposes, the time and date of containment. This term no longer has a strategic meaning in federal wildland fire policy (Wooten 2021).

Control: To construct fireline or use natural features to surround a fire and any control spot fires therefrom and reduce its burning potential to a point that it no longer threatens further spread or resource damage under foreseeable conditions. For reporting purposes, the time and date of control. This term no longer has a strategic meaning in federal wildland fire policy (Wooten 2021).

Cover Type: The type of vegetation (or lack of it) growing on an area based on cover type minimum and maximum percent cover of the dominant species, species group, or non-living land cover (such as water, rock, etc.). The cover type defines both a qualitative aspect (the dominant cover type), as well as a quantitative aspect (the abundance of the predominant features of that cover type) (Wooten 2021).

Crown Fire: A fire that advances at great speed from crown to crown in tree canopies, often well in advance of the fire on the ground (NWCG 2024).

Defensible Space: An area around a structure where fuels and vegetation are modified, cleared, or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire toward or from a structure. The design and distance of the defensible space is based on fuels, topography, and the design/materials used in the construction of the structure (SWCA).

Duff: The layer of decomposing organic materials lying below the litter layer of freshly fallen twigs, needles, and leaves and immediately above the mineral soil (NWCG 2024).

Ecosystem: An interacting natural system, including all the component organisms together with the abiotic environment and processes affecting them (SWCA).

Environmental Conditions: That part of the fire environment that undergoes short-term changes: weather, which is most commonly manifest as windspeed, and dead fuel moisture content (Wooten 2021).

Escape Route: A preplanned and understood route firefighters take to move to a safety zone or other low-risk area. When escape routes deviate from a defined physical path, they should be clearly marked (flagged) (NWCG 2024).

Evacuation: The temporary movement of people and their possessions from locations threatened by wildfire (SWCA).

Exposure: During fire suppression activities, an exposure is any area/property that is threatened by the initial fire, but, in the National Fire Incident Reporting System, a reportable exposure is any fire that is caused by another fire (i.e., a fire resulting from another fire outside that building, structure, or vehicle, or a fire that extends to an outside property from a building, structure, or vehicle) (NWCG 2024).

Fire-Adapted Community: A fire-adapted community collaborates to identify its wildfire risk and works collectively on actionable steps to reduce its risk of loss. This work protects property and increases the safety of firefighters and residents (FAC 2025).

Fire Behavior: The manner in which fuel ignites, flame develops, and fire spreads and exhibits other related phenomena as determined by the interaction of fuels, weather, and topography (NWCG 2024)

Fire Brand: A burning ember that detaches from burning vegetation during a wildfire and is lofted into the air by wind and convective forces (NWCG 2024).

Fire Break: Areas where vegetation and organic matter are removed down to mineral soil (NWCG 2024).

Fire Environment: The characteristics of a site that influence fire behavior. In fire modeling, the fire environment is described by surface and canopy fuel characteristics, windspeed and direction, relative humidity, and slope steepness (Wooten 2021).

Fire Frequency: A broad measure of the rate of fire occurrence in a particular area. For historical analyses, fire frequency is often expressed using the fire return interval calculation. For modern-era analyses, where data on timing and size of fires are recorded, fire frequency is often best expressed using fire rotation (NWCG 2024).

Fire Hazard: Fire hazard is the potential fire behavior or fire intensity in an area given the type(s) of fuel present—including both the natural and built environment—and their combustibility (NWCG 2024).

Fire History: The chronological record of the occurrence of fire in an ecosystem or at a specific site. The fire history of an area may inform planners and residents about the level of wildfire hazard in that area (NWCG 2024).

Fire Intensity: A general term relating to the heat energy released in a fire (NWCG 2024).

Fireline Intensity: Amount of heat release per unit time per unit length of fire front. Numerically, the product of the heat of combustion, quantity of fuel consumed per unit area in the fire front, and the rate of spread of a fire, expressed in kilowatts per minute (SWCA). This expression is commonly used to describe the power of wildland fires, but it does not necessarily follow that the severity, defined as the vegetation mortality, will be correspondingly high (NWCG 2024).

Fire Prevention: Activities such as public education, community outreach, planning, building code enforcement, engineering (construction standards), and reduction of fuel hazards that are intended to reduce the incidence of unwanted human-caused wildfires and the risks they pose to life, property, or resources (NWCG 2024).

Fire Regime: A measure of the general pattern of fire frequency and severity typical to a particular area or type of landscape. The regime can include other metrics of the fire, including seasonality and typical fire size, as well as a measure of the pattern of variability in characteristics (NWCG 2024).

Fire Return Interval (FRI): Number of years (interval) between two successive fires in a designated area (NWCG 2024).

Fire Severity: A qualitative measure of the immediate effects of fire on the fire severity ecosystem. It relates to the extent of mortality and survival of plant and animal life both aboveground and belowground and to loss of organic matter. It is determined by heat released aboveground and belowground. Fire severity is dependent on intensity and the residence time of the burn. For trees, severity is often measured as a percentage of basal area removed. An intense fire may not necessarily be severe (NWCG 2024).

Fire Risk: *Risk* takes into account the intensity and likelihood of a fire event to occur, as well as the chance, whether high or low, that a hazard, such as a wildfire, will cause harm. Fire risk can be determined by identifying the susceptibility of a value or asset to the potential direct or indirect impacts of wildfire hazard events (NWCG 2024).

Flammability/Flammable: The relative ease with which fuels ignite and burn regardless of the quantity of the fuels (NWCG 2024).

Flame Length: The length of flames in the propagating fire front measured along the slant of the flame from the midpoint of its base to its tip. It is mathematically related to fireline intensity and tree crown scorch height (Wooten 2021).

Fuel Break: A natural or human-made change in fuel characteristics that affects fire behavior so that fires burning into them can be more readily controlled (NWCG 2024).

Fuel Continuity: A qualitative description of the distribution of fuel both horizontally and vertically. Continuous fuels readily support fire spread. The larger the fuel discontinuity, the greater the fire intensity required for fire spread (Wooten 2021).

Fuel Loading: The volume of fuel in a given area generally expressed in tons per acre (SWCA). Dead woody fuel loadings are commonly described for small material in diameter classes of 0 to 0.25, 0.25 to 1, and 1 to 3 inches and for large material greater than 3 inches (Wooten 2021).

Fuel Management/Fuel Reduction: Manipulation or removal of fuels to reduce the likelihood of ignition and to reduce potential damage in case of a wildfire. Fuel reduction methods include prescribed fire, mechanical treatments (mowing, chopping), herbicides, biomass removal (thinning or harvesting or trees, harvesting of pine straw), and grazing. Fuel management techniques may sometimes be combined for greater effect (NWCG 2024).

Fuel Model: A set of surface fuel bed characteristics (load and surface-area-to-fuel model volume ratio by size class, heat content, and depth) organized for input to a fire model (Wooten 2021).

Fuel Modification: The manipulation or removal of fuels (i.e., combustible biomass such as wood, leaves, grass, or other vegetation) to reduce the likelihood of igniting and to reduce fire intensity. Fuel

modification activities may include lopping, chipping, crushing, piling and burning, including prescribed burning. These activities may be performed using mechanical treatments or by hand crews. Herbicides and prescribed herbivory (grazing) may also be used in some cases. Fuel modification may also sometimes be referred to as "vegetation treatment" (NWCG 2024).

Fuel Moisture Content: This is expressed as a percent or fraction of oven dry fuel moisture content weight of fuel. It is the most important fuel property controlling flammability. In living plants, it is physiologically bound. Its daily fluctuations vary considerably by species but are usually above 80% to 100%. As plants mature, moisture content decreases. When herbaceous plants cure, their moisture content responds as dead fuel moisture content, which fluctuates according to changes in temperature, humidity, and precipitation (NWCG 2024).

Fuel Treatment: The manipulation or removal of fuels to minimize the probability of ignition and/or to reduce potential damage and resistance to fire suppression activities (NWCG 2024). Synonymous with fuel modification.

Grazing: There are two types of grazing: traditional grazing and targeted grazing. Traditional grazing refers to cattle that are managed in extensive pastures to produce meat. Targeted grazing involves having livestock graze at a specific density for a given period of time for the purpose of managing vegetation. Even though both kinds of grazing manage fuel loading in range- and forested lands, targeted grazing is different in that its sole purpose is to manage fuels. Targeted grazing is done by a variety of livestock species, such as sheep, goats, or cows (Clark et al. 2023).

Hazard: A "hazard" can be defined generally as an event that could cause harm or damage to human health, safety, or property (NWCG 2024).

Hazardous Areas: Those wildland areas where the combination of vegetation, topography, weather, and the threat of fire to life and property create difficult and dangerous problems (NWCG 2024).

Hazardous Fuels: A fuel complex defined by type, arrangement, volume, condition, and location that poses a threat of ignition and resistance to fire suppression (NWCG 2024).

Hazardous Fuels Reduction: Any strategy that reduces the amount of flammable material in a fire-prone ecosystem. Two common strategies are mechanical thinning and prescribed burning (Wooten 2021).

Hazard Reduction: Any treatment that reduces the threat of ignition and spread of fire (NWCG 2024).

Highly Valued Resources and Assets (HVRAs): Landscape features that are influenced positively and/or negatively by fire. Resources are naturally occurring, whereas assets are human-made (IFTDSS 2024).

Ignition: The action of setting something on fire or starting to burn (NWCG 2024).

Incident: An occurrence or event, either natural or human-caused, which requires an emergency response to prevent loss of life or damage to property or natural resources (Wooten 2021).

Initial Attack: The actions taken by the first resources to arrive at a wildfire to protect lives and property and to prevent the expansion of the fire (NWCG 2024).

Invasive Species: An introduced, nonnative organism (disease, parasite, plant, or animal) that begins to spread or expand its range from the site of its original introduction and that has the potential to cause harm to the environment, the economy, or to human health (U.S. Geological Survey 2021).

Ladder Fuels: Fuels that provide vertical continuity, allowing fire to carry from surface fuels into the crowns of trees or shrubs with relative ease (NWCG 2024).

Litter: Recently fallen plant material that is only partially decomposed and is still discernible (NWCG 2024).

Manual Treatments: Felling and piling of fuels done by hand. The volume of material generated from a manual fuel treatment is typically too small to warrant a biomass sale; therefore, collected material is disposed of by burning or chipping. The work can be performed by either a single individual or a large, organized crew with powered equipment (UCANR 2021a).

Mechanized Treatments: Mechanical treatments pulverize large continuous patches of fuel to reduce the volume and continuity of material. Mechanical treatments can be applied as either mastication or chipping treatments. Both treatments shred woody material, but mastication leaves residue on-site, whereas chipping collects the particles for transportation off-site. Similar to hand treatments, mechanical treatments can target specific areas and vegetation while excluding areas of concern. In addition, mechanical treatment is easily scalable to large areas (>30 acres) with little added cost (UCANR 2021b).

Mitigation: Action that moderates the severity of a fire hazard or risk (NWCG 2024).

Mutual Aid: Assistance in firefighting or investigation by fire agencies, irrespective of jurisdictional boundaries (NWCG 2024).

Native Revegetation: The process of replanting and rebuilding the soil of disturbed land (e.g., burned) with native plant species (USDA 2005).

Native Species: A species that evolved naturally in the habitat, ecosystem, or region as determined by climate, soil, and biotic factors (USDA 2005).

National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy (Cohesive Strategy): The Cohesive Strategy is a strategic push to work collaboratively among all stakeholders and across all landscapes, using best science, to make meaningful progress toward three goals:

- Resilient landscapes
- Fire-adapted communities
- Safe and effective wildfire response

Vision: To safely and effectively extinguish fire when needed; use fire where allowable; manage our natural resources; and as a nation, to live with wildland fire (Forests and Rangelands 2023).

Noxious Weed: Plant species designated by the State of Arizona as harmful to agriculture, natural resources, or habitat and subject to state regulation. Class A species are not present or are of limited distribution and are prioritized for prevention and eradication. Class B species occur in limited areas and may require control where they pose a significant threat. Class C species are widespread but may be recommended for active management based on risk. Movement of these species and contaminated materials is restricted under Arizona law (AZDA 2026).

Overstory: The portion of the trees in a forest that forms the upper or uppermost layer (SWCA).

Passive Crown Fire: A type of crown fire in which the crowns of individual trees or small groups of trees burn, but solid flaming in the canopy cannot be maintained except for short periods. Passive crown fire encompasses a wide range of crown fire behavior, from occasional torching of isolated trees to nearly active crown fire. Passive crown fire is also called torching or candling. A fire in the crowns of the trees in

which trees or groups of trees torch, ignited by the passing front of the fire. The torching trees reinforce the spread rate, but these fires are not basically different from surface (NWCG 2024).

Prescribed Burning: Any fire ignited by management actions under specific, predetermined conditions to meet specific objectives related to hazardous fuels or habitat improvement. Usually, a written, approved prescribed fire plan must exist, and National Environmental Policy Act requirements must be met, prior to ignition (NWCG 2024).

Rate of Spread: The relative activity of a fire in extending its horizontal dimensions. It is expressed as rate of increase of the total perimeter of the fire, as rate of forward spread of the fire front, or as rate of increase in area, depending on the intended use of the information. Usually, it is expressed in chains or acres per hour for a specific period in the fire's history (NWCG 2024).

Resilience: Resilience is the capacity of any entity—an individual, a community, an organization, or a natural system—to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and stresses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience (NWCG 2024).

Response: Movement of an individual firefighting resource from its assigned standby location to another location or to an incident in reaction to dispatch orders or to a reported alarm (NWCG 2024).

Riparian: Habitat type associated with perennial and ephemeral watercourses and flood-prone areas, often characterized by higher density vegetation and/or different vegetation types than upland areas. Riparian habitat provides a beneficial function in floodplains and is protected in unincorporated Pima County within the Floodplain Ordinance (USFWS 2026).

Slash: Debris left after logging, pruning, thinning, or brush cutting. Slash includes logs, chips, bark, branches, stumps, and broken trees or brush that may be fuel for a wildfire (NWCG 2024).

Soil Burn Severity: A qualitative assessment of the heat pulse directed toward the ground during a fire. Burn severity relates to soil heating, large fuel and duff consumption, consumption of the litter and organic layer beneath trees and isolated shrubs, and mortality of buried plant parts (SWCA).

Suppression: The most aggressive fire protection strategy—it leads to the total extinguishment of a fire (NWCG 2024).

Surface Fire: Fire that typically burns only surface litter and undergrowth (NWCG 2024).

Surface Fuel: Fuels lying on or near the surface of the ground, consisting of leaf and needle litter, dead branch material, downed logs, bark, tree cones, and low stature living plants (NWCG 2024).

Structural Ignitability: The ability of structures (such as homes or fences) to catch fire (SWCA).

Topography: The arrangement of the natural and artificial physical features of an area (SWCA).

Total Fuel Load: The mass of fuel per unit area that could possibly be consumed in a hypothetical fire of the highest intensity in the driest fuels (Wooten 2021).

Tree Crown: The primary and secondary branches growing out from the main stem, together with twigs and foliage (SWCA).

Understory: Low-growing vegetation (i.e., herbaceous, brush, or reproduction) growing under a stand of trees. Also, that portion of trees in a forest stand below the overstory (SWCA).

Values and Assets at Risk: The elements of a community or natural area considered valuable by an individual or community that could be negatively impacted by a wildfire or wildfire operations. These

values can vary by community and can include public and private assets (natural and human-made), such as homes, specific structures, water supply, power grids, natural and cultural resources, community infrastructure, as well as other economic, environmental, and social values (IFTDSS 2024).

Wildfire: A *wildfire* can be generally defined as any unplanned fire in a *wildland* area or in the WUI (NWCG 2024).

Wildland: Those unincorporated areas covered wholly or in part by trees, brush, grass, or other flammable vegetation (NWCG 2024).

Wildland Fire: Fire that occurs in the wildland as the result of an unplanned ignition (NWCG 2024).

Wildland Fuels (aka fuels): Fuel is the material that burns. It can be any kind of combustible material, especially petroleum-based products, and wildland fuels. For wildland fire, it is usually live, or dead plant material, but can also include artificial materials, such as houses, sheds, fences, pipelines, and trash piles. In terms of vegetation, there are six wildland fuel types. *Fuel type* refers to an identifiable association of fuel elements of distinctive species, form, size, arrangement, or other characteristics that will cause a predictable rate of spread or resistance to control under specified weather conditions. The six wildland fuel types consist of the following (NWCG 2024):

- Grass
- Shrub
- Grass-shrub
- Timber litter
- Timber-understory
- Slash-blowdown

Wildland–Urban Interface (WUI): The WUI is the zone of transition between unoccupied land and human development. It is the line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels (USFA 2021). In the absence of a CWPP, Section 101 (16) of the HFRA defines the WUI as "(I) an area extending ½ mile from the boundary of an at-risk community; (II) an area within 1 ½ miles of the boundary of an at-risk community, including any land that (1) has a sustained steep slope that creates the potential for wildfire behavior endangering the at-risk community; (2) has a geographic feature that aids in creating an effective fire break, such as a road or ridge top; or (3) is in condition class 3, as documented by the Secretary in the project-specific environmental analysis; (III) an area that is adjacent to an evacuation route for an at-risk community that the Secretary determines, in cooperation with the at-risk community, requires hazardous fuels reduction to provide safer evacuation from the at-risk community (Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, Pub. L. No. 108–148, 117 Stat. 1887 (2003)). A CWPP offers the opportunity to establish a localized definition and boundary for the WUI (USFA 2020).



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GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Jeff Sargent, Acting Finance Director

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT RECONCILIATION AND MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT

ITEM #: 8D

REQUIRED ACTION:	☐ Discussion Only	☒ Formal Motion	☐ Resolution
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	☒ Approve	☐ Conditional Approval	☐ Deny
SUPPORTED BY:	☒ Staff	☒ Fire Chief	☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

Presented are the monthly financial reports and cash reconciliation.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

Motion to approve and accept the Golder Ranch Fire District reconciliation and monthly financial report as presented.

GRFD_07_2026

Statement of Revenues and Expenditures - Unposted Transactions Included In Report

From 10/1/2026 Through 10/31/2026

	Current Period Actual	Current Period Budget - Original	Current Period Budget Variance - Original
Expenses			
5000 Labor, Beneefits, & ERE	4,166,942.58	3,903,019.70	(263,922.88)
6200 Supplies	61,034.68	117,659.33	56,624.65
6500 Vehicle & Equipment	45,562.06	182,135.00	136,572.94
6700 Utiliteis	36,836.76	50,568.53	13,731.77
7000 Professional Fees	109,821.80	202,586.13	92,764.33
7500 Membership Dues, Liecense Renewals	17,841.18	48,773.13	30,931.95
7700 Business Insurance	0.00	68,670.00	68,670.00
8000 Facility Repair & Maintenance	24,565.10	68,275.00	43,709.90
9000 Debit Services	16,282.48	83,141.67	66,859.19
9900 Capital / Lease	788,844.10	2,776,000.00	1,987,155.90
Total Expenses	5,267,730.74	7,500,828.49	2,233,097.75

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Shannon Ortiz, Board Services Supervisor

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM #: 9

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This agenda item allows an individual Governing Board member to recommend item(s) to go on future agendas.

Pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.2(H), the Board will not discuss the items(s) at this time because it would be a violation of the Open Meeting Laws and no voting action will be taken on the recommended item.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.

GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT
BOARD COMMUNICATION MEMORANDUM

TO: Governing Board

FROM: Shannon Ortiz, Board Services Supervisor

MTG. DATE: November 17, 2026

SUBJECT: Call to the Public

ITEM #: 10

REQUIRED ACTION: ☒ Discussion Only ☐ Formal Motion ☐ Resolution

RECOMMENDED ACTION: ☐ Approve ☐ Conditional Approval ☐ Deny

SUPPORTED BY: ☒ Staff ☒ Fire Chief ☐ Legal Review

BACKGROUND

This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not on the agenda. The Board is not permitted to discuss or take action on any item raised in the Call to the Public, which are not on the agenda due to restrictions of the Open Meeting Law; however, individual members of the Board are permitted to respond to criticism directed to them. Otherwise, the Board may direct staff to review the matter or that the matter be placed on a future agenda.

RECOMMENDED MOTION

No motion is necessary for this agenda item.