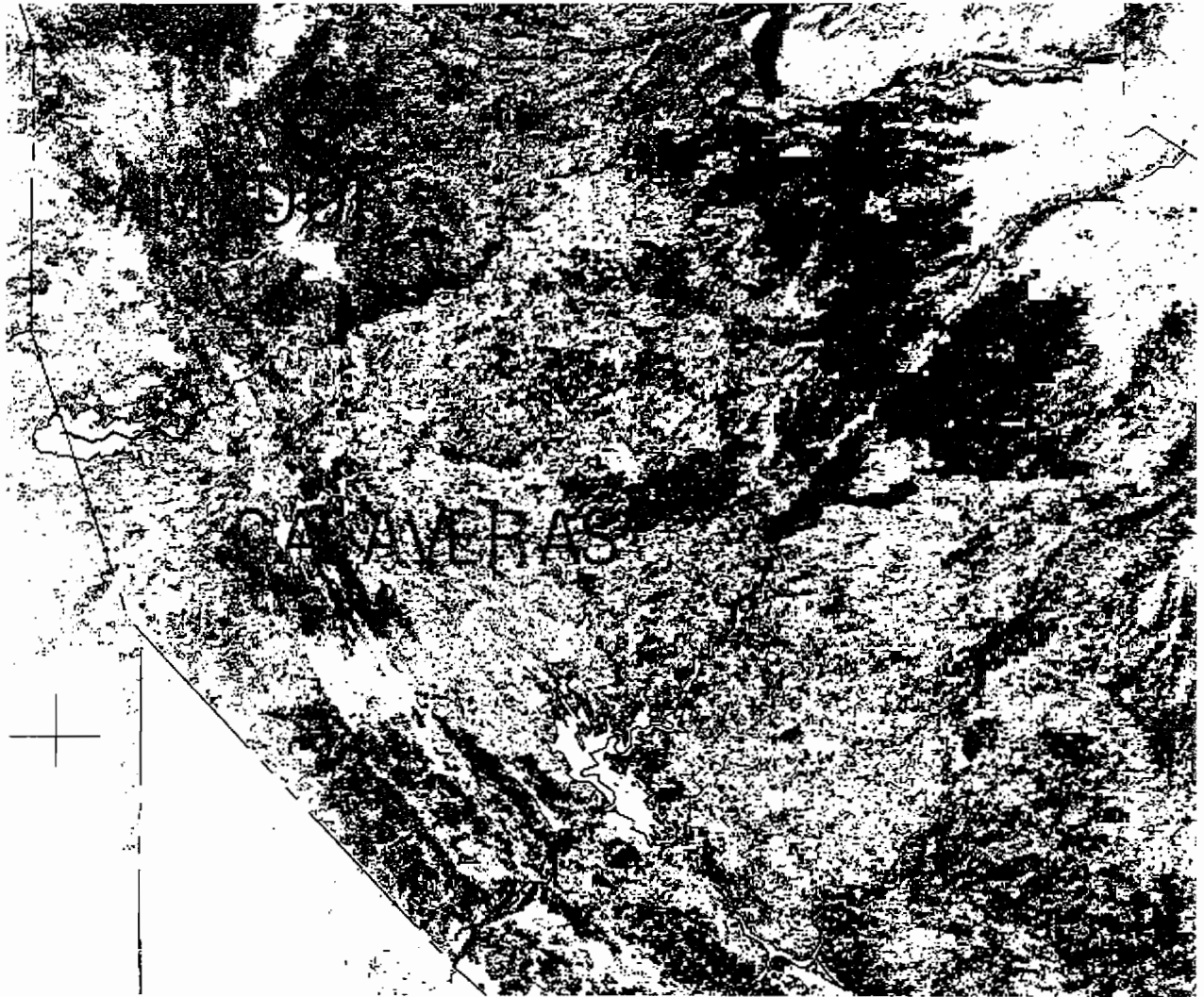


Fire Hazard Planning







Issue: Calaveras County is dominated by lands in the high and very high fire threat category.

Constraint: The Safety Element of the 1996 General Plan lacks standards for defensible space, and for peak period water needs for fire fighting.

Opportunity: In 2003 OPR, in consultation with representatives from rural counties, developed a guide for dealing with fire hazard concerns in local general plans. Calaveras County can use this as a guide in addressing these concerns in the General Plan Update.



FIRE THREAT

	Extreme		Moderate
	Very High		Non-fuel
	High		Not Mapped

CDF-FRAP has developed a rating of wildland fire threat based on the combination of potential fire behavior (Fuel Rank) and expected fire frequency (Fire Rotation) to create a 4-class Index for risk assessment. Areas that do not support wildland fuels (e.g., open water, agricultural lands, etc.) are omitted from the calculation. Most large urbanized areas receive a moderate fire threat classification to account for fires carried by ornamental vegetation and flammable structures. For a detailed description of these data and methods please visit https://frap.cdf.ca.gov/projects/fire_threat/



Gray Davis
GOVERNOR

State of California



Tal Finney
INTERIM DIRECTOR

FIRE HAZARD PLANNING

General Plan Technical Advice Series

Governor's Office of Planning and Research

November 2003

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California Rural Policy Task Force, Governor's Office of Planning and Research
California State Association of Counties
Regional Council of Rural Counties
State Clearinghouse, Governor's Office of Planning and Research

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The General Plan Technical Advice Series is intended to offer land use practitioners, particularly at the local level, concise information regarding General Plan law. This series of occasional papers is part of OPR's public education and training program for planners, developers and others. This advice is intended to supplement, but not to amend or revise the *California General Plan Guidelines*.

Acknowledgement: The 2003 edition of Fire Hazard Planning was initiated through a request by the Regional Council of Rural Counties. It was developed through a state and local partnership of the Regional Council of Rural Counties, California Association of Counties, the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research and the California Department of Forestry.

FIRE HAZARD PLANNING

General Plan Technical Advice Series

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INTRODUCTION

The intent of this advisory is to assist city and county planners to have more meaningful discussions with fire mitigation, preparedness and response professionals for the purpose of developing effective policies for the General Plan that can be carried through to specific plans, zoning ordinances and other local planning documents.

OPR also encourages Fire Safe Councils, concerned citizens, elected officials, fire authorities and city and county planners to use the opportunity of an update to the General Plan to better integrate local fire hazard mitigation plans with the General Plan.

Appendix 1 includes an extensive list of sources that may be useful in development of fire-related polices in the General Plan. Integration of the General Plan, the fire hazard mitigation plan and other hazard reduction polices, plans and mitigation activities is essential to providing a robust wildfire hazard mitigation program to California communities.

SECTION I. FIRE SAFE COUNCILS: A NEW PLANNING PARTNER

The federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA 2000) enacted a number of changes under Section 322 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Stafford Act) which led to a new requirement that communities develop Local Hazard Mitigation Plans in order to be eligible for FEMA mitigation project assistance.

Fire Safe Councils can play an important role in the development of these plans.

The typical Fire Safe Council consists of state and federal fire agencies, local fire districts, businesses, local government, and local concerned citizens formed to enhance the effectiveness of fire protection. Some councils have also combined with neighboring fire safe councils to develop countywide wildfire hazard mitigation plans.

These Fire Safe Councils can provide an excellent resource to planners and elected officials in the development of the fire protection and prevention policies and implementation measures in the General Plan. OPR encourages the use of these Councils for both their expertise and as a means for expanding public participation in the General Plan preparation process.

Funding Available

Funding is available for projects that improve the effectiveness of local fire protection. Examples include funds distributed through the National Fire Plan, the California Fire Plan and House Resolution (H.R.) 2389 - (The Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000). Additionally jurisdictions that develop Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plans that meet FEMA requirements may be eligible for federal funds for planning activities. Funding for development of Fire Hazard Mitigation Plans may be available from the National Fire Plan through the following programs:

- USFS State & Private Forestry Economic Action Program.
- Community Based Wildfire Protection Program, administered by the California Fire Safe Council.

See the California Fire Alliance Resource Guide at www.cafirealliance.org/grant.asp for more information on funding for Community Safe Fire Plans.

BACKGROUND ON DMA 2000

The DMA 2000 authorized changes for federal programs under the Stafford Act related to pre-disaster mitigation, for streamlining the administration of disaster relief, and for controlling federal costs of disaster assistance. These changes have collectively brought greater focus on pre-disaster planning and activities as a means for reducing response and post-disaster costs. California local governments, nationally known for their planning and disaster mitigation efforts have a unique opportunity to join efforts with the Fire Safe Councils to provide more targeted wildfire prevention polices and implementation strategies.

On February 26, 2002, an Interim Final Rule (IFR)(44 CFR Parts 201 & 206), to implement the DMA 2000, was published that addressed state mitigation planning, identified new local mitigation planning requirements, authorized Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds for planning activities, and the possibility of an increase in the percentage of HMGP funds available to states that develop a comprehensive, enhanced, State Hazard Mitigation Plan.

In accordance with the February 26th and a further October 1st IFRs, local governments must have a Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, reviewed by the State Mitigation Officer and approved by FEMA, prior to November 1, 2004, as a condition of receiving FEMA mitigation project assistance. These Local Mitigation Plans must be revised, reviewed and approved, every 5 years.

According to the February 26, 2002 IFR, section 201.6, local and tribal governments must include the following in their Local Hazard Mitigation Plans:

- A planning process
- An assessment of the risks
- A mitigation strategy
- A plan maintenance and updating process

According to the February 26th IFR, a stated goal for FEMA is for State and local governments to develop comprehensive and integrated plans that are coordinated through appropriate State, local, and regional agencies, as well as non-governmental interest groups, and, to the extent feasible and practicable, to consolidate the planning requirements for different mitigation plans and programs.

Although the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and the General Plan will not be identical documents, much of the data and analysis requirements are similar, and, clearly, it is essential that polices in one document will need to be consistent with the policies in the other. OPR recommends that local governments work with and support the efforts of Fire Safe Councils as a means for ensuring effective and integrated wildfire mitigation programs.