



Community Wildfire Protection Plans

State of Alaska - Highlighting the Kenai Peninsula

Working with Communities & Assessing Risk

The Healthy Forest Initiative's Interim Field Guide and the National Association of State Foresters' field guidance provided direction for Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs). On the Kenai Peninsula, the Spruce Bark beetle Mitigation Program took advantage of this direction, developed risk assessments and grass-root support for Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

Background

The Kenai Peninsula Borough (KPB) has taken a proactive, interagency approach to the accomplishment of Community Wildfire Protection Plans. KPB's Spruce Barkbeetle Mitigation Program had previously assessed the level of risk between communities and geographic areas within the Borough. From this information, it was possible to rank Community Wildlife Protection Plan (CWPP) areas into 4 categories; low, medium, high and extreme risk (see map, page 2). Eight extreme risk category communities were contacted first. Independent contractors facilitated community discussions and created protection plans based on community need. For those geographic areas categorized at *extreme* risk, all CWPPs have been completed as of summer 2006. This covers nearly 800,000 acres, twenty-one towns, and approximately \$1.7 billion dollars in cumulative structure value. Two CWPP areas assessed as being in *high* risk areas will be completed by fall of 2006. The remaining four high risk CWPP areas will complete their plans during 2007.



Unique Aspects

Remoteness, few roads, and necessity of boat & air travel increase the challenge of completing CWPPs throughout Alaska. Risk assessments may be completed at central locations; however it's crucial that involved parties travel to remote villages during the writing of the CWPP. Local ownership will determine how heavily a village may rely on their plan.

Summary

Community Wildfire Protection Plans are being completed by active community members. This is happening throughout the State of Alaska. As an example, the Kenai Peninsula Borough has completed eight CWPPs. Seven more are slated for completion in 2007.

More Information

Contacts: **Debora Cooper**, Interagency National Fire Plan Coordinator, Alaska; (907) 714-2439
Roberta Wilfong, Project Manager, SBB Mitigation Program; (907) 714-2431
Jim Peterson, Area Forester, Kenai-Kodiak Area; (907) 260-4210
Or visit www.borough.kenai.ak.us/sprucebeetle

