

July 15, 2025

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Jim Byrne, Emergency Management Director
Dennis Day, Program Manager, Emergency Preparedness
Geoff Butler, Poudre Fire Authority

SUBJECT

Staff Report: Urban Wildfire Readiness Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to provide a progress update on the Wildfire Mitigation Plan.

The wildland-urban interface (WUI) may be defined as the zone where the built environment meets wildland vegetation. Poudre Fire Authority (PFA) has long recognized the wildfire potential in the WUI as including the foothills and grasslands adjacent to the City of Fort Collins as well as occluded wildland areas within the City. As part of the effort to identify and address the wildfire hazard in our jurisdiction, the PFA completed the third iteration of its Community Wildfire Protection Plan in February of 2025. This plan emphasizes interagency collaboration, advanced wildfire risk assessment using modern data and modeling tools, and public engagement. It outlines actionable strategies for mitigation, response, and evacuation.

PFA has a longstanding collaborative relationship with the City's Natural Areas Program and Emergency Preparedness and Security by jointly engaging in planning, wildfire public outreach, and annual Poudre River hazard assessments. Although PFA is not a land management agency and does not lead prescribed fire projects, it supports such efforts through operational assistance. PFA co-established the Natural Areas prescribed fire program in 2003 and remains an active participant in prescribed fires throughout the region.

Given the ecological role of fire in Fort Collins' grassland natural areas, prescribed burning remains a valuable but complex management tool. Its effectiveness in reducing fuel loads in grass is transient. While its utilization is site specific and involves logistical and safety challenges, it remains an important management option.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Presentation