Executive Summary

Overview

The 2026 Marin County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) establishes a unified, countywide framework for reducing wildfire risk to communities. The purpose of the CWPP is to identify where wildfire risk is highest, where communities are most vulnerable, and where investments in mitigation can deliver the greatest reduction in potential wildfire impacts.

This CWPP provides a unified action plan for wildfire risk reduction for the many stakeholders in Marin, including land managers, fire agencies, utilities, emergency managers, and resident groups. It was developed through a collaborative, multi-agency planning process that brought together fire agencies, land managers, Marin County departments, cities and towns, and other stakeholders. The process included an inventory of existing conditions and an assessment of current programs. In addition, the CWPP integrated a wide variety of science-based risk analyses to provide a robust, quantitative view of risk. This comprehensive approach ensures that the Plan accounts for existing investments in wildfire risk reduction and provides a forward-looking set of recommendations that reflect both local expertise and the best available wildfire science. This comprehensive CWPP provides a common, justifiable narrative to help residents, community groups, and agencies align to promote a safer, more fire adapted Marin County.

The CWPP is a dynamic and actionable planning framework that supports coordinated decision-making processes across County agencies. By combining multiple lines of evidence, including potential wildfire behavior, the likelihood of ignitions in given locations, community exposure, evacuation difficulty, structure vulnerability, and fire response capacity, the prioritization framework provides data-driven, geographically specific recommendations for implementing the policies, projects, and programs with the greatest opportunity to reduce wildfire risk. This CWPP uses a consensus-based approach to support transparent, defensible, and explainable prioritization rationale. The framework is designed to be updated and dynamic over time as projects are implemented, conditions change, and new information becomes available.



This plan recognizes that the areas of Marin County that are at highest risk of wildfires and its areas of highest social vulnerability do not always overlap. The County considers both areas when approaching risk reduction strategies: prioritization decisions are driven by fire-behavior science, while grant and outreach program design draw on **Appendix C. Marin County Social Vulnerability Assessment** to ensure that risk-reduction investments reach the county's most vulnerable residents. A Spanish-language version of this summary will be published alongside the English original at the time of final Plan approval.

Deliverables

Key deliverables from the CWPP include:

- A countywide summary of wildfire risk and a prioritized set of geographically specific opportunities for risk reduction, based on conditions as of 2025.
- A dynamic, updatable prioritization framework that can be used in future years to refresh recommendations as conditions change and mitigation projects are implemented.
- A public-facing storymap that explains the CWPP process, findings, and recommendations in a clear and accessible way and helps residents understand how the Plan supports community safety.
- A set of supporting datasets, maps, and technical resources that enable agencies to integrate wildfire risk and fire behavior information directly into project planning, grant applications, and program implementation.

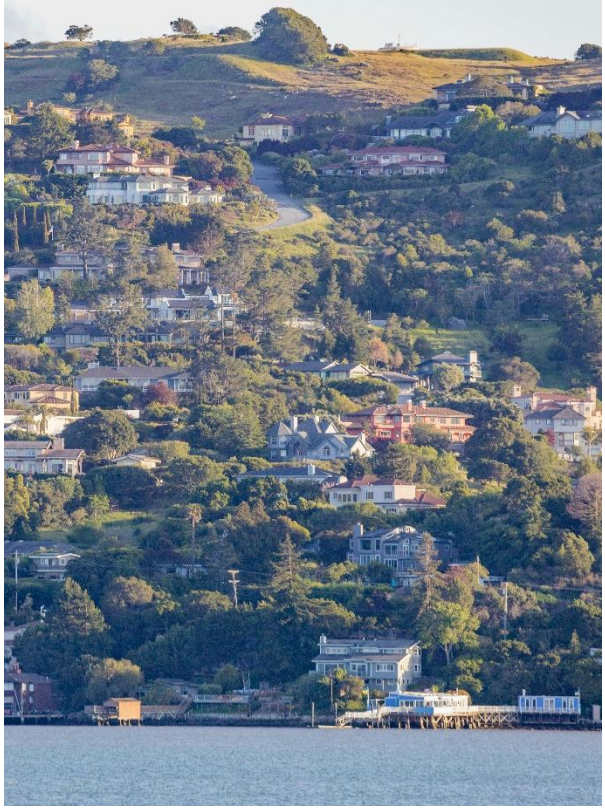
Cross-Cutting Recommendations

This CWPP identifies several overarching strategic principles for fire planning and investment in Marin County:

Fire Adaptation, not Fire Exclusion: Fire is a natural and necessary ecological and cultural process in Marin County's ecosystems. Wildfire preparedness programming should be based on the expectation that wildfires will continue to occur in these fire-adapted landscapes. The objective of County and local programs should be to reduce the impacts of wildfires on life, property, and critical community assets, rather than to attempt to prevent wildfires altogether.

Prepare for a Changing Climate: Climate change is lengthening and intensifying fire seasons in Marin County. Planning should anticipate longer fire seasons, more severe autumn fire weather events, increased fire activity outside of the traditional dry season, and more severe multi-year droughts. More frequent wintertime atmospheric rivers are anticipated to produce robust annual grass crops, elevating the risk of rapid fire spread in subsequent dry seasons. "Routine" fire weather conditions are expected to increase in frequency and severity, placing additional strain on fire

resources in the County. Fire prevention efforts should be designed for more frequent and more severe wildfire activity. Fire response agencies should plan for year-round fire seasons with increased fire danger throughout the year. The risk reduction activities in this plan are prioritized with the implicit understanding that climate change will drive longer, more intense fire seasons and fire suppression staff will be taxed due to increased fire frequency and severity.



Prioritize Community Safety: Prioritize programs that reduce risks to life and property. Mitigation efforts should focus on addressing the vulnerabilities that allow fire to become established and spread within communities and on ensuring safe evacuation and reliable warning systems. After these critical vulnerabilities are addressed, additional investments can target other values at risk to provide broader community and environmental benefits.

Continuous, Coordinated, and Systematic Wildfire Risk Reduction: Alignment and coordination across agencies, jurisdictions, and programs are essential to achieving meaningful risk reduction. Focus on targeted, cross-cutting initiatives rather than isolated or distributed projects. Coordinated action across jurisdictions and tactics can produce compounding benefits that exceed the impact of many independent initiatives. Integrated, place-based efforts, such as pairing targeted vegetation management with intensive on-parcel risk reduction within a single neighborhood, can deliver more effective and durable risk reduction outcomes than programming without geographic and thematic alignment. Further, consider integrating wildfire risk into plans for new development in the County and ensure that land use planning works systematically with fire prevention planning. Progress should be evaluated using standardized, data-driven performance metrics wherever possible.

Plan Explicitly for Rare, Catastrophic Events: The greatest wildfire losses occur during rare, extreme wind-driven fires exacerbated by severe drought conditions. Preparedness, mitigation, and evacuation planning should explicitly account for these high-consequence scenarios in addition to average or most-likely scenarios. Risk reduction activities designed to meet the most severe wildfire scenarios are also likely to be effective during average scenarios; however, the opposite is not always true.

Local Operational Playbooks: Fire agencies and evacuation managers should create operational pre-plans for evacuation and firefighting response under a variety of likely fire scenarios. Emergency managers should communicate evacuation routes in advance and work with communities to ensure

evacuation plans are in place and understood. Agencies should consider expanded efforts to identify potential congestion points and evaluate the role of temporary fire refuge areas (TFRAs) where appropriate. Planning should include residents, community groups, fire agencies, and facilities or populations with special needs.

Demographic-Specific Planning: Wildfire preparedness and risk reduction programs should be designed to meet the needs of Marin County's communities. Data sources, such as the Marin Wildfire Risk Perceptions Survey and **Appendix C. Marin County Social Vulnerability Assessment**, identify population-specific needs and barriers, including those of renters, older adults, non-English speakers, and other socially vulnerable populations who may face structural barriers to residential wildfire risk mitigation. Outreach, education, and assistance programs should be tailored to reach these resident groups, and partner directly with community-based organizations already trusted by these groups. Marin Wildfire and partner agencies will expand needs-based grants programs and prioritize outreach and evacuation guidance for populations with the greatest documented need.

Emphasize Resident Action: Residents play a critical role in reducing wildfire risk at both the parcel and community scale. Programs should continue to emphasize the importance of low-cost, high-impact actions for homes, including vent and gutter screens, an ember-resistant 5-foot zone around the home (Zone Zero), and replacing combustible fences. Education, incentives, and enforcement should be coordinated between community organizations and fire agencies to increase adoption of fire-safe landscaping and home hardening practices. Consider focusing incentive programs to areas where fire may transition into the built environment and where public dollars can be most effective in reducing community risk.

Partner for Landscape Resilience: More than 50% of the land in Marin County is protected open space, which includes a mosaic of county, state, and federal parklands and preserves. These lands are recognized globally as a biodiversity hot spot and are included in the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve designated by UNESCO in 1988. As identified in the Marin Regional Forest Health Strategy (*Forest Health Strategy*), a Regional Priority Plan developed with funding from the Department of Conservation's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program, the more than 118,000 acres of forest and woodland in Marin County are irreplaceable natural resources. The *Forest Health Strategy* details how Marin County's land managers and fire agencies are working together to advance actions that will promote forest health and ecosystem resilience at landscape scale in the face of climate change and other stressors. This CWPP will support continued collaboration to ensure fire prevention and landscape resilience efforts are complimentary and coordinated wherever they intersect.

Vision for Implementation

The CWPP is designed to be used as a reference for prioritizing wildfire resilience investments, designing projects, and coordinating programs across agencies. It is intended to inform budgeting, grant applications, capital planning, and annual work programs.

In addition, the CWPP can steer policy discussions, drive changes to local and state building codes and ordinances, and promote insurability in Marin County.

The CWPP framework and underlying datasets will be updated annually; completed projects will be reflected in the data, priorities will be recalculated, and programs will adapt based on measured outcomes.

The CWPP is not designed to supplant local expertise. Local fire agencies bring place-based knowledge that helps to contextualize and operationalize the recommendations in the CWPP into programs and tactics appropriate at the neighborhood scale. Instead, the CWPP is designed to outline a set of strategic guiding principles and foster inter-agency communication among fire and land management agencies in Marin County.

Marin Wildfire Prevention Authority member agencies can submit proposals for MWPA funding as part of the annual work plan development process. For fire prevention activities in the Tiburon / Belvedere peninsula, please contact the Tiburon Fire District.

