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INYO COUNTY

Office of Emergency Services

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Public Comment Open for Community Wildfire Protection Plans

Independence and 40 Acres Fire Safe Councils seek your feedback

Wildfires are continuously knocking at our doors. It is imperative that we come together as neighbors, land managers, and responders to ensure our communities can thrive alongside wildfire. Community wildfire protection planning is one of the most important components of a wildfire safety strategy. Curious what these robust plans look like?

February 27 through March 27, the Fire Safe Councils of 40 Acres and Independence are asking the public to review and comment on their communities' draft Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP). These CWPPs, along with instructions for submitting comments, will be available online at the Inyo County Office of Emergency Services website (<https://www.inyocounty.us/services/emergency-services>). Hard copies will be available at the public library in Independence and other sites that will be listed on the County website. An open house in Independence will also be held on Tuesday, March 7, 2023 from 5-7 p.m. at the Owens Valley School Multi-Purpose Room to gather community input. A similar event at 40 Acres will be held on March 4, 2023 from 1-3 p.m. at Kay Ogden's home and virtually on March 8, 2023 from 6- 7:30 p.m.

These CWPPs will allow 40 Acres and the greater Independence area to plan and prioritize projects that can make a difference in protecting homes, residents, and first responders in the event of a wildfire. These CWPPs consist of a description of the wildland urban interface (WUI) and the fire environment, a risk-hazard assessment and analysis, mitigation strategies, and project tracking and monitoring strategies.

Now is a great time to get familiar with these plans, as Inyo County embarks on updating the countywide CWPP this year. Public involvement in developing CWPPs is a foundational component, and there will be many opportunities for input.

The development of these CWPPs was overseen by the respective Fire Safe Councils of 40 Acres and Independence, which includes the Fort Independence Tribe. Technical expertise and input were gathered from a core group of planning representatives from various government agencies, including California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), LADWP, and Inyo County Office of Emergency Services (OES), along with the Whitebark Institute and other community or organization representatives. Public meetings were held in each of these communities to gather input and tailor the plan to fit the priorities of the communities.

In partnership with the 40 Acres Fire Safe Council, Independence Fire Safe Council, and the Whitebark Institute, funding for this project was provided by a grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as part of the California Climate Investments Program, through the California Fire Safe Council.

Community Wildfire Preparedness Project, is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing GHG emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment— particularly in disadvantaged communities. The Cap-and-Trade program also creates a financial incentive for industries to invest in clean technologies and develop innovative ways to reduce pollution. California Climate Investments projects include affordable housing, renewable energy, public transportation, zero-emission vehicles, environmental restoration, more sustainable agriculture, recycling, and much more. At least 35 percent of these investments are located within and benefiting residents of disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households across California. For more information, visit the California Climate Investment website at: <http://www.caclimateinvestments.ca.gov/>.

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