

# WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE FIRE PROTECTION PLAN

## 10-7-1: PURPOSE:

Valley County's community wildfire protection plan acknowledges that wildfire hazard areas exist throughout the county. Therefore, wildfire mitigation actions are prudent to enable safe habitation in these fire environments. The Valley County fire working group recommends that a requirement for the development and approval of a wildland urban interface fire protection plan be added as an addendum to the Valley County subdivision regulations ordinance. The existence of said plan will assist the Valley County planning and zoning commission and the structural fire districts in satisfying the current subdivision regulation, subsection [10-3-2-6D7](#) of this title. (Ord. 10-07, 8-26-2010)

## 10-7-2: DEFINITIONS:

**APPROVED:** Refers to approval as the result of review, inspection or tests by reason of accepted principles.

**ASPECT:** Generally, refers to the direction to which a mountain slope faces. For example: A slope that faces the sun in the afternoon has a westerly aspect or is a west facing slope.

**DEFENSIBLE SPACE:** Refers to that area between a building and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been modified to reduce the wildfire threat and to provide an opportunity for firefighters to effectively defend the building.

**FORESTED:** Idaho Code title 38, chapter 1 (Idaho forestry act) defines "forestland" as meaning "any land which has upon it sufficient brush or flammable forest growth of any kind or size, living or dead, standing or down, including debris or growth following a fire or removal of forest products, to constitute a fire menace to life (including animal) or property".

**FUEL BREAK:** An area, strategically located for fighting anticipated wildfires, where the vegetation has been modified or removed so that fires burning into it can be more easily controlled. Fuel breaks may divide fire prone areas into smaller areas for easier fire control and to provide access for firefighting.

**PROFESSIONAL:** Can include qualified professional forester, fire ecologist, or comparable experience. Professionals can be prequalified by the commission or recommended by the Valley County fire working group and kept on record at the planning and zoning office.

**PROFESSIONAL FORESTER:** An individual holding at least a Bachelor of Science degree in forestry from an accredited four (4) year institution. (This is consistent with Idaho state tax commission rule 960 of the Idaho administrative code, Idaho state tax commission, PDAPA 35.01.03, section 04.)

**SLOPE:** The variation of terrain from the horizontal; the number of feet of rise or fall per one hundred feet (100') measured horizontally, expressed as a percentage.

**STRUCTURE:** That which is built or constructed, an edifice or building of any kind or any piece of work artificially built up or composed or parts joined together in some manner.

**VALLEY COUNTY FIRE WORKING GROUP:** This group is given charter by the Valley County board of commissioners and is tasked with oversight of the community wildfire protection plan. This group is represented by local fire departments, SITPA, public land managers (USFS, IDL, BOR), bureau of homeland security, West Central Highlands RC&D, Valley County Natural Resource Consultants, etc.

**WILDFIRE:** An uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels, exposing and possibly consuming structures.

**WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE AREA:** That geographical area where structures and other human development meets or intermingles with wildland or vegetative fuels. (Ord. 10-07, 8-26-2010)

## 10-7-3: BASIS FOR RECOMMENDATION:

Valley County adopted the 2006 international fire code, which references the international wildland urban interface when dealing with wildlands. The following addendum's structure set out in section [10-7-4](#) of this chapter is based on the 2006 wildland urban interface area requirements section 405. (Ord. 10-07, 8-26-2010)

**10-7-4: SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:**

- A. General: All developers of proposed subdivisions shall provide a wildland urban interface fire protection plan (the plan) for review and approval by the planning and zoning commission with their preliminary plat application or planned unit development submittal.
- B. Content: The plan shall be based upon a site-specific wildfire risk assessment that includes consideration of location, topography, aspect, flammable vegetation, climatic conditions and fire history. The plan shall address water supply, access, fire protection systems and equipment, defensible space, and vegetation management.
  - 1. Preparation: The plan shall be developed by a "professional" (see definition in section [10-7-2](#) of this chapter). Professionals can be prequalified by the commission and a list will be maintained at the Valley County planning and zoning office.
  - 2. Format: The plan shall consist of two (2) sections:

**a. Wildfire Risk Assessment: This portion of the plan includes a map and narrative describing the status of the land to be developed. At a minimum, the following must be included:**

(1) Topographic map. Use blank map format included on the last page.

(2) Site description including discussion of slope(s), aspect(s), and significant topographic features.

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(3) Narrative describing existing vegetation and fuel hazards, distribution, and continuity.

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(4) Fire history, including historical occurrence, causes, typical wind and climatic conditions which influence fire behavior.

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(5) Existing roads and bridges, including a description of widths, grade percentages and weight limits.

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(6) Location of existing structures and an estimate of the proposed density, types and sizes of planned structures.

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(7) Infrastructure that may affect wildland fire risk (i.e., existing power lines, railroad lines, propane tanks, etc.).

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(8) Description of existing features that may assist in controlling a wildfire (i.e., fuel breaks, water sources, etc.).

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(9) Current structural and wildland fire jurisdictional agencies.

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(10) Effect of proposed development on current wildland fire risk within the development area and to adjacent landowners.

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**b. Wildfire Risk Mitigation: This portion of the plan includes a map(s) and narrative detailing planned wildfire hazard mitigation actions to be taken by the developer prior to individual lot development to mitigate risks to life and property from wildland fire. Specific items to be addressed include:**

(1) Access - planned ingress and egress routes.

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(2) Water supply for structural and wildland fire response.

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(3) Estimated response time and distances for jurisdictional fire agencies.

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(4) Planned internal fire protection systems and/or equipment, including buried tanks, wells, hydrants, drylines, etc., along with protective measures for systems and/or equipment.

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(5) Proposed infrastructure, including bridge standards, road widths, grades, signage, aboveground/belowground power lines, etc.

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(6) Safety zone locations.

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(7) Planned live and dead fuel treatment actions, including modification through thinning, pruning, piling, chipping, and fuel break construction; and removal through commercial harvest, chipping and hauling or prescribed burning.

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(8) Long term maintenance schedule to sustain fuel treatment effectiveness.

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(9) Analysis of the overall change in wildland fire risk within the development and to adjacent landowners once the planned mitigation actions are implemented.

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3. Submittal, Implementation and Verification:

- a. The plan shall be submitted with the preliminary plat application to the Valley County planning and zoning office.
  - b. Planned mitigation work must be completed or financially guaranteed prior to the recordation of the final plat. A schedule for the phased completion of mitigation work may be approved in conjunction with recordation of final plats.
  - c. Verification of completed implementation of mitigation actions will be the responsibility of the jurisdictional structural fire district. Where no structural fire district exists, the Valley County sheriff shall appoint a county representative.
4. Exceptions: Proposed administrative plats of less than five (5) lots and proposed subdivisions with lands less than twenty percent (20%) "forested" (see definition in section [10-7-2](#) of this chapter) are exempt from the **professional requirement**. For proposed subdivisions fitting these descriptions, the developer may complete the plan (see the fire protection form). The plan for an administrative plat can be approved by the administrator upon receiving an approval letter from the fire district.
5. Cost: The cost and implementation of the plan preparation shall be the responsibility of the applicant.
6. Plan Retention: The approved plan shall be retained at the Valley County planning and zoning office and the jurisdictional fire district or designated agency where no fire district exists. (Ord. 10-07, 8-26-2010)

Use additional pages as necessary. If you have map already constructed, it may be used instead.

