

Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs)

SOLUTION WHITE PAPER

Wildfire risk across the United States is rising fast—and most communities are unprepared. With most at-risk areas lacking a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), the window to act is closing. The final round of federal funding through the Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG) is rapidly approaching, and without a CWPP, cities and counties are ineligible to apply. That's not just a missed opportunity—it's a costly liability. A CWPP is more than a plan on paper; it's the foundation for securing federal dollars, implementing life-saving mitigation projects, and protecting what matters most.

A CWPP is a locally driven strategy that helps communities reduce wildfire risk and unlock critical funding. It's the foundation for protecting lives, property, and natural resources.

A CWPP helps communities:

- Identify wildfire hazards and prioritize high-risk areas
- Plan fuel reduction projects and evacuation routes
- Coordinate with fire agencies and emergency services
- Qualify for state and federal wildfire mitigation grants

Without a CWPP, your community may be left unprotected—and unfunded.

CI International brings the experience, technical expertise, and national leadership in wildfire planning to help your community take action—before it's too late. Our team includes former federal fire officials, wildfire risk assessors, and expert facilitators who have developed Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Emergency Services Strategic Plans, Forest Management Plans, and other guiding documents that meet federal standards and drive real, on-the-ground results. We don't deliver one-size-fits-all solutions. Instead, we collaborate with community leaders, emergency personnel, land managers, and residents to craft wildfire protection strategies grounded in local priorities and informed by best-available science. **We embed funding strategy into every plan—ensuring your CWPP is not only compliant, but also capable of unlocking the grants that turn planning into action. Partner with CI International and take the first—and most important—step toward a safer, more resilient future.**

Summary of Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Consulting Process

The CWPP consulting methodology can be visualized as a **step-by-step process** that integrates stakeholder collaboration, risk analysis, planning, and implementation. Below is a concise outline of the overall process.



1. **Initiate & Identify Stakeholders** | *Organize & Coordinate*: We begin by convening local officials, fire chiefs, emergency managers, and state forestry representatives to define goals, roles, and a timeline for the CWPP. We establish a stakeholder engagement plan to ensure inclusive input and secure leadership buy-in early—laying the foundation for a collaborative, community-driven process.



2. **Mapping & Risk Assessment** | *Define the WUI & Assess Risks*: We create a detailed base map of the community, highlighting the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) and values at risk. Our team conducts a comprehensive hazard and risk assessment—analyzing fuels, fire history, housing vulnerability, and critical infrastructure—to identify high-risk zones that demand attention.



3. **Community Input & Priorities** | *Stakeholders & Public Collaboration*: Through town halls, surveys, and workshops, we engage residents, landowners, and key partners to surface concerns and identify local priorities. We work toward consensus on priority areas for fuel reduction, home hardening, and emergency improvements—ensuring the plan reflects local knowledge and shared values.



4. **Action Plan Development** | *Draft the CWPP Plan—Projects and Implementation Strategy*: We compile the full CWPP: community profile, maps, risk analysis, and agreed-upon mitigation actions. Each recommendation—fuel breaks, defensible space campaigns, evacuation routes—is supported by a clear implementation roadmap outlining who will do what, and when. The plan fully aligns with HFRA guidelines and is refined through community feedback.



5. **Grant Application Development** | *Go After the Money!*: We don't stop at planning—we position your community to act. Each priority project is linked to viable funding streams, including CWDG and state-level programs. We develop project-ready language and assign responsibilities to ensure your plan translates directly into fundable, shovel-ready proposals—with measurable progress built in.



6. **Approve & Adopt** | *Finalize and Adopt the CWPP*: We secure formal approval from local governments, fire authorities, and state agencies, then help promote the plan to the public. Your CWPP is integrated into emergency management and land use frameworks, ensuring it becomes a living document—ready to guide mitigation efforts and unlock funding for years to come.



The CI International Wildfire Planning Team

Jeff Wyatt is a seasoned fire service professional with over two decades of experience, culminating in retirement as an Air Force Fire Chief. He holds two master's degrees from the University of Denver—one in Environmental Policy and Management and another in Leadership and Organizations—and a bachelor's degree in Fire Emergency Services Administration from Colorado State University. Jeff has facilitated the creation of community and WUI (Wildland Urban Interface) risk assessments for fire departments across the nation and has taught advanced concepts in community risk reduction. He excels at guiding committees and agencies toward strategic planning, ensuring all stakeholders understand how to mitigate wildfire threats effectively. Jeff's leadership style is grounded in fostering data-driven decisions, enhancing interagency collaboration, and delivering resilient outcomes for communities.

Kimberly Lightley brings a powerful combination of technical expertise, field experience, and personal insight into wildfire risk management. As a surviving crewmember of the South Canyon Fire on Storm King Mountain, her perspective is deeply personal, she understands the stakes and channels that experience into every plan she supports. Kimberly began her career fighting wildland fires on engine crews and elite hotshot teams, gaining firsthand knowledge of safety and mitigation in action. She later served as a Risk Management Program Specialist for the USDA Forest Service Washington Office, where she shaped national strategies to protect people and resources. Today, she partners with agencies at all levels to deliver strategic assessments and guide the development of actionable, community-rooted CWPPs. Her credibility, compassion, and commitment make her a trusted ally in building wildfire resilience. Kimberly holds a Master of Science in Risk Management from Notre Dame of Maryland University and a Bachelor of Science in Biology from George Fox University.

Gary Bettger is a seasoned facilitator with an-depth experience in the land management arena. He has provided extensive facilitation to the USDA Forest Service, particularly Fire & Aviation Management, including the Complex Incident Mgt (CIM) After Action Review (AAR), with over a hundred different stakeholders from USDA, DOI, and beyond. He also supports the California Fire Safe Council in program evaluation/impact assessment. He is certified Project Management Professional and adjunct professor at George Mason University, where he teaches program evaluation. He is a former strategic planning practice leader at Booz Allen Hamilton.

Fred Richardson is a principal at CI International with over 25 years of experience in the management consulting sector. He is a certified facilitator with lengthy experience working with non-profit communities in the land management arena. While at Booz Allen Hamilton, Fred served as project manager for the 2013-2014 Quadrennial Fire Review, a federal interagency effort to develop a 20-year forecast for the future of wildland fire in the United States. He acts as CI International's account manager for business with the USDA Forest Service's Fire & Aviation Management directorate. He holds a masters degree from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas.

Ready for a powerful partnership?

Contact us to start the conversation.

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