

# San Benito Wildfire Resilience Program Community Meeting

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Thursday, August 15, 2024



# Agenda

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- 5:30 Arrivals & Food**
- 5:45 Overview & Introductions**
- 6:00 Cultural Significance of Fire**
- 6:10 Lessons Learned from the June 2024 Tres Pinos Fire**
- 6:20 San Benito Wildfire Risk Assessment and Strategies**
- 6:30 Fire Prevention, Fuels Reduction, & Post-Fire Recovery Projects**
- 6:40 Q&A**
- 7:00 Small Groups Discussions/Open House**
- 7:45 Large Group Plenary: Concerns & Potential Solutions**
- 8:00 Adjourn**

# San Benito Wildfire Resilience Program Goals



Better understand wildfire hazards and risks for communities and resources in San Benito County



Share information and solicit ideas from community members



Update the County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)



Develop an actionable Regional Prioritization Plan (RPP) plan of projects to reduce hazardous fuels and reduce risk



Develop burn plans and environmental documentation for priority projects

# Core Collaborators Team

- University of California Cooperative Extension
- San Benito Resource Conservation District
- San Benito Agricultural Land Trust
- San Benito Fire Safe Council
- San Benito County Office of Emergency Services
- Amah Mutsun Land Trust
- Central Coast Prescribed Burn Association
- City of Hollister Fire Department
- San Benito County Cattlemen's Association
- CAL FIRE
- California State Parks
- Bureau of Land Management
- National Park Service (Pinnacles)
- Environmental Science Associates (Consultant team)
- Spatial Informatics Group (Consultant team)



# What is a **Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)**?

- Provides an updated hazard assessment for an area
- Creates a list of next-step actions and priorities
- Opens doors for funding
- Shift wildfire prevention, response, and recovery culture

## **Minimum requirements**

Local and regional collaboration

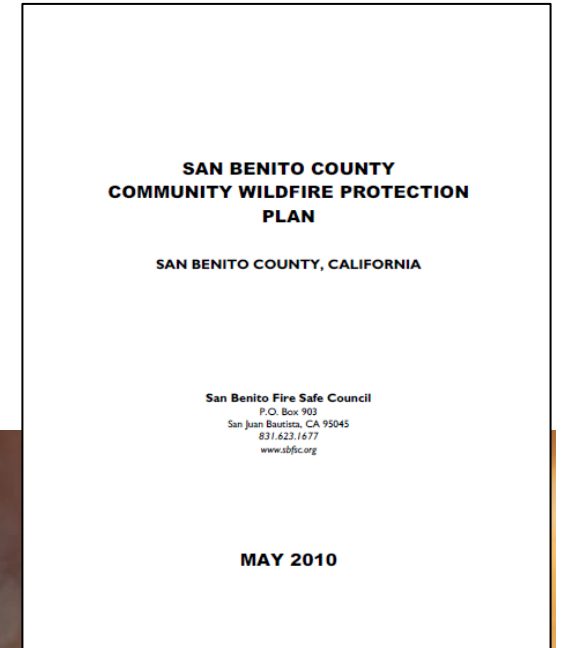
Identify and prioritize areas for wildfire risk reduction projects

Identify strategies for reducing structural ignitability



# San Benito CWPP Update

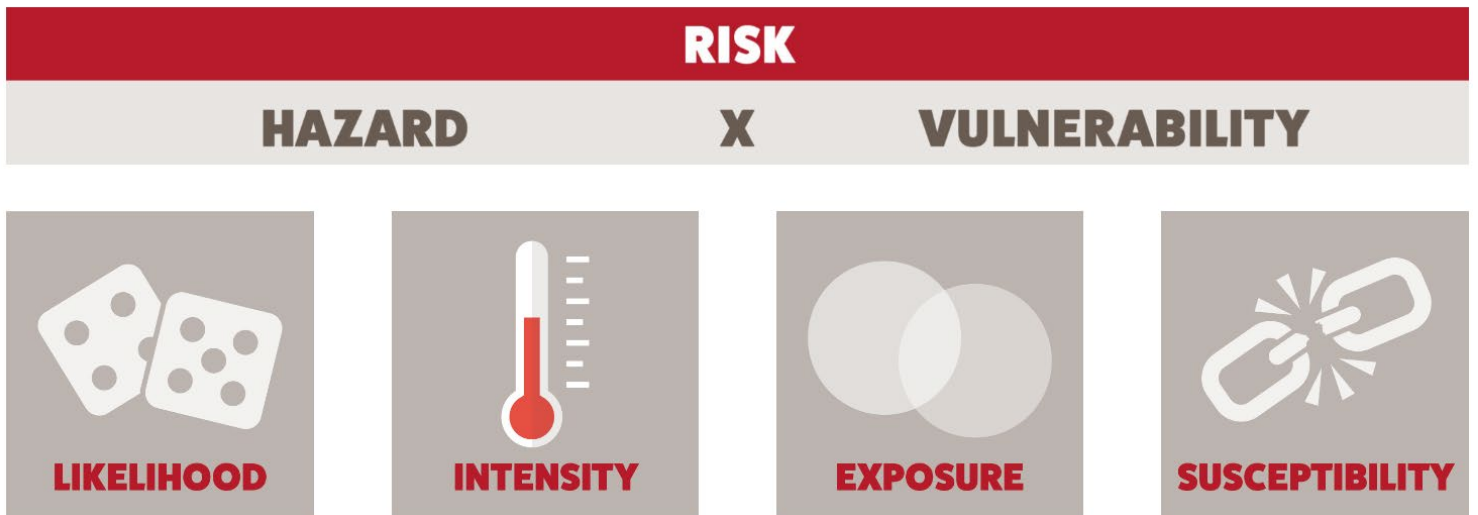
- Guidance recommends updates every 5 years
- Prior CWPP published in 2010 – lots has changed!
  - ✓ More fires burning more land
  - ✓ Hotter and drier conditions
  - ✓ More people causing more ignitions (accidental and intentional)
  - ✓ 100+ years of fire suppression → more dense, burnable vegetation
- Update will include:
  - Updated definition of wildfire risk in San Benito County
  - Recommendations to reduce risk
  - Prioritized actions and projects



Salinas Fire, 2020

# Values, Resources, and Assets at Risk

- Human lives
- Properties/Structures/  
Infrastructure
- Businesses
- Habitats and species
- Air quality
- Water quality and supply
- Recreational sites
- Cultural sites
- Historic sites



Identifying and prioritizing Highly Valued Resources and Assets (HVRAs) helps evaluate the potential consequences of wildfires and develop targeted strategies to reduce risk.

# Small Group Discussions/Open House

## *Community Participatory Mapping*

Where are the places that matter most to you and why?

## *Fire Prevention and Response*

What are you most concerned about with respect to wildfire?

What are some potential actions that you as a resident and/or homeowner can take?

What wildfire projects should be prioritized?

How can we improve communication and outreach on wildfire risks and preparedness?

How can we build resilience to wildfire?

## *Open House/Flip Charts*

What are you most concerned about with respect to wildfire?

If you had \$100,000 to improve your community's wildfire prevention and response efforts, how would you spend it?

Which actions are you currently implementing or need help to successfully implement?