

PUBLIC SAFETY CITIZENS' COMMITTEE 2025

FLAGSTAFF FIRE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION, FEBRUARY 4, 2026



COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION: THE 5 E'S

EDUCATION



Communications Plan
Fire Wise
School Programming
Elderly Programming
Evacuation Plan

ENFORCEMENT



Special Events
Fire Prevention Inspection &
Investigations
Fire Restrictions
Code Development
WUI Code
Occupancy Load



EMERGENCY RESPONSE



Emergency Medical Services
Fire Suppression (Structural & Wildfire)
Special Operations
(Haz-Mat & Technical Rescue)
Wildfire Management (WFM)
Operations
CARE

ECONOMIC INCENTIVES



Grants
Insurance Crisis
Initiative
ISO Rating
Grant Funded Mitigations
Forest Mitigation Initiative
Air Filtration Program

ENGINEERING



Prescribed Fire
Broadcast/Pile Burn
Community Risk Assessment/Plan
Fuel Reduction
Forest Restoration Plan Review
Fire Investigation
CWPP

WHO WE ARE

Wildland Fire Management (WFM) providing exceptional customer service to the community, visitors, and surrounding region.

- 9 personnel working proactively, and collaboratively to deliver mitigation and response services to Flagstaff and the Greater Flagstaff Region.
- Modern wildland fire management strategizes within the 5 Es of community risk reduction.

WHO WE ARE

- WFM reducing risk in the community as a fire department battalion



WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT VISION

The Wildland Fire Management Program vision is led by the best available science, enabling meaningful progress towards safe and effective wildfire response, resilience landscapes and fire adapted communities.

WHO WE ARE

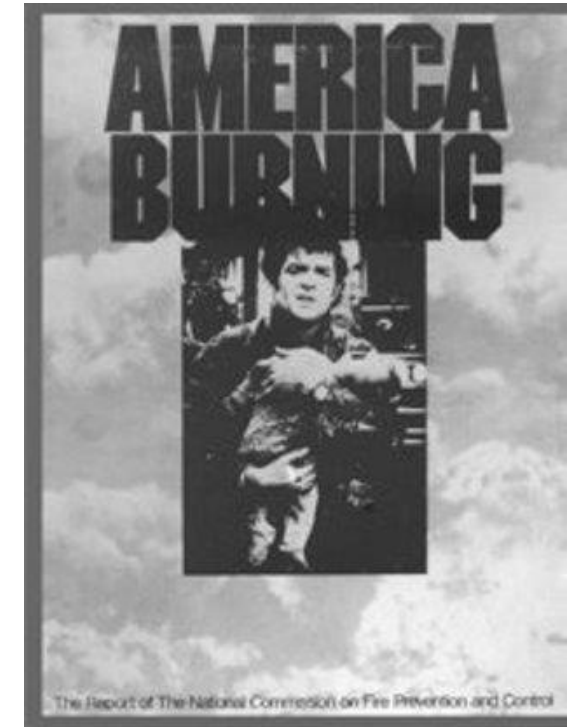
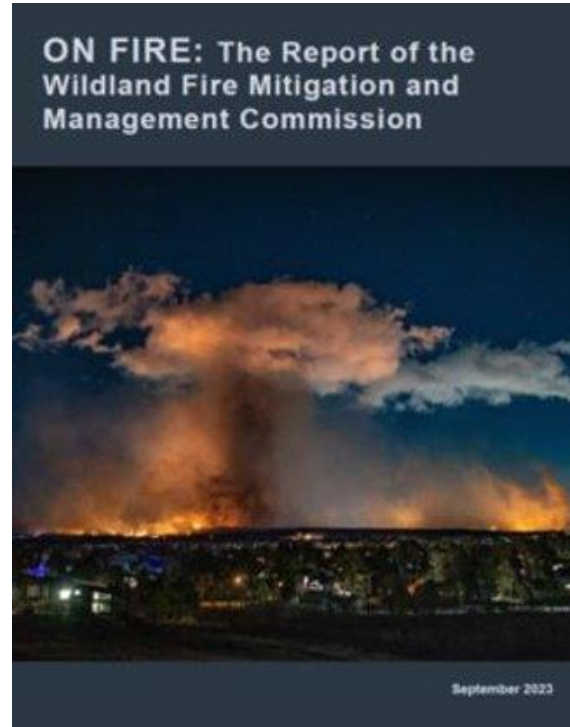
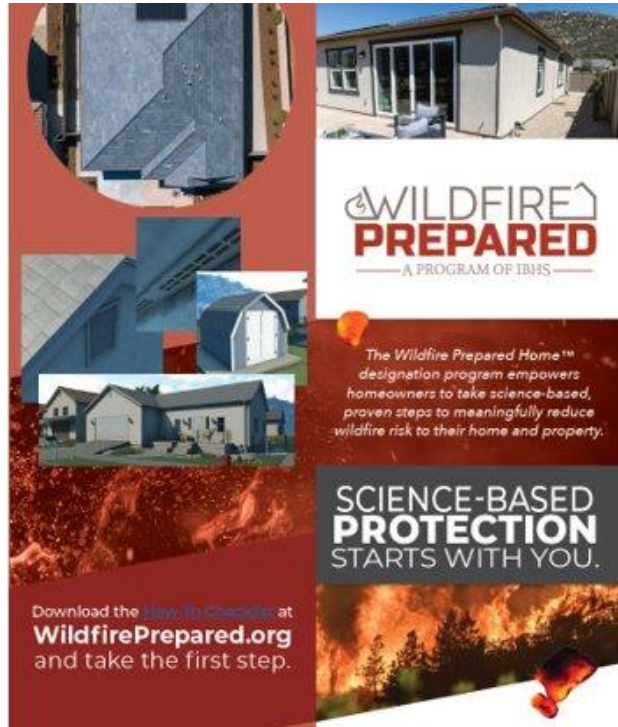
Initiatives

- Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project
- Flagstaff Carbon Neutrality Plan
- Flagstaff Wildland Urban Interface Code
- Greater Flagstaff Forest Partnership
- Gordan and Betty Moore Foundation's Wildfire Resilience Initiative
- Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network
- Firewise USA*
- Four Forest Restoration Initiative
- National Emergency Response Support and Training
- National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy
- Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission

Our Tactics (5 E's of Community Risk Reduction)

- Develop and **Enforce** science-based codes and ordinances
- **Engineer** a fire adapted natural and built environment
- Continuously improve **Emergency Response**
- **Educate** citizens on wildfire risk reduction actions and the natural role of beneficial fire
- Support **Economic** incentives that encourage parcel level action and wildfire risk reduction investments at scale

BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE DRIVES FIRE SERVICE MODERNIZATION AND WFM SERVICES



WHAT WE DO



WHAT WE DO



Photos taken



Photos taken at the
same location

WHAT WE DO

Non-
Engineered Enviro
nment



FIRE-SUPPRESSED FOREST Fire in a ponderosa pine forest where fires have been repeatedly suppressed: Overcrowding can make the forest less healthy and resilient. When such a forest burns, the fire can extend into the crowns, killing large swaths of trees. © Erica Sloniker / TNC

Severe Economic
Impacts

Engineered
Environment



FIRE-MAINTAINED FOREST Fire in a ponderosa pine forest using controlled burns with or without mechanical thinning: A fire burns low through the understory, maintaining gaps between some trees that help prevent future large crown fires. © Erica Sloniker / TNC

Less Severe
Economic Impacts



THE WILDFIRE PROBLEM FOR FLAGSTAFF SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF UNNATURAL, HIGH SEVERITY FOREST FIRE

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SCHULTZ FIRE OVER 10 YEARS TOTALED BETWEEN
\$109 - \$114 MILLION.

ENGINEER



HOW WE ENGINEER THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Fuel reduction thinning

Private sector

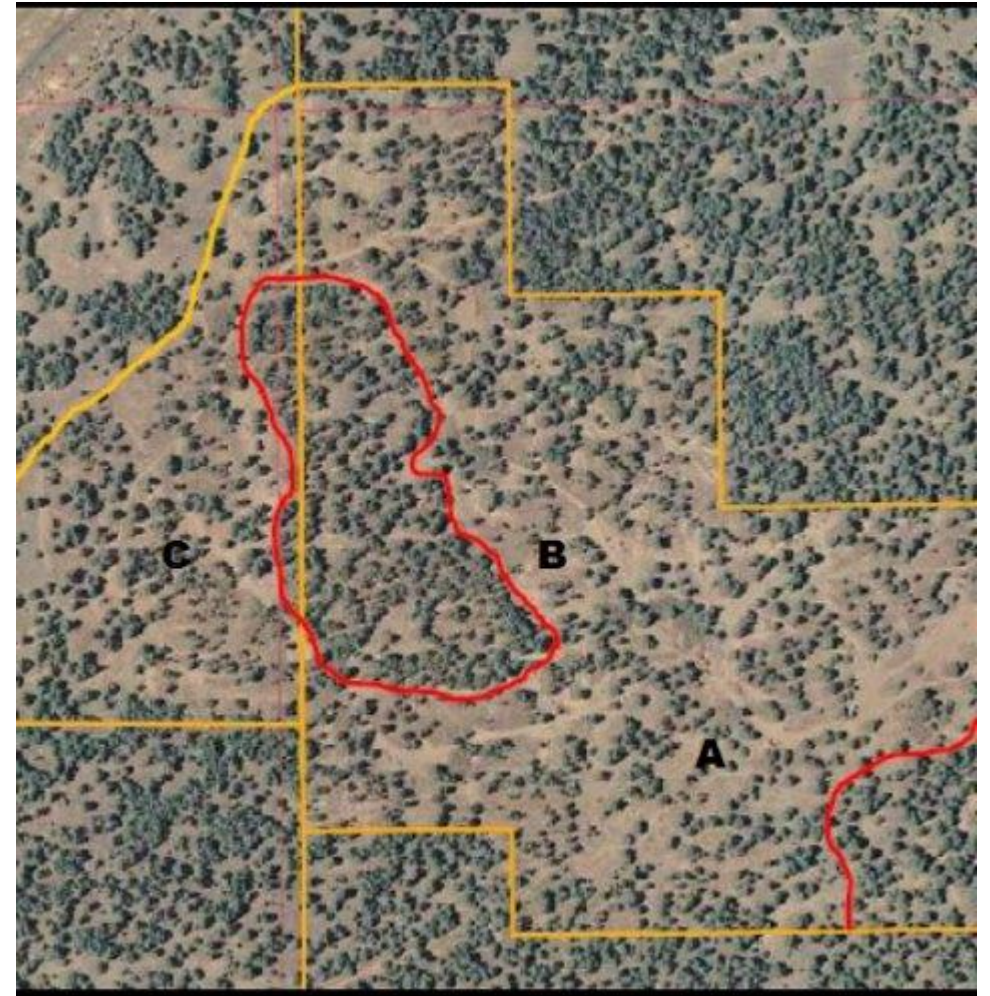
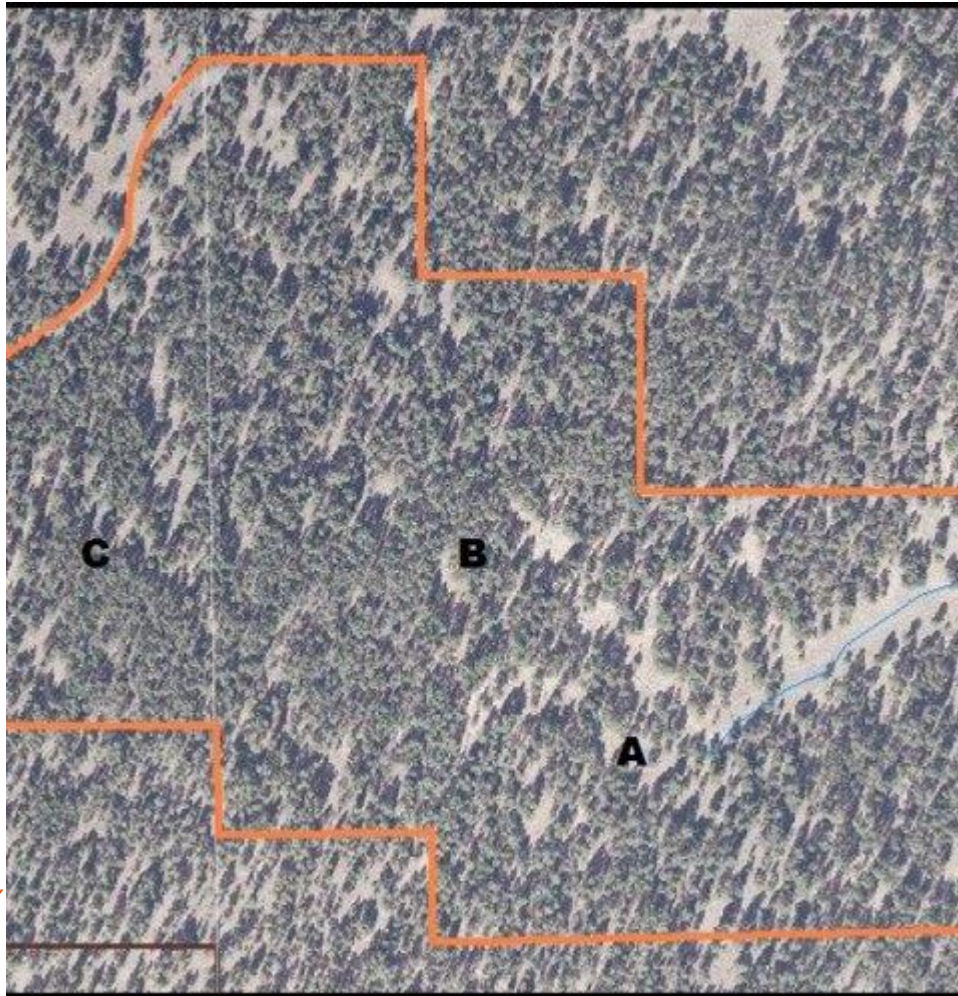


Fuel reduction burning

Public sector



WHAT WE DO



RX FIRE/BENEFICIAL FIRE



RX FIRE/BENEFICIAL FIRE



ENABLING BENEFICIAL FIRE



ENABLING BENEFICIAL FIRE

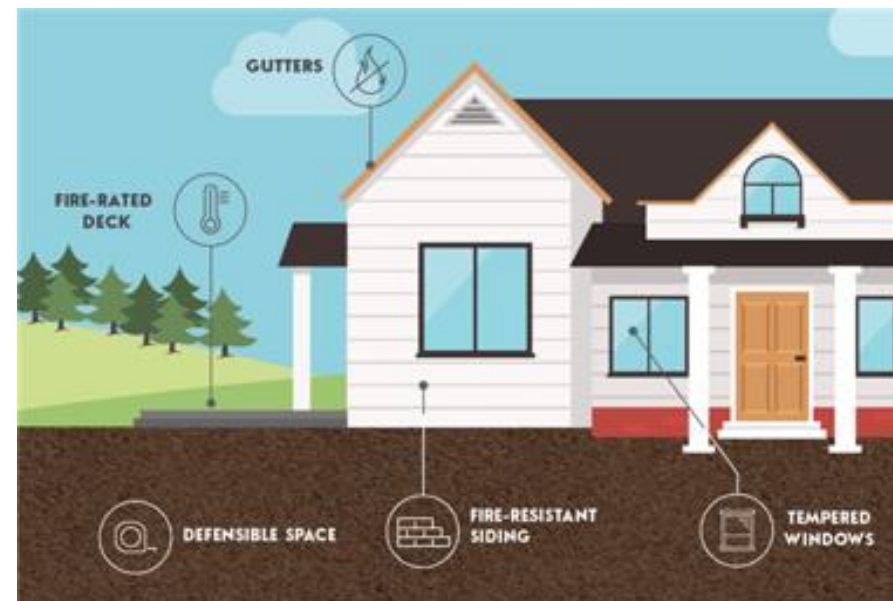


HOW WE ENGINEER THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Defensible Space



Home Hardening





ZONE ZERO



DEVELOP AND
ENFORCE
SCIENCE-BASED
CODES AND
ORDINANCES



EDUCATE CITIZENS ON WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION ACTIONS

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- All stations have wildland apparatus available for response 24/7 365.
- All Fire Department Line Personnel are qualified to respond to and suppress wildland fires.
- Year-round planning for response.
- WFM staff supports the 24-hour line personnel with a team of 9 full-time firefighters.





TRAINING (CONTINUOUS SUPPORT OF RESPONSE DEMANDS)

- Response training begins at the academy level and is required through the duration of a career.
- All FFD personnel are required to complete 24 hours of annual wildland fire training. These qualification requirements are met throughout the year.
- WFM staff provide wildland fire training to 200 firefighters throughout the Greater Flagstaff Region.



MARS FIRE, JULY 9, 2023

- *Red flag day* (combination of high winds, low relative humidity and high temperatures)
- **Engineered (treated) area**
- The initial response included 1 FFD engine (3) and WFM Module (5)
- Resistance to control was low with flame lengths less than 1 foot.
- Fire was easily contained that day

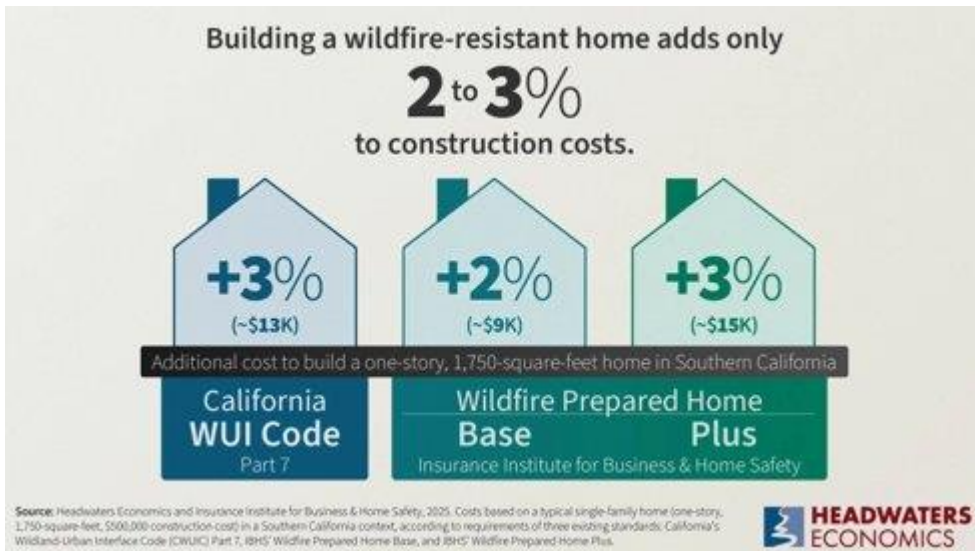


BEAR FIRE, JULY 10, 2023

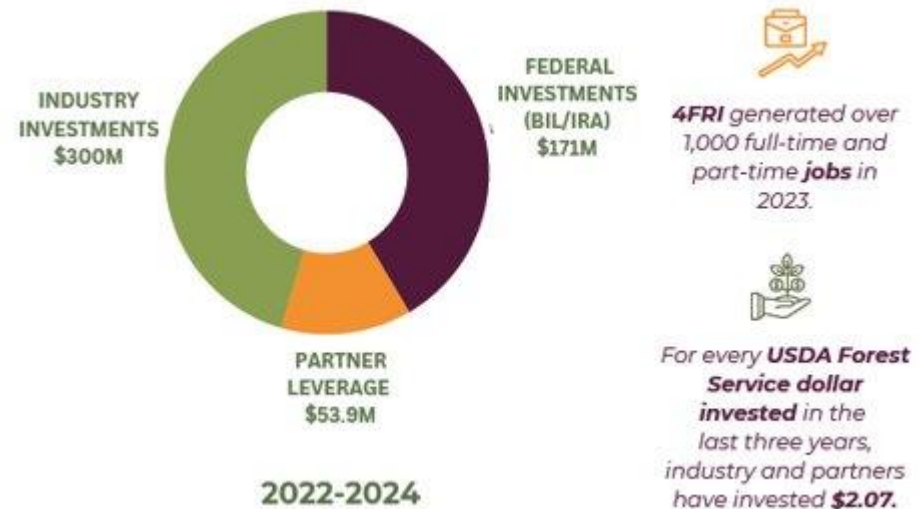
- Red flag day
- **Untreated area**
- The initial response included 3 Forest Service Engines (15), 1 Hotshot Crew (20), 1 Initial Attack Dozer (2), and several Patrol units (4).
- Resistance to control was high enough for the Incident Commander to order 2 helicopters for water drops.
- Containment took multiple days

SUPPORT ECONOMIC INCENTIVES THAT ENCOURAGE PARCEL LEVEL ACTION AND WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION INVESTMENTS AT SCALE

Built Environment



Natural Environment



- MAINTAINS PRIVATE MARKET INSURABILITY
- EXPECTED TO REDUCE OR MITIGATE INCREASES TO INSURANCE PREMIUMS

WHAT'S CHANGED

PUBLIC SAFETY CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE - FLAGSTAFF FIRE DEPARTMENT PRESENTATION

WHAT HAS CHANGED

- Wildfire Resource Infrastructure Protection Fee (WRIP)
 - Water service usage fee paid by all Flagstaff residents – funds WFM program
- 5X increase in home assessment requests since January 2025 (Palisades fire)
 - Need for ongoing funding for community risk specialist (\$127k FY '29/'30)
 - Additional funding for Wildfire Resilient Home Initiative
- Increase costs of personnel and commodities
 - Original fee study in 2019 did not account for increasing costs in personnel and inflationary realities
- Frequency and severity of unplanned, catastrophic wildfire
 - Increased timeline of typical "fire season"
- Wildland fire management training center and program station

WFM/WRIP FUNDING GAPS

- Current operations:
 - Current Deficit: \$290K
(projected in red in 3-4 years)
 - Contractual/commodities
 - Home hardening funding: -\$50k
 - Hazardous fuel reduction projects: -\$100k
 - New WFM facility: -\$125k

WFM/WRIP FUNDING GAPS CONT...

- New position:
 - Wildland fire community health specialist: -\$127k (FY '29-30 full burden)
- WFM training facility – capital
 - WFM construction - \$2M
 - WFM station equipment - \$165k
- Capital:
 - Radio replacement: \$250k

GAPS

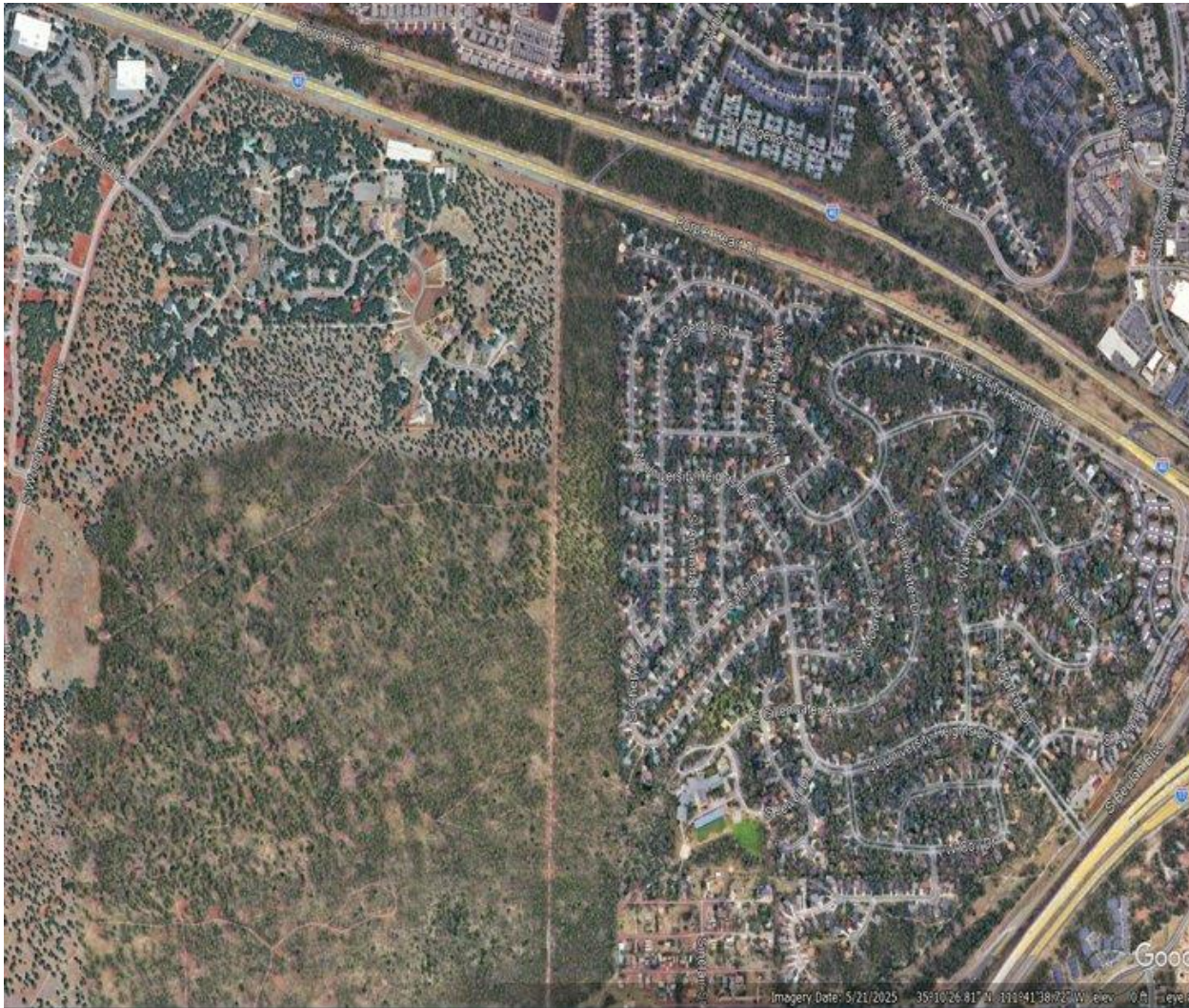


- **Total gap:**
 - Current operations =
 - Ongoing - \$565k
 - capital - \$250k
 - New positions = \$127k
 - Capital WFM/training facility - \$2.165M
- Grand totals
 - Ongoing: -\$692k
 - Capital: -\$2.415M



QUESTIONS?

INSURANCE IMPACTS



WHERE IS
THE
WILDFIRE
RISK?

INSURANCE: DISCONNECT IN UNDERSTANDING WILDFIRE RISK



Alignment Around Mitigations that matter



We cannot suppress, regulate or price our way out of the WUI Fire Problem



Linkage of conditions on the ground to pricing of risk



Close the gap between mitigation actions and what is visible to insurers/modelers



Facilitate impactful and effective community action



Refine & support risk model validity and insurance pricing



Drive down the cost of collecting granular, valid and comprehensive data



Bring consistency to requirements and messaging around mitigations that matter



Facilitate targeted prioritization of mitigations to better allocate scarce resources



Identify and overcome barriers to mitigation



Deepen understanding of fire science studies and fire suppression strategies



Reduce risk to lives and property by preparing communities to receive fire



- ✓ Address vulnerable intersections and flammable surface areas
- ✓ Remove accumulated debris from the roof valleys and gutters
- ✓ Remove flammable debris from on top of and under deck area
- ✓ Maintain a noncombustible zone
- ✓ Reduce fuels around and in between properties including RVs, trailers, outlying buildings, and neighboring homes



SOME OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE RISK
REDUCTION STRATEGIES ARE ALSO THE
MOST AFFORDABLE.

INSURANCE SERVICES OFFICE (ISO) FIRE RATING



INSURANCE SERVICES OFFICE (ISO) FLAGSTAFF FIRE DEPARTMENT

- ISO evaluates a community's fire protection system and assigns a rating from 1 (best) to 10 (minimal).
- Flagstaff Fire Department Rating: Class 2/10 — reflects a strong, high-performing system.
- ISO reviews staffing, apparatus, dispatch, training, and water supply.
- A strong rating is one indicator of preparedness and community resilience.

KEY FACTORS THAT LIMITED A CLASS I RATING

Even with a strong overall score, ISO identified system gaps:

- Two Fully Staffed Quints
- Deployment
- Staffing
- Water system testing

WHAT A BETTER ISO RATING MEANS FOR RESIDENTS & BUSINESSES

- Potential insurance savings for many homeowners and businesses (varies by provider).
- Faster, stronger emergency response during high-risk incidents.
- Increased protection of lives, homes, and local businesses.
- Improved economic development competitiveness and investor confidence.
- Greater system resilience as Flagstaff grows.



CLOSING COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS