



Communities at Risk Report FY2012

March 2013

Background

The National Association of State Foresters (NASF) continually surveys all states to determine progress in identifying communities at risk and developing Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs).¹ This report provides a national snapshot of wildland fire risk, preparedness and capacity. The FY2012 data was collected through the U.S. Forest Service's National Fire Plan Operations & Reporting System (NFPORS), and reflects data accomplishments through September 30, 2012.

State foresters have made advances in the methods and information used to identify and assess communities at risk (CAR). This has led to the identification of 72,397 communities at risk in FY2012. The number of CARs covered by a CWPP (14,755) shows an increase of 5,366 since last year's report (an increase of 57 percent).

Reduced Risk

A community is at reduced risk from wildland fire if it has satisfied at least one of the following requirements:

1. Recognized as a Firewise community or equivalent,
2. Enacted a mitigation/fire prevention ordinance, or
3. High priority hazardous fuels identified in a CWPP are reduced or appropriate fuel levels on such lands are maintained in accordance with plan schedule.

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|---|--------|
| Number of Communities at Risk (CAR) | 72,397 |
| Number of CAR covered by a CWPP or equivalent | 14,775 |
| Percent of CAR covered by a CWPP | 20% |
| Number of CAR at reduced risk | 3,973 |
| Percent of CAR at reduced risk | 5.5% |

Community Wildfire Protection Plans

State foresters collaborate with local communities and others to prepare CWPPs. The table below shows how many of those communities are now covered by a CWPP, as well as how many CAR are at reduced risk.

| Year | Region | Communities | | |
|------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | | Total CAR | Covered by a CWPP | At Reduced Risk |
| 2012 | West | 7,650 | 5,912 | 899 |
| | South | 59,803 | 8,143 | 2,586 |
| | Northeast | 4,941 | 709 | 488 |
| | TOTAL | 72,397 | 14,755 | 3,973 |

¹ NASF does not maintain or publish a list of individual communities at risk.

| Year | Region | Communities | | |
|------|--------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| | | Total CAR | Covered by a CWPP | At Reduced Risk |
| 2011 | | | | |
| | West | 6,796 | 4,235 | 1,280 |
| | South | 54,899 | 4,494 | 2,764 |
| | Northeast | 5,005 | 660 | 723 |
| | TOTAL | 66,700 | 9,389 | 4,767 |

National Increases in Capacity

Many at-risk communities reported increased local suppression capacity as evidenced by:

1. The increasing number of trained and/or certified fire fighters and crews, or
2. Upgraded or new fire suppression equipment obtained, or
3. Formation of a new volunteer fire department or expansion of an existing department.

| | |
|--|---|
| Total firefighters trained State Fire Assistance (SFA): 55,522; Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA): 27,865, | 83,387 |
| Funding provided for upgraded or new fire suppression equipment (SFA: 6.8 million, VFA: \$9.1 million) | \$15.9 million in funding for communities |
| Formation of a new volunteer fire department or expansion of an existing department | 87 |
| Total Number of communities assisted by SFA and VFA | 12,505 |
| Total Communities at Risk | 72,397 |
| Percent of Communities with increased capacity | 17% |