

The Human Cost of Disaster



CITY CLUB OF CENTRAL OREGON, MARCH 18, 2021

Proposed Code Amendments to Reduce Wildfire Risk to Property & Structures

The Bulletin

EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY bendbulletin.com

OREGON WILDFIRES

TOWNS ERASED

Governor: 'Could be the greatest loss of life and structures due to wildfire in state history'



THE SCENE IN **REDMOND**

Displaced people learn the worst

'Just keep your fingers crossed, man,' says one Idanha resident. 'That's all we can do.'

BY KYLE SPURR

The Bulletin

REDMOND — In the parking lot of the Super 8 motel, Ray Mount and his family waited Wednesday to hear if their home in Idanha was spared from one of the many wildfires burning 374,522 acres on the western side of Oregon.

Mount, who manages the Mill City Mobil gas station 24 miles from his home, stood with about 60 other people who were also displaced by the wildfires. They all gathered for an update from Cassidy Kern, a spokesperson for the U.S. Forest Service.

"Just keep your fingers crossed, man," Mount told a friend. "That's all we can do."

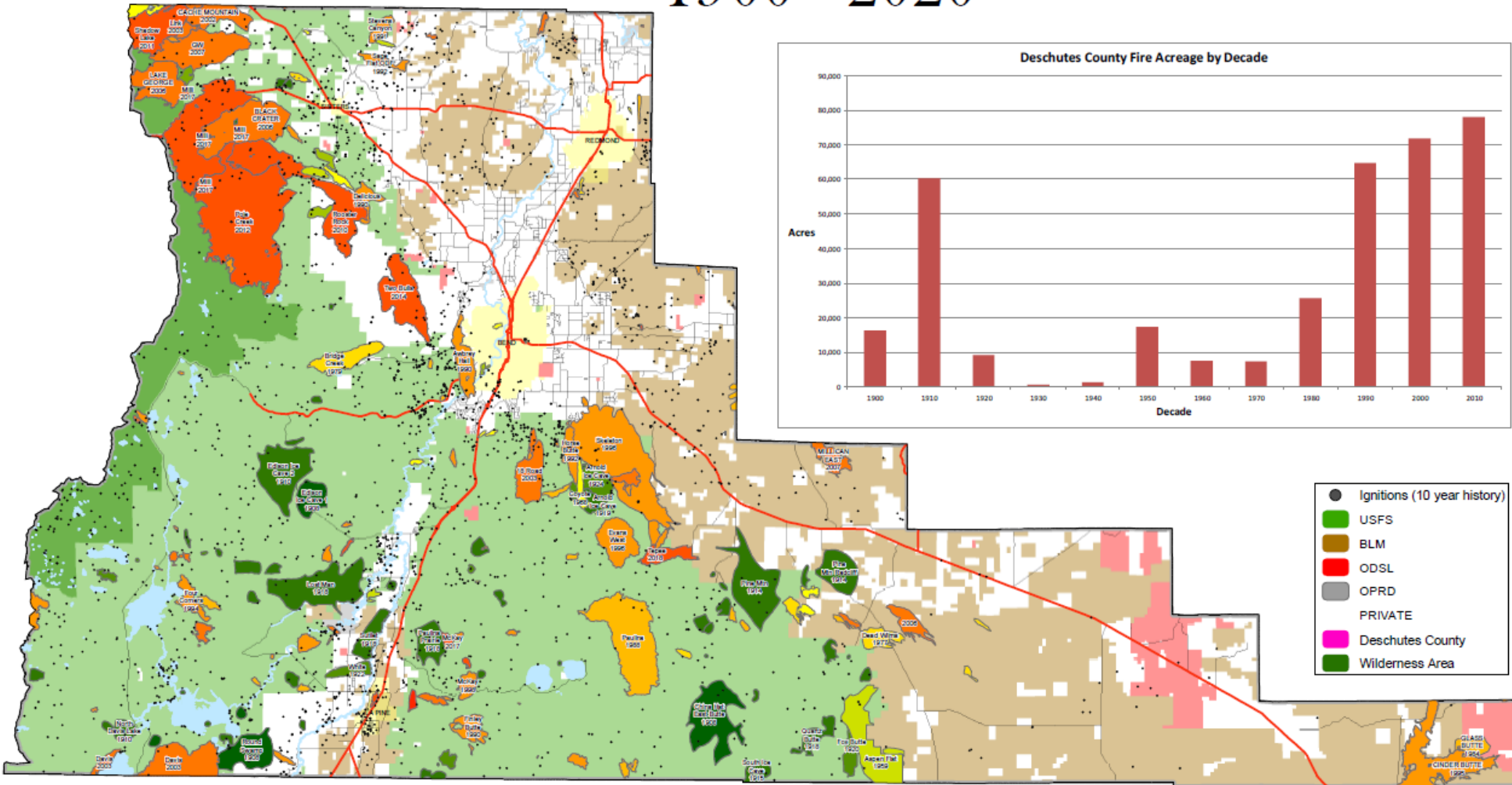
Kern had no information about Mount's home, but said entire towns were mostly destroyed, including towns just a few miles from Idanha, such as Detroit, a popular boating and camping town of about 200 residents on Detroit Lake.

See **Displaced** / A13

Three chairs are all that remain at the Gates post office Wednesday. It was among several buildings destroyed in Gates, a city on the border of Linn and Marion counties. Entire communities from Western to Southern Oregon have been destroyed by wildfire.

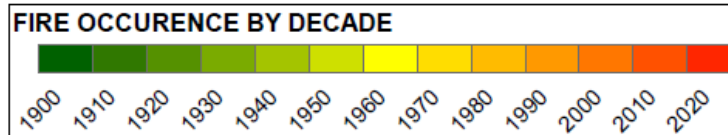


Deschutes County Large* Fire History 1900 - 2020



*fires over 100 acres

Map Prepared by Deschutes County
Natural Resources
Ed Keith
61150 SE 27th Street
Bend, OR 97702
541-322-7117



Wildfire Map & Code Amendments

Background

Where: Wildfire Hazard Zone / Map

Structures: Wildfire – Resistant Building Codes

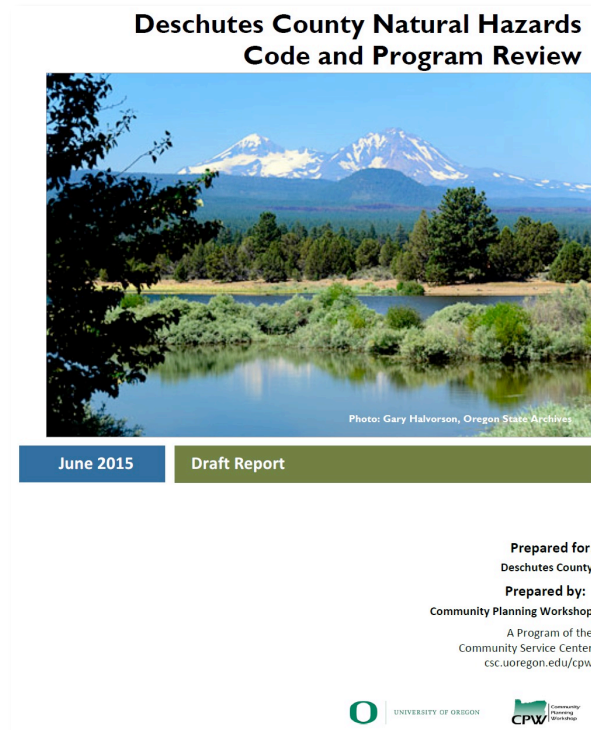
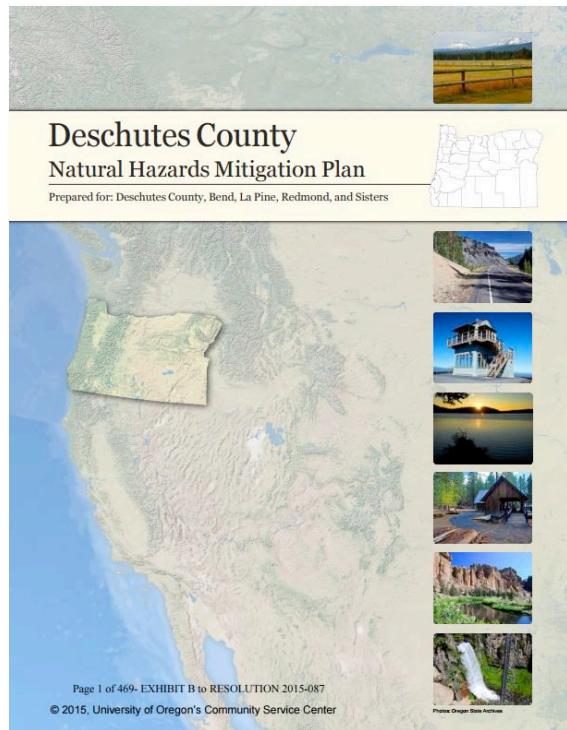
Property: Defensible Space

Next Steps

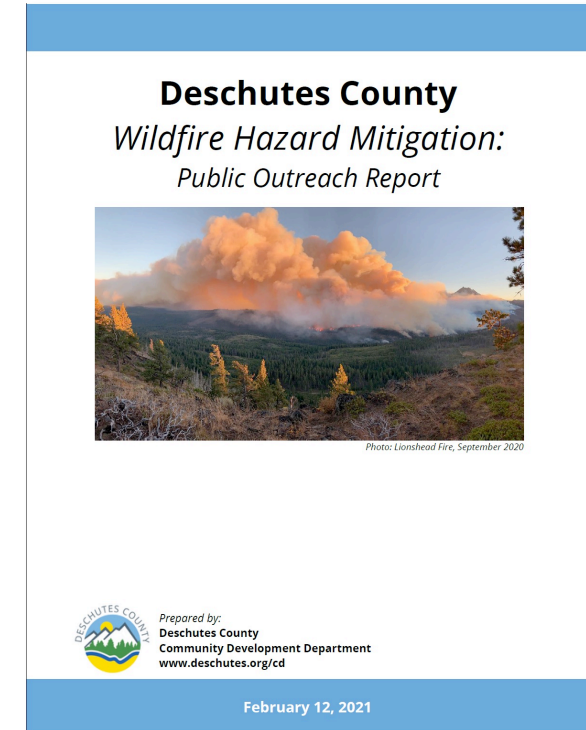
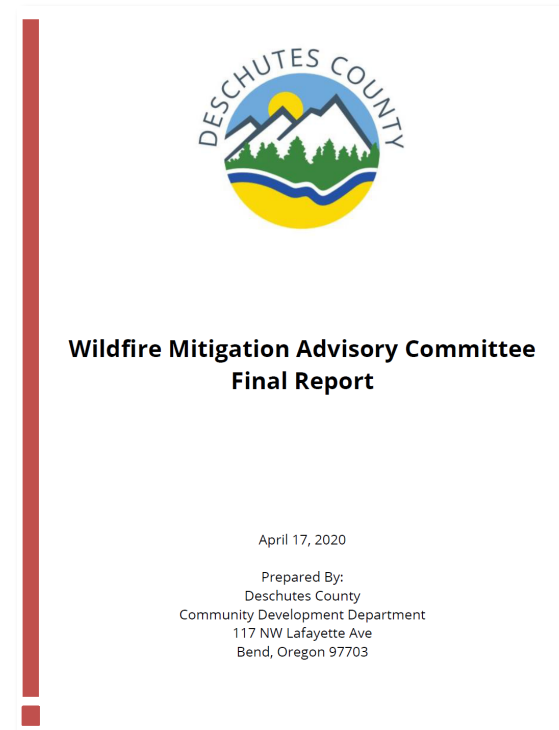


Background

2015



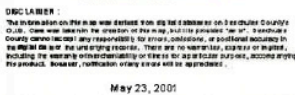
2020-21



2018-2019: Participated in the state process to develop & adopt fire resistant building codes



Exhibit "B"



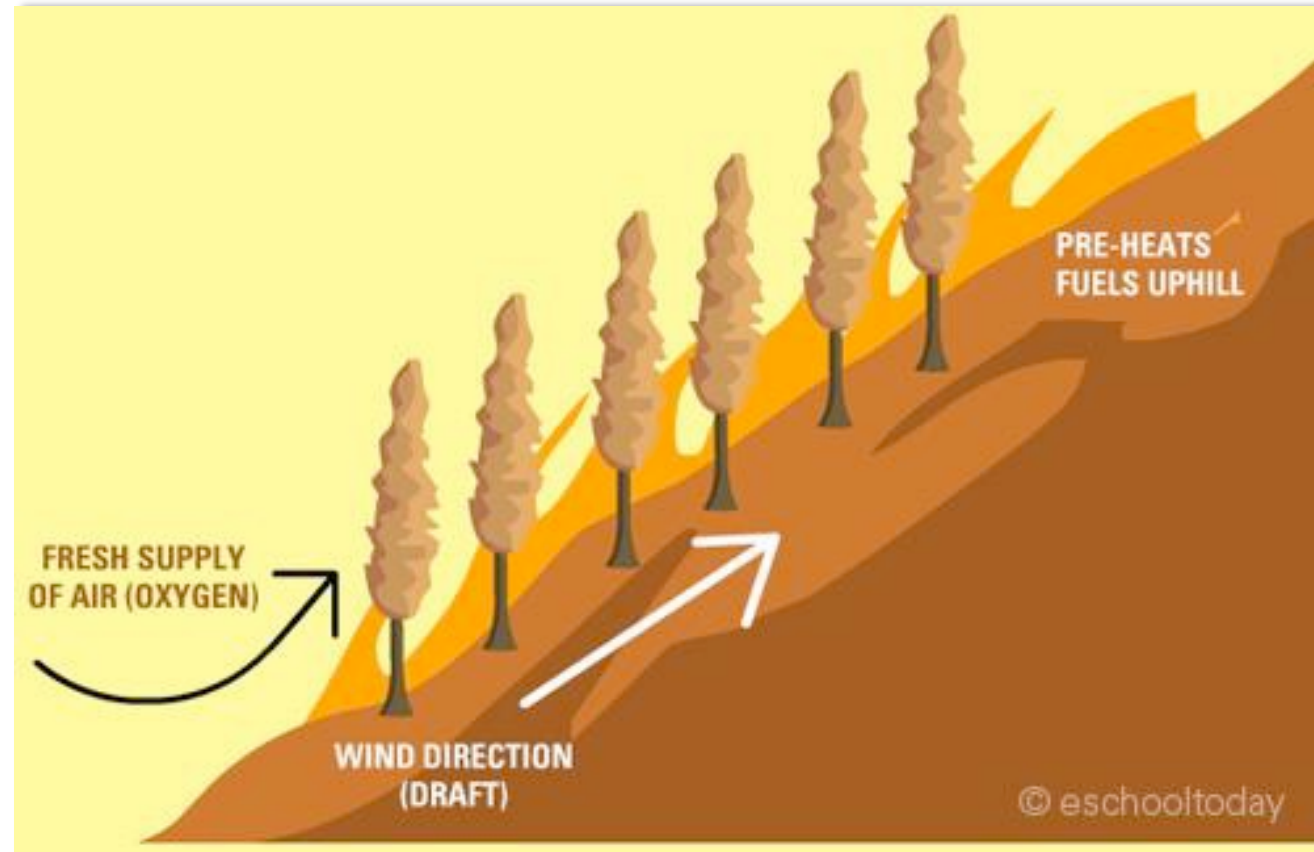
-



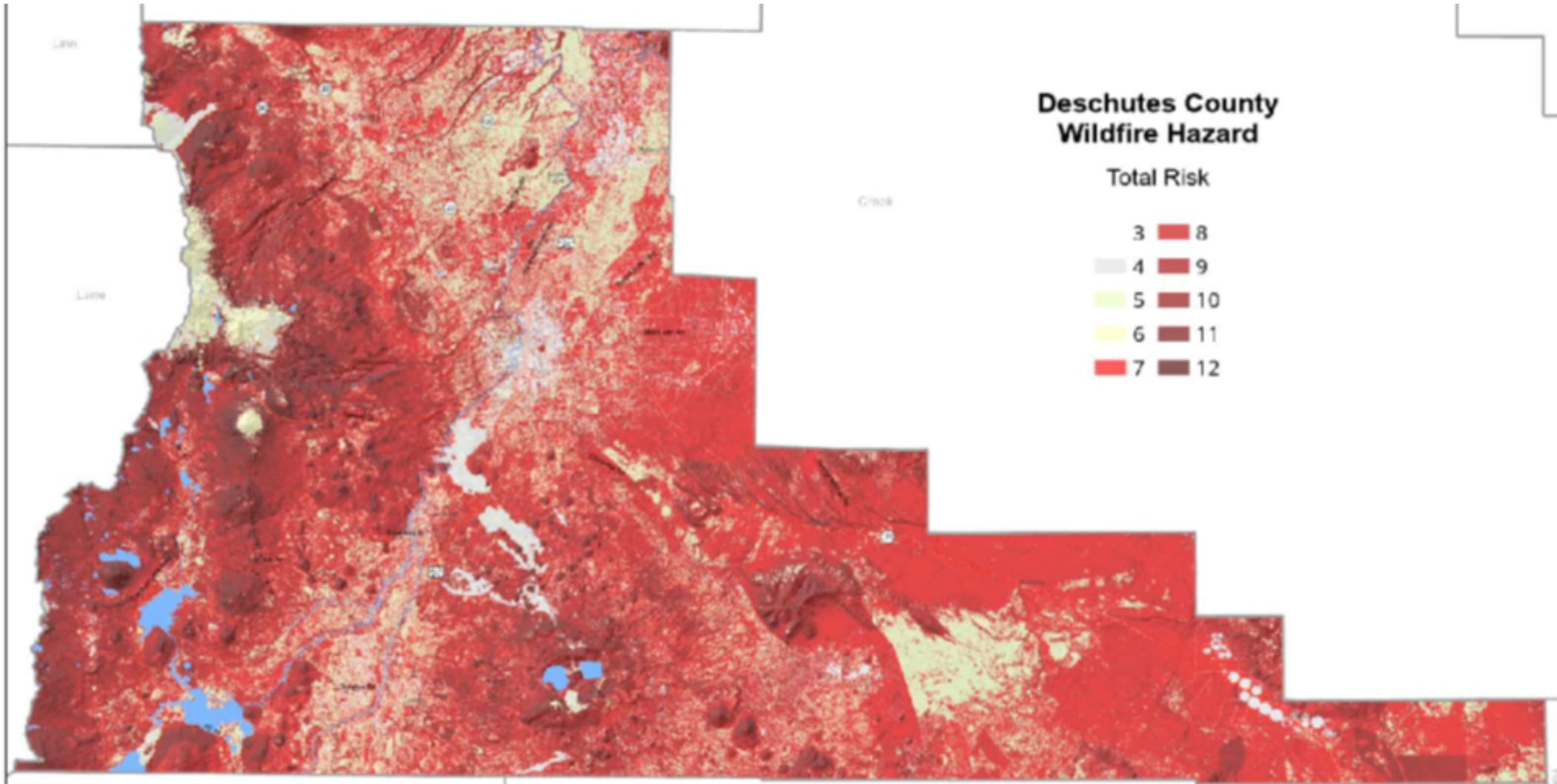
Oregon Department of Forestry

**Wildfire Hazard Zones / Maps
Determined by OAR 629-044-
0200 scoring criteria:**

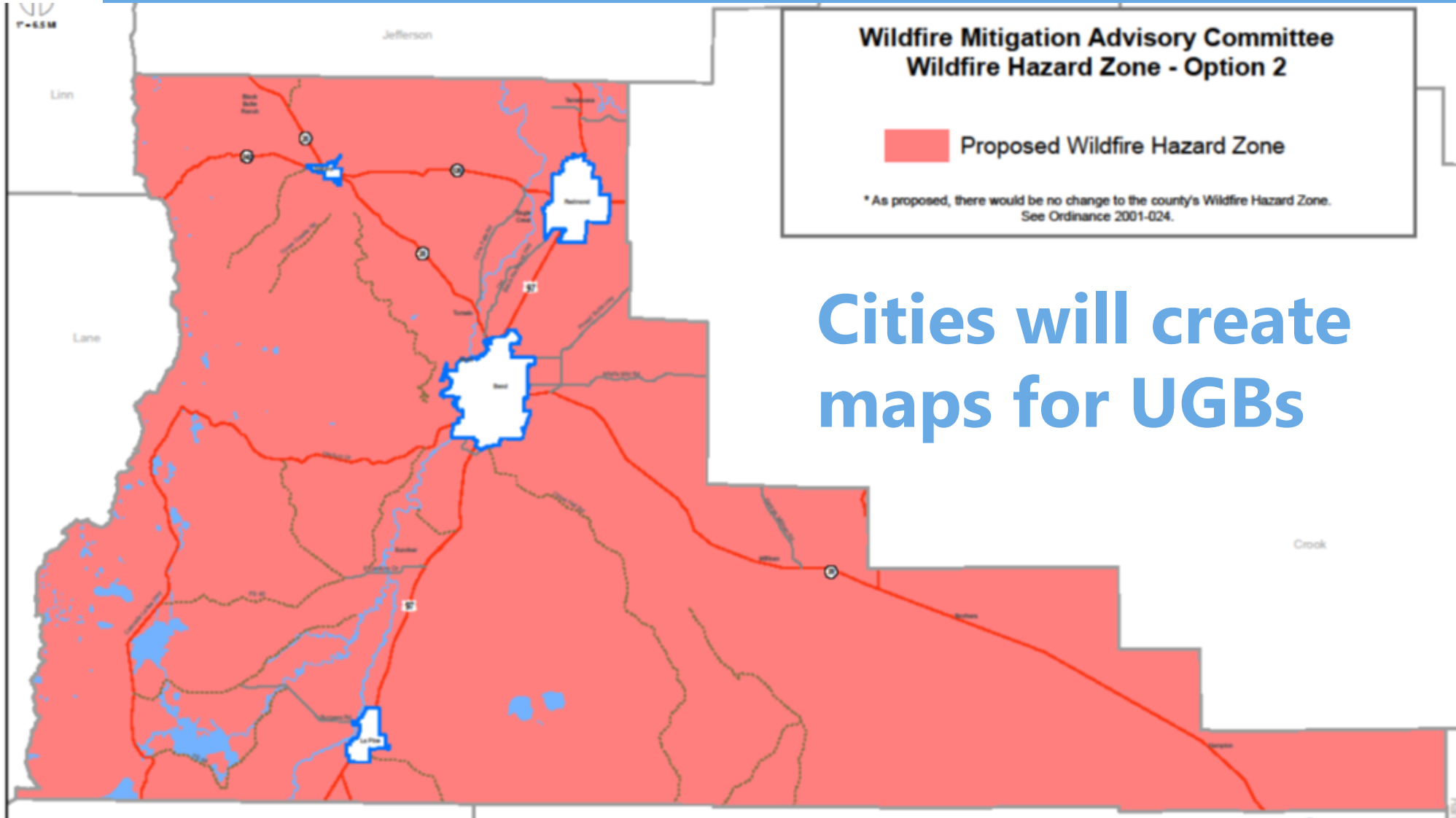
- **Weather**
- **Slope**
- **Fuel Hazard**
- **Fuel Distribution**



Wildfire Hazard – Total Risk



County Wildfire Hazard Zone



Structures: Fire Resistant Building Codes

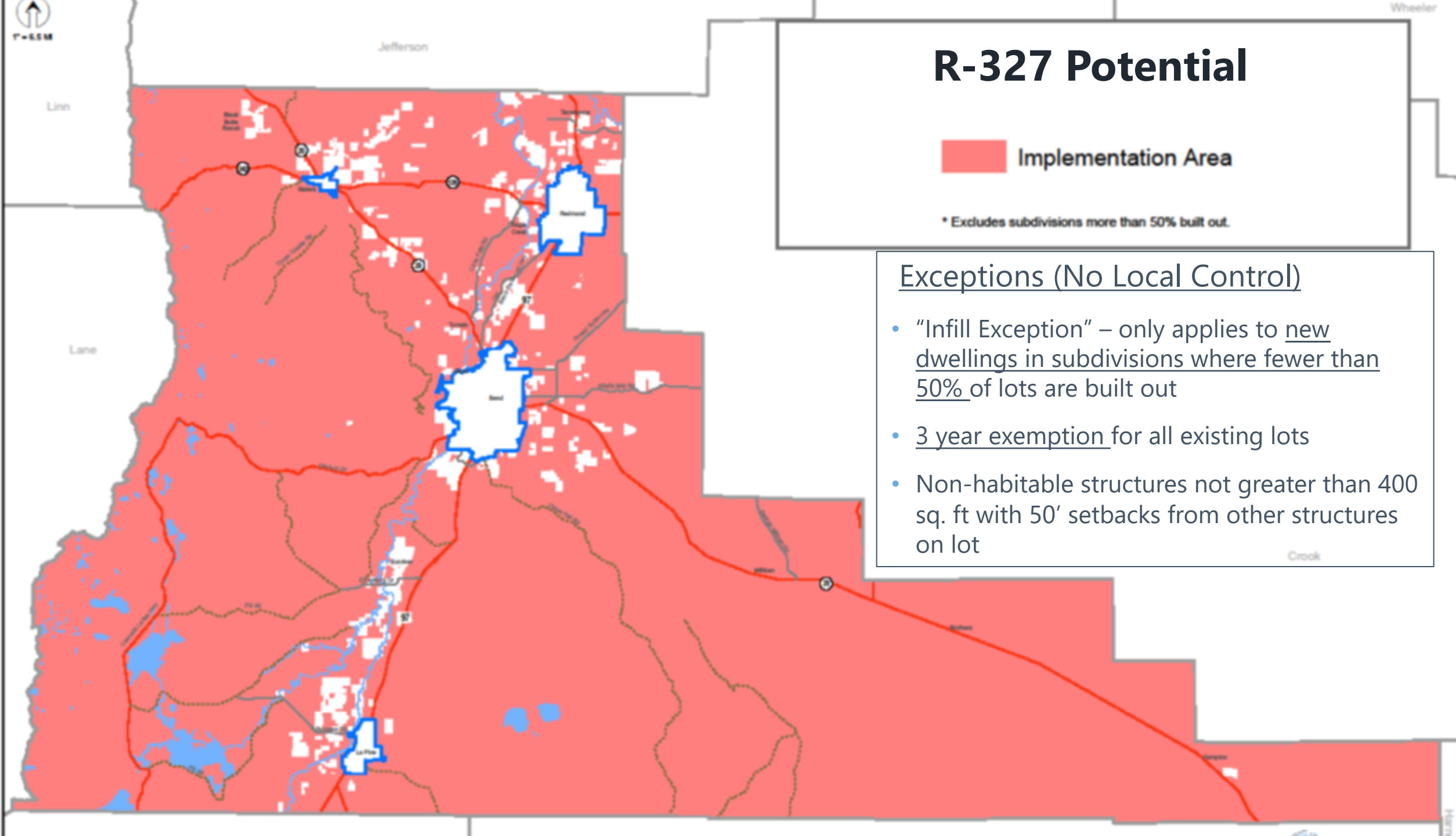


Graphic Credit:
Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety

Fire Resistant Building Codes

- **What is it?**
 - State Building Codes Division adopted a rule, R327, in January 2019 that amends the Oregon Residential Specialty Code to include increased construction standards for wildfire hazard mitigation that **can be** adopted (**optional**) by a local jurisdiction.
- Intended to “provide increased fire ignition protection of homes from flying embers and debris caused by wildfires”
- Local governments cannot change the code
- Local governments may allow waivers “for any lot, property or dwelling or the replacement or reconstruction of a dwelling”
- Estimated compliance costs: \$0 - \$6,000 or more





R-327 Potential

 Implementation Area

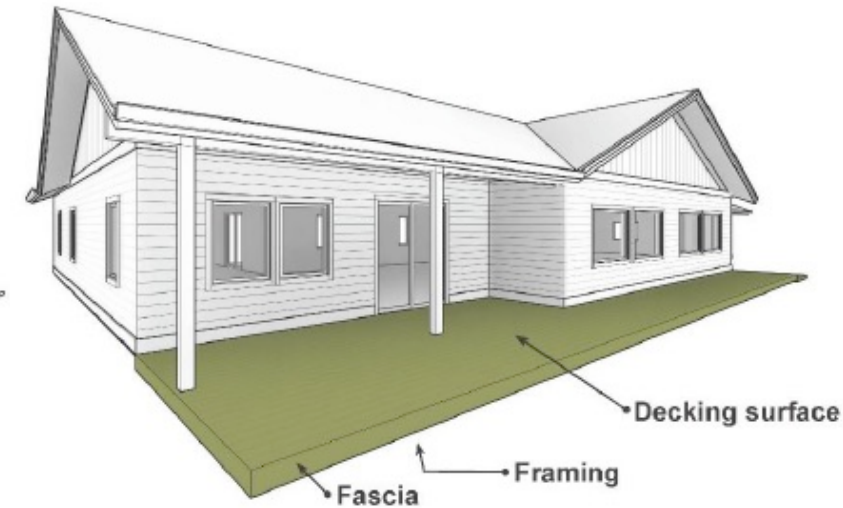
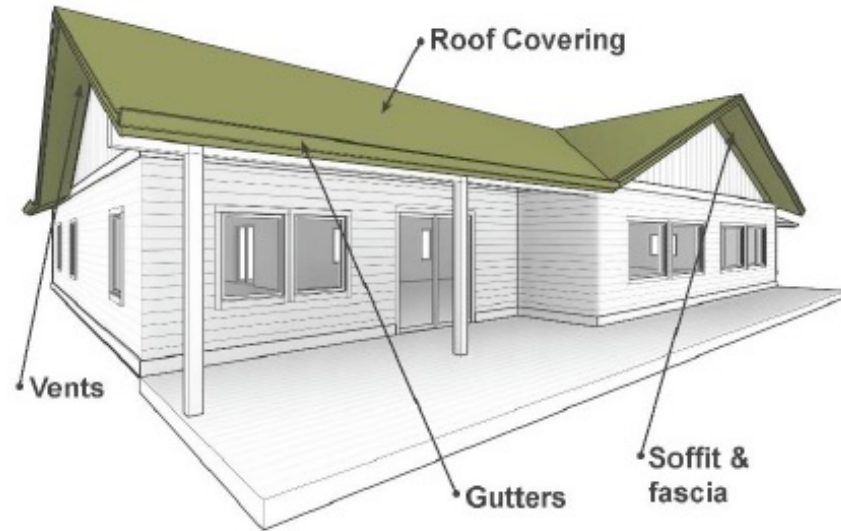
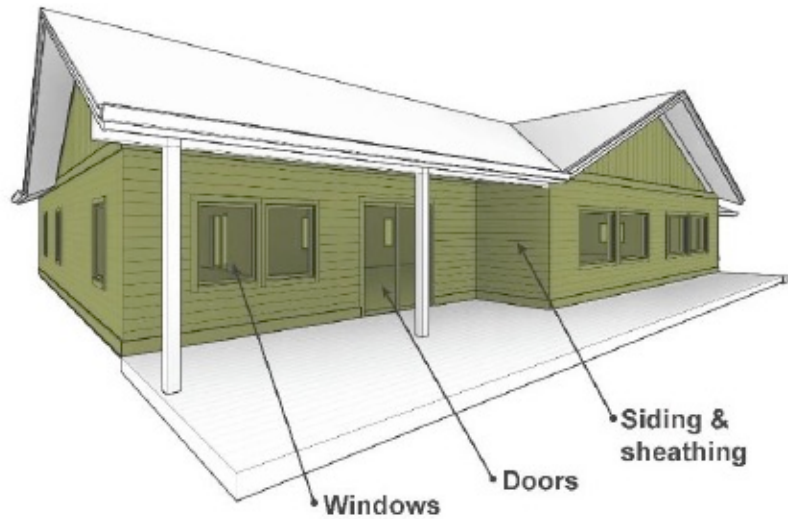
* Excludes subdivisions more than 50% built out.

Exceptions (No Local Control)

- “Infill Exception” – only applies to new dwellings in subdivisions where fewer than 50% of lots are built out
- 3 year exemption for all existing lots
- Non-habitable structures not greater than 400 sq. ft with 50’ setbacks from other structures on lot

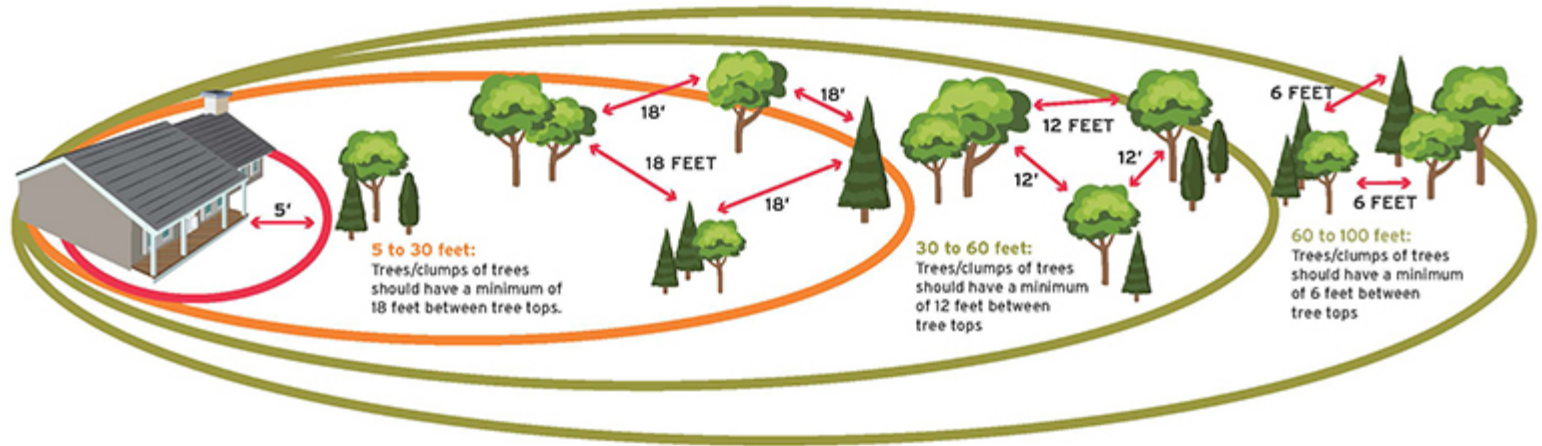
R327 Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Requirements

Fire resistant materials & requirements for roofing, ventilation, exterior wall coverings, overhanging projections, decking surfaces & glazing in windows /skylights & doors



Property: Defensible Space

TREE SPACING



Defensible Space

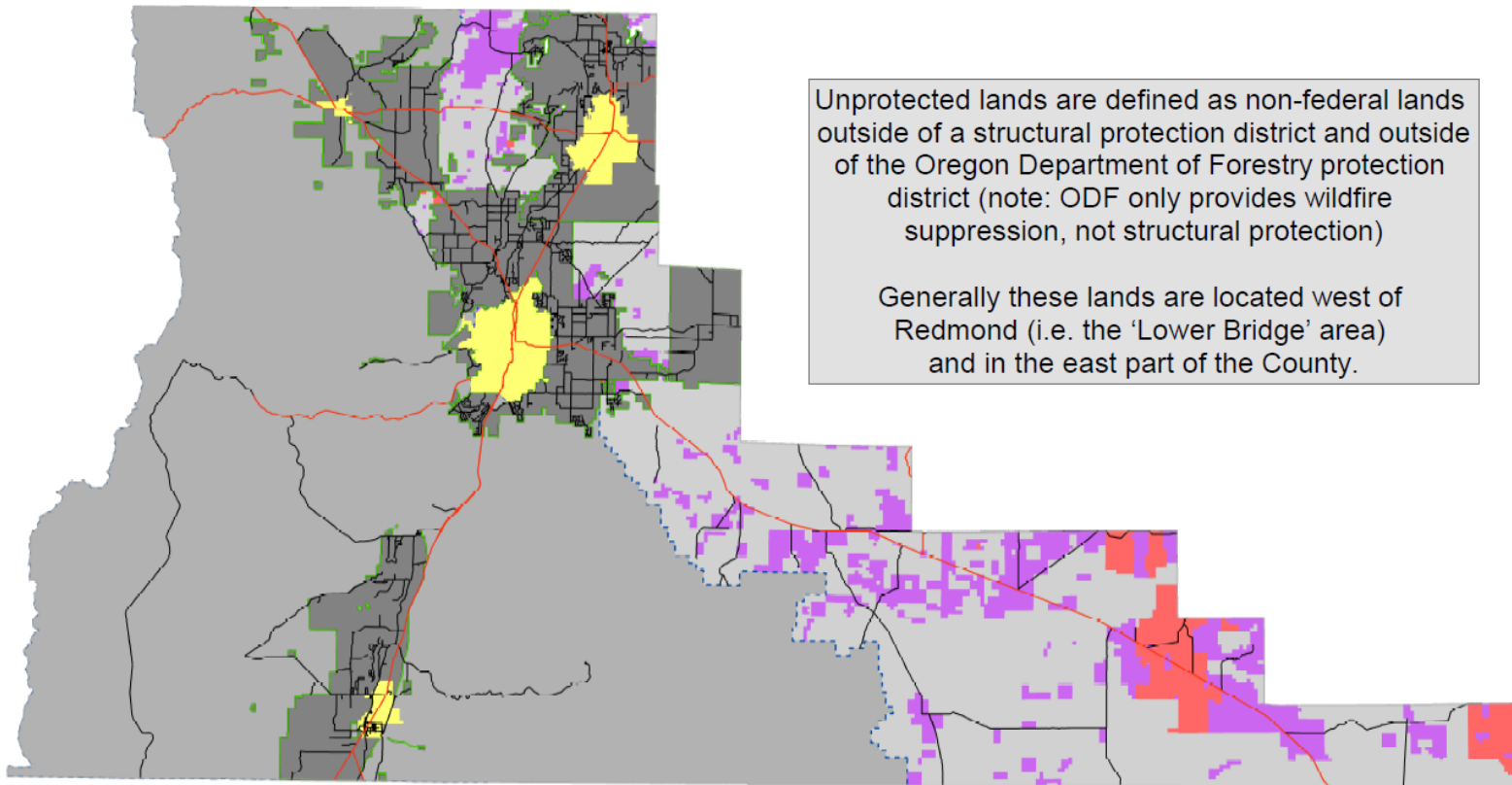
- **What is it?**
 - The **natural & landscaped area** around a structure that has been maintained & designed to reduce wildfire danger by using vegetation that is fire resistant.
- **County Code currently** has defensible space standards for properties:
 - **Forest Zones.** Required for all new dwellings & permanent structures including replacement dwellings.
 - **Unprotected Lands.** Privately owned wildland outside of any forestland protection district, fire protection district, city or the Oregon Department of Forestry
- **Over 40 Firewise communities working to reduce risk**



Defensible Space Required

Deschutes County Fire Protection

Highlighting Unprotected Lands



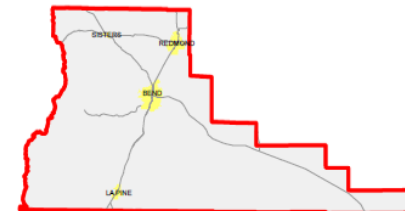
Unprotected lands are defined as non-federal lands outside of a structural protection district and outside of the Oregon Department of Forestry protection district (note: ODF only provides wildfire suppression, not structural protection)

Generally these lands are located west of Redmond (i.e. the 'Lower Bridge' area) and in the east part of the County.

Legend

- City Limit
- Rural Fire Protection
- ODF / USFS Protection
- BLM Protection
- USFS Protection
- DSL - Unprotected
- Private - Unprotected

Vicinity Map



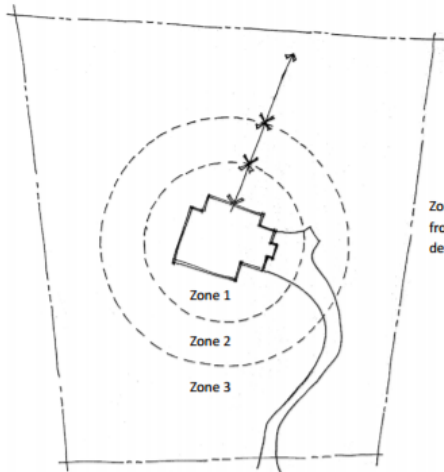
0 5 10 20 Miles



Defensible Space Required

- Site Specific Development Examples
 - Tree Farm
 - Westside Transect

APPENDIX B: DEFENSIBLE LANDSCAPE ZONE DIAGRAM



Zone 1 = 30 feet from the Residence
Zone 2 = 30 feet from the Residence
Zone 3 = Over the property line.

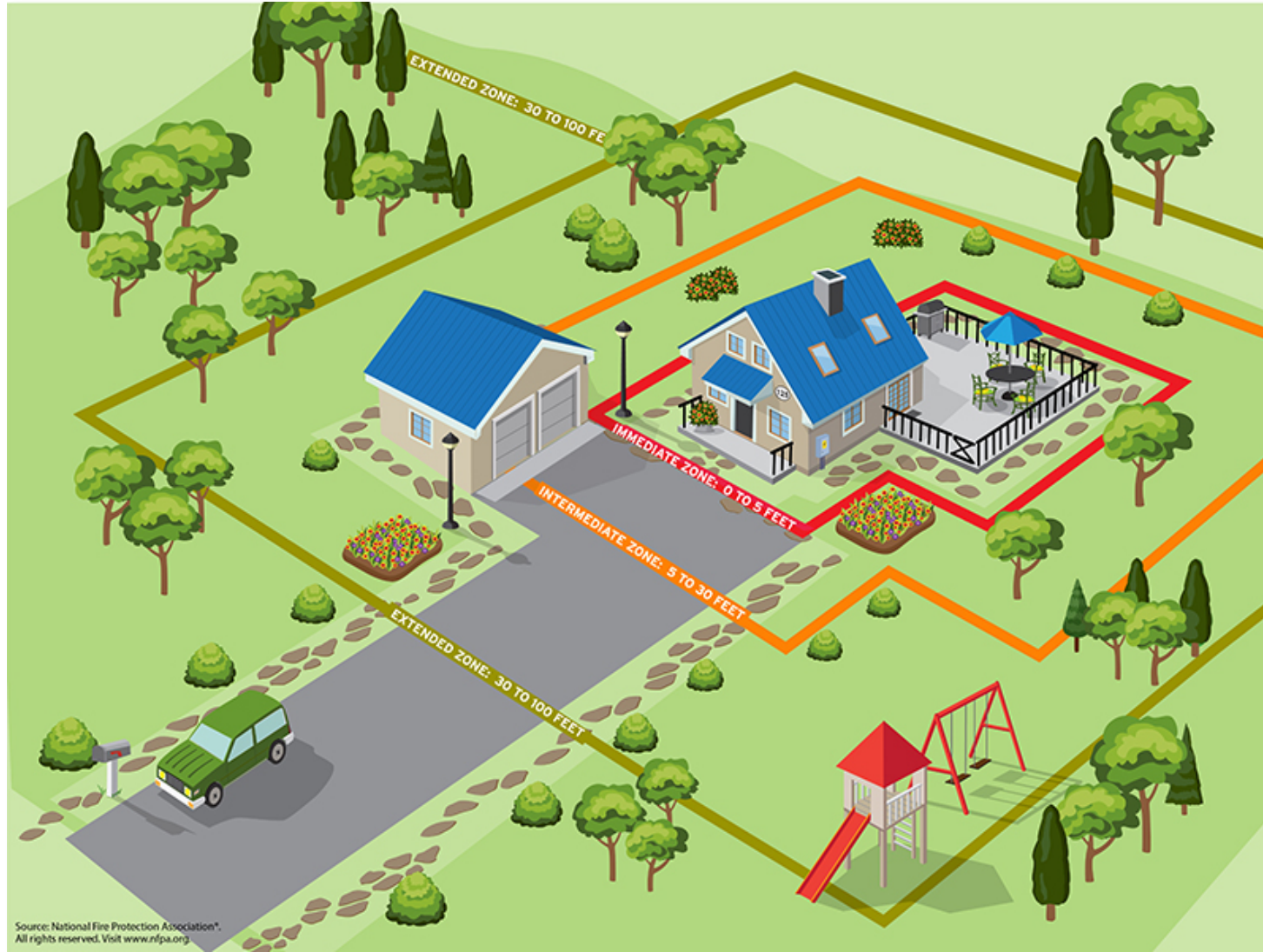
APPENDIX C: APPROVED FIRE-RESISTANT PLANTS AND TREES for ZONES 1 and 2

Ground Covers

<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Carpet bugleweed
<i>Antennaria rosea</i>	Pink Pussytoes
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Kinnikinnick
<i>Aubrieta deltoidea</i>	Rock cress
<i>Ceanothus prostratus</i>	Mahala mat
<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	Snow-in-summer
<i>Delosperma cooperi</i>	Purple iceplant
<i>Delosperma nubigenum</i>	Yellow iceplant
<i>Dianthus species</i>	Dianthus, Garden Carnation or Pinks
<i>Fragaria species</i>	Wild strawberry
<i>Lamium species</i>	Dead nettle
<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	Japanese pachysandra
<i>Phlox subulata</i>	Creeping phlox
<i>Sedum species</i>	Sedum or stonecrops
<i>Sempervivum species</i>	Hens and chicks
<i>Thymus praecox</i>	Creeping thyme
<i>Veronica species</i>	Speedwell



Defensible Space



Defensible Space

Non-combustible material adjacent to structure



Combustible Juniper adjacent to wood deck



Defensible Space

- **Key questions:**
 - Apply regulations/codes to **all** rural properties, **new** development, or other characteristics?
 - Establish **compliance date** or **phase in** over several/many years?
 - **Administration & partnerships** with fire districts and/or other organizations to educate & assist residents/owners, apply for grants to assist creating & maintaining defensible space, monitor ongoing compliance, etc.?
- **Implementation Cost Estimates:**
 - **\$600** to **\$3,000** per acre to initially establish with an average of **\$1,200** in forested areas, and **\$800** in juniper sage steppe setting
 - **\$100** to **\$125** per acre to maintain defensible space
- **Property-specific, not one-size fits all approach**



Next Steps

1. Board of County Commissioners

- Monitoring wildfire hazard mitigation bills in the 2021 Legislature. Work session in April to review maps showing where fire resistant building codes would apply & review the status of bills.

2. More information:

- www.deschutes.org/cd/page/wildfire-mitigation
- <http://bit.ly/DeschutesFirewise>

3. 2021 FireFree Yard Debris Disposal Events:

- **Knott Landfill:** Sat., May 1 – Sun., May 16
- **Deschutes County Transfer Sites:** Sat., May 22 – Sat., June 5



Questions?

Nick Lelack, AICP
Community Development Director
541-385-1708
Nick.Lelack@deschutes.org

Kyle Collins
Associate Planner
541-383-4427
Kyle.Collins@deschutes.org

Chris Gracia
Assistant Building Official
541-388-6578
Chris.Gracia@deschutes.org

Boone Zimmerlee
Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator
541-322-7129
Kyle.Collins@deschutes.org

Ed Keith
County Forester
541-322-7117
Ed.Keith@deschutes.org

