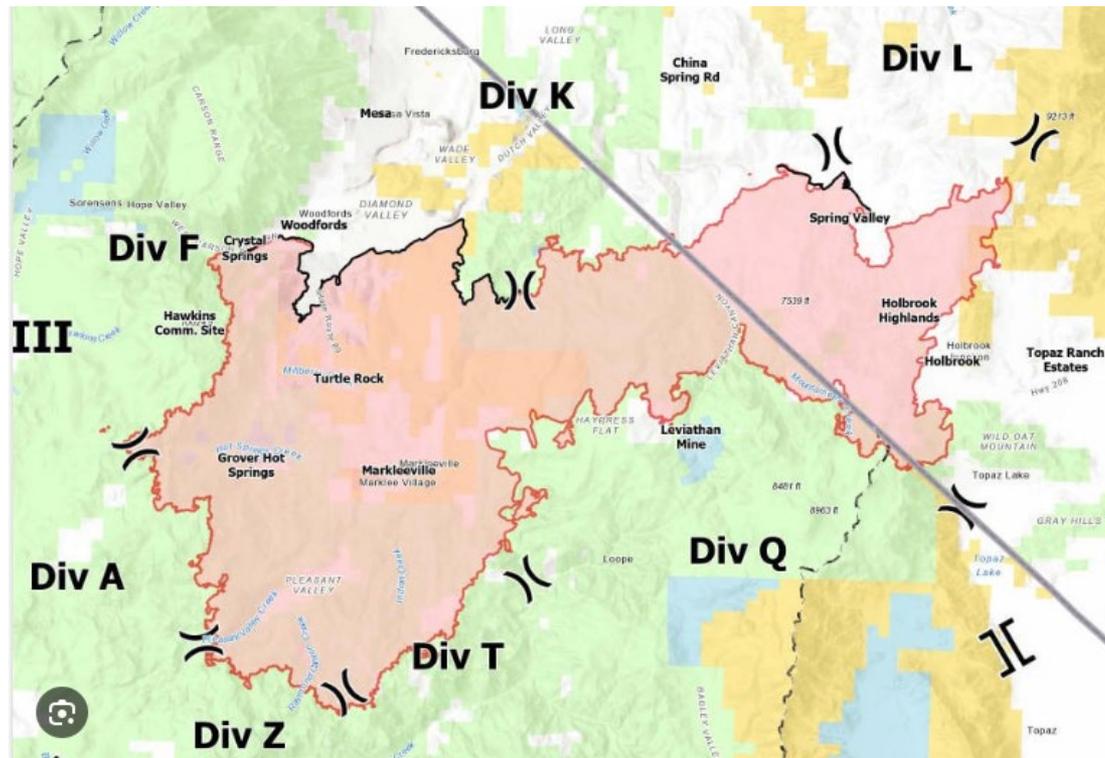


Tamarack Fire

Tamarack Fire - 2021



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Firewise Regional Coordinators

Shane Vargas

Deputy Chief – CAL FIRE
NFPA Firewise USA – **State Liaison**

Malcolm Kennedy

Battalion Chief
NFPA Firewise USA – **Regional Coordinator**

Vacant (Chief Kennedy)

Fire Captain
NFPA Firewise USA – **Regional Coordinator**

Arend Tosti

Fire Captain
Cal Fire (Eldorado Co.) – **Regional Coordinator**



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The Basic Problem

- It's simple: We live in a high fire danger region
 - Heavy forests surround us
 - Our annual dry spell increases fire danger
 - Even when there is no drought
 - Ignitions can occur at any time
 - Both lightning and human causes

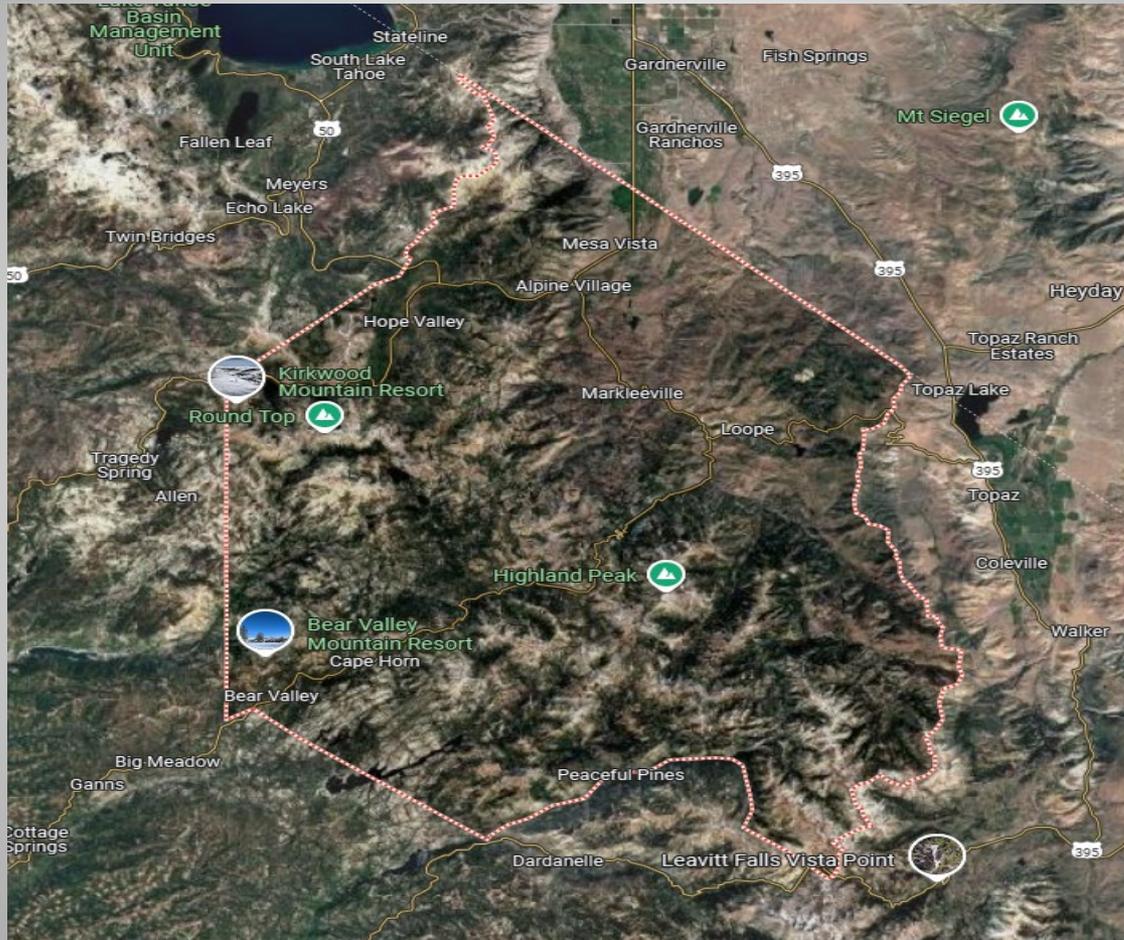


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Alpine County:

Note: Dense vegetation and topographical features

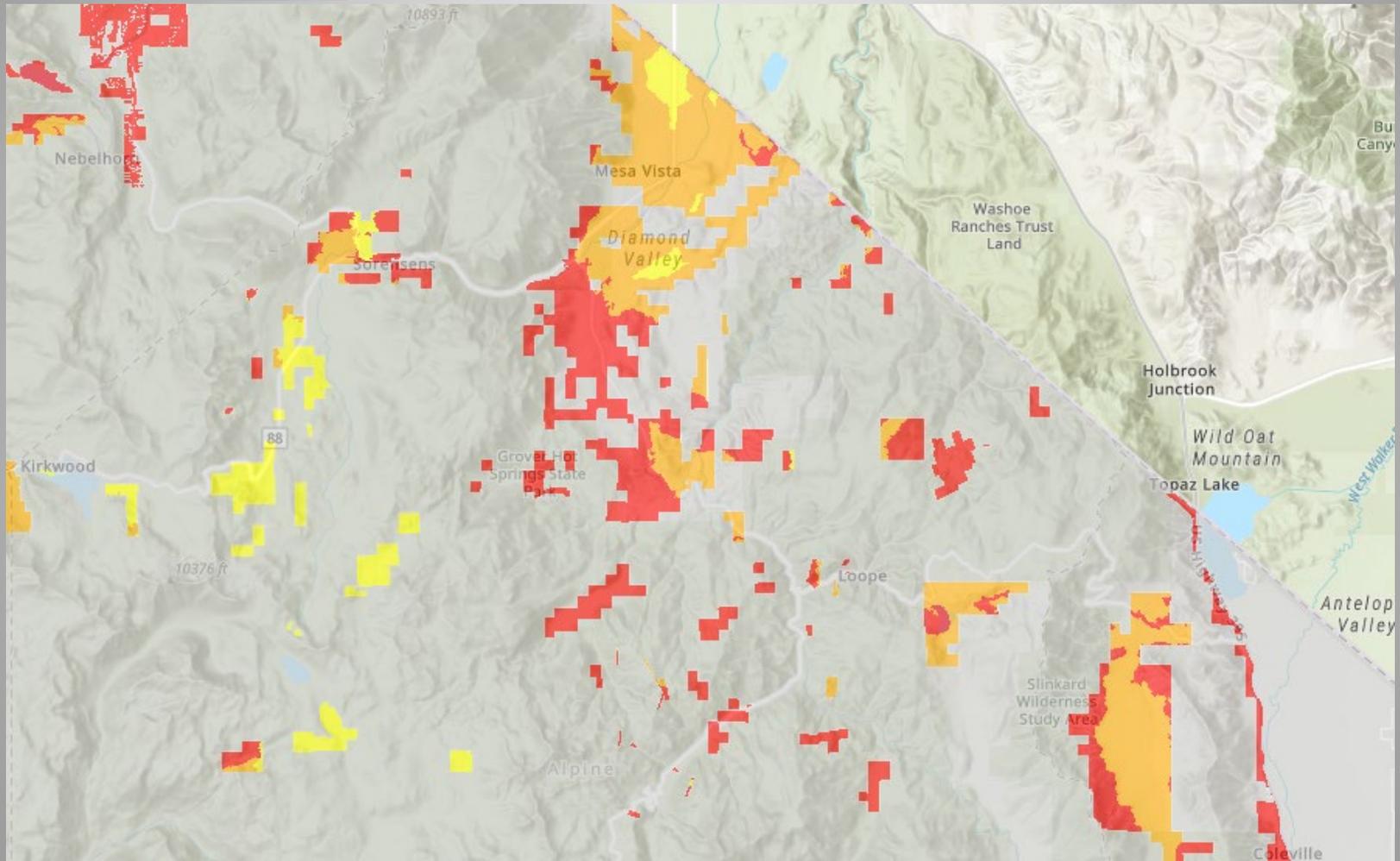


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Hazards: The Official View

Excerpt from the CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map – April 1, 2024



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The External Fire Threat

- **Wildland fire could approach the development from any direction**
 - **Grass, Oak Woodland with intermix Timber to the north, south, east & west**
 - **“Ember blizzard” can reach well ahead of the flame front (up to 1.5 Miles away)**
 - **Wind and Topography drive Wildland Fires**
 - **Camp Fire burned at 300 yards a minute.**
 - **How much time would you have???**



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What's an "Ember Blizzard"?

A gazillion little glowing particles, plus some larger pieces



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Internal Fire Threat

- Fires originating within the housing development are also a concern
- Must consider fuels within the development
 - Natural fuels ... *trees, BRUSH*
 - Introduced fuels ... *homes, other structures, propane tanks, firewood stacks, vehicles, flammable landscaping, wood decks, etc.*



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Reality Check

- Wildland fires **WILL** occur
- In a major fire, there will **NOT** be enough fire suppression resources to protect every structure
- *But ...* homeowners **CAN** have a powerful influence on determining whether their home will survive



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Firewise Can Help Make It Better

- A self-directed, self-help program to make fire safety improvements within the development
 - Starts with a community evaluation
 - Find both strengths and weaknesses
 - Free assistance from fire professionals
 - Then YOU decide what you'd like to do about it
 - Lay out a multi-year hazard mitigation plan
 - Get the community involved



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Why Should We Do This?

- Gain insights into community risks
 - *Findings from Wildfire Risk Assessment*
- Improve awareness of fire safety issues and good practices
 - *Public education is emphasized*
- Work towards reduced fire risks
 - *Projects to create a more fire resistant, fire tolerant neighborhood*
 - *Reduced hazards to you and your property*
- Demonstrate commitment to insurance carriers and others
 - *Improves standing for grant applications*
 - *May reduce fire insurance premiums- USAA is a Firewise USA partner*

CCR § 2644.9. Consideration of Mitigation Factors; Wildfire Risk Models



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The Initial Process

- Form a Firewise Board/ Committee
- Conduct a community wildfire risk assessment
- Prepare an action plan
- Take action
 - Complete one Educational outreach event annually (Firewise Day)
 - Complete wildfire risk reduction in your community
- Submit certification application on-line at the Firewise portal



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What Does It Cost?

- The Firewise organization charges no fees
- Assistance with the community evaluation is at no charge
 - CAL FIRE, Alpine Co. Fire Safe Council, Eastern Alpine Fire, Bear Valley Fire, Kirkwood Fire, USFS
- Documentation is done by volunteers
- 1 hour per dwelling annual investment is easily achieved
 - “Dwelling” is a single-family home, cabin, mobile home or apt.
 - Volunteer time counts, at more than \$29 / hour



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To Maintain Certification

- Required annual Firewise activities
 - Hold a “Firewise Day” educational outreach event
 - Wildfire Risk Reduction investments
 - Minimum investment of 1 hour per dwelling (amount of hours is for entire Firewise community activities, every home is not required to do 1 hour. For instance, 100 homes need to do 100 hours of investment within the community as a whole)
 - Submit renewal on-line through the Firewise portal www.firewise.org
- Update your action plan when needed



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Important Take-Aways

- Firewise is designed to link Communities with Fire Professionals (for Risk Assessments)
- No Guarantees for Insurance Discounts
- Outside assistance is available for Assessments and Mapping
- Utilize Resident Leader. If more than 150 Homes, consider delegating to Zone Leaders
- Need at least 8 homes for a FWC, up to 2,500 homes
- Consider matching a Fire Safe Council with a FWC to establish uniformity



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Contacts

- Alpine County Fire Safe Council – Alpinefiresafecouncil.org
(530) 694-1879
- Alpine Wildfire Project Coordinator – ccelio@alpinecountyca.gov
(775) 720-6534
- Chief Malcolm Kennedy – Malcolm.Kennedy@fire.ca.gov
(530) 360-5291
- Captain Arend Tosti – Cal Fire – Arend.Tosti@fire.ca.gov
(530) 708-2723



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Helpful Links

- NFPA Firewise USA – www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa
- CAL FIRE - Prepare – www.fire.ca.gov/prepare
- CAL FIRE – Ready for Wildfire – www.fire.ca.gov/prepare
- Wildfire Prepared (IBHS) – <https://wildfireprepared.org>



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