

Wildfire Risk Assessment

Taos County

October 4, 2016

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Headwaters Economics

Presentation Overview

- Who We Are
- What We Did

Wildfire Risk Modeling

Identify Fuels Treatment Project Locations

Recommendations to Integrate Wildfire Risk
Reduction Measures into Development Processes

- What's Next?



Independent Nonpartisan Research



Economic Impact of National Parks

This interactive and background materials show visits, spending, and the number of jobs created in gateway communities for every National Park Service unit.

[read more](#)



Federal Coal Program in Context

Explore the Socioeconomic Context of the Federal Coal Leasing Program.

[read more](#)



Does Insurance Affect Home Development on Wildfire-Prone Lands?

It is unlikely that insurance rates and policies alone will determine whether or not a landowner decides to build a new home on wildfire-prone land.

[read more](#)

Project Overview

- 2013-2014: First case study in Summit County, CO.
- 2015-2016: Efforts are scaled up to five more communities in the West.

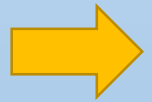
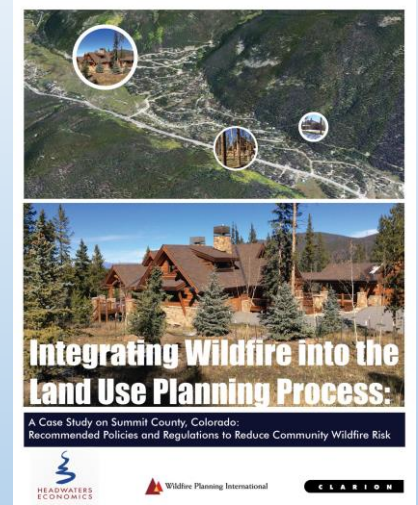
- Taos County, NM

- Missoula County, MT

- City of Bend, OR

- City of Austin, TX

- City of Wenatchee, WA



Reported on what 5 cities in the West were doing to address wildfire risk through land use planning.

- San Diego, CA

- Austin, TX

- Flagstaff, AZ

- Santa Fe, NM

- Boulder, CO

- 2016-2017: Five new communities selected, as well as ongoing support in existing five communities.

Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW)

- **Objective:** Help communities reduce wildfire risk through improved land use planning.
- **Structure:** Joint partnership between Headwaters Economics and Wildfire Planning International.

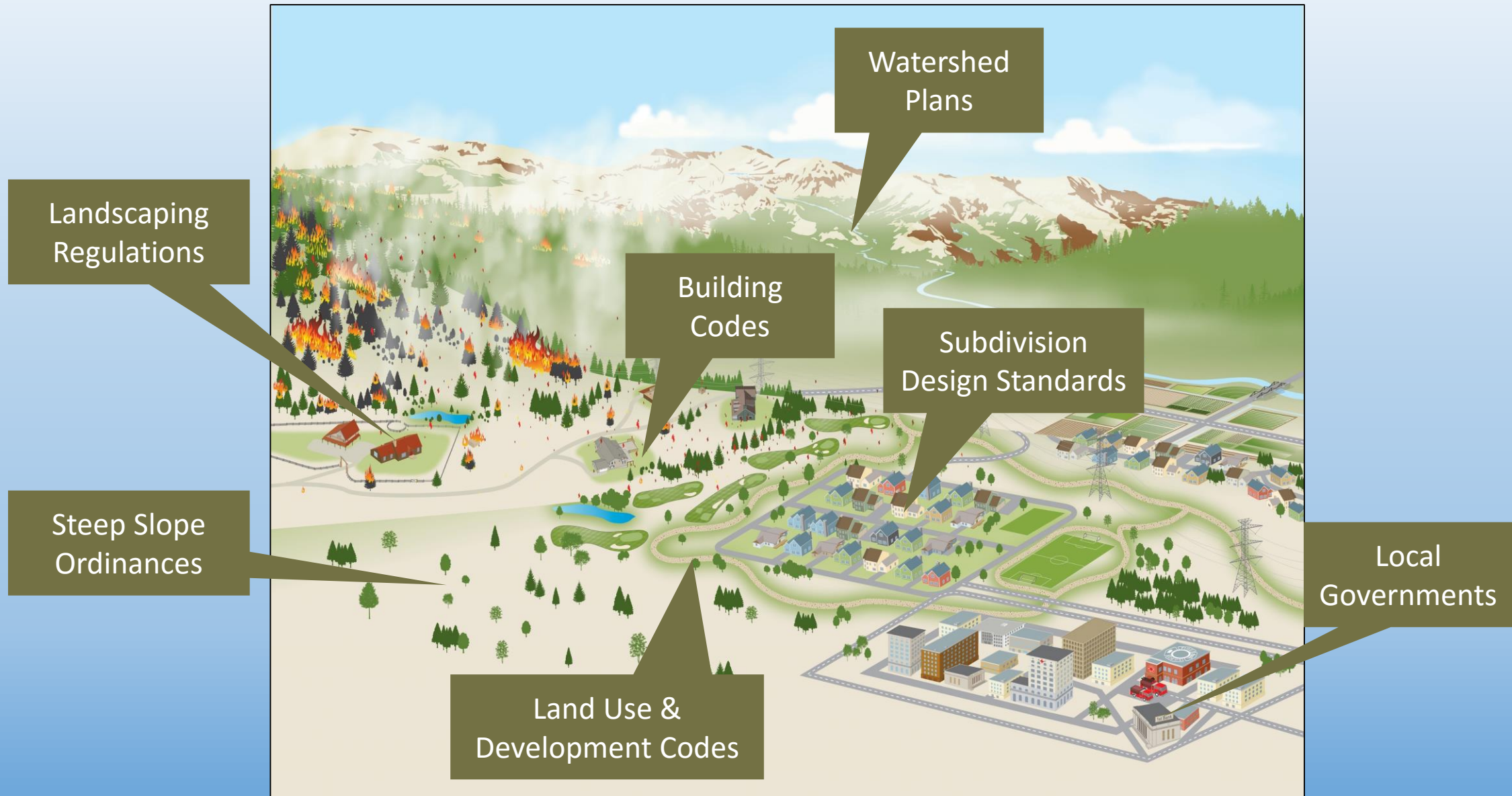


Wildfire Planning International



- **Approach:** Provide technical assistance in the form of planning advice, forestry expertise, and risk assessment modeling.

What do we mean by good land use planning?



What We Did in Taos County:

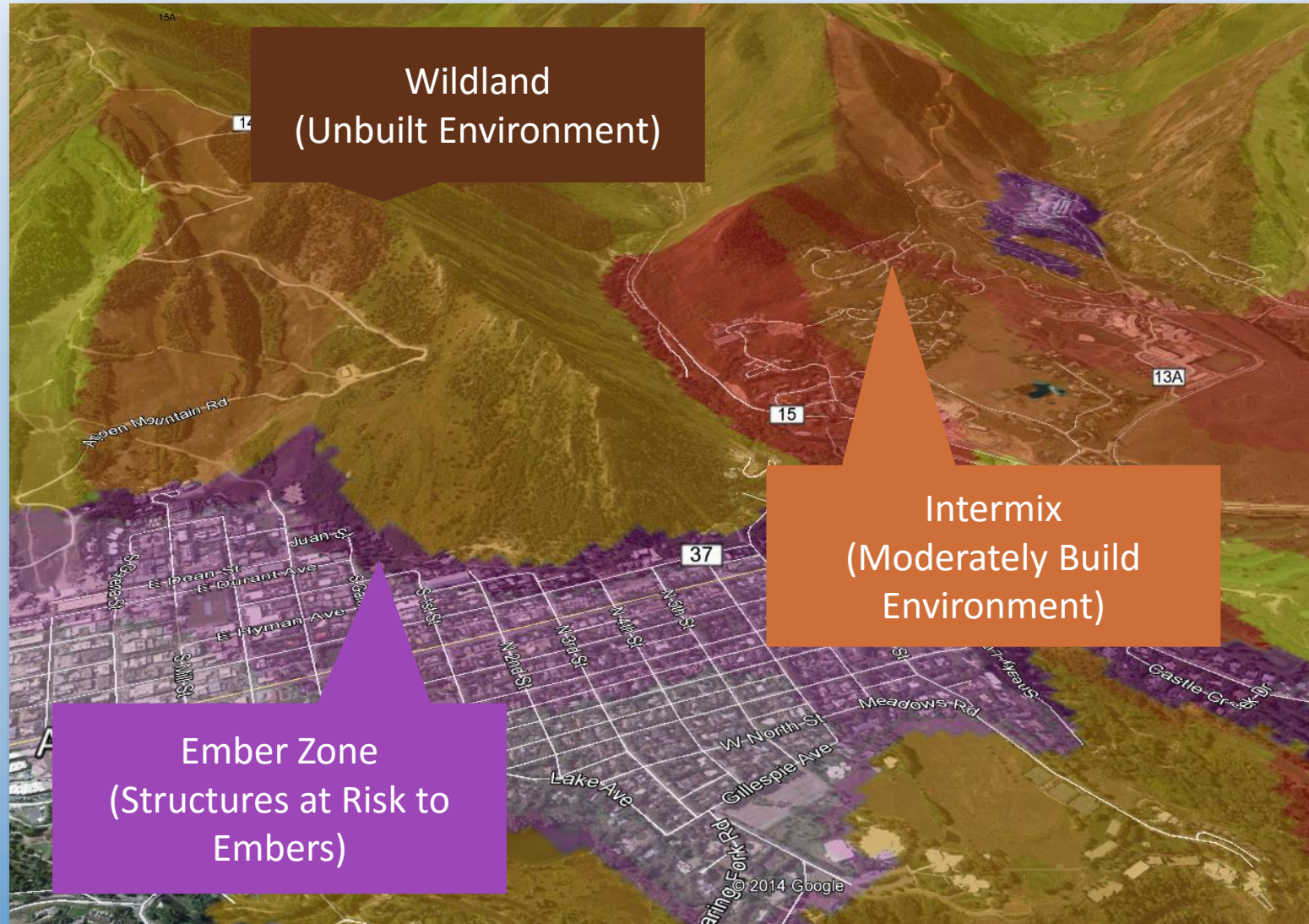
- **September 2015:** Wildfire Assessment Project Proposed to Taos County and meeting with initial team of stakeholders:
 - Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Core Team
 - Land Use Planning Department
 - Carson National Forest
 - Taos Pueblo
 - Soil & Water Conservation District
 - The Nature Conservancy
- **Follow-up Trips:** November (2015), February (2016), June (2016)
- **3 Wildfire Risk Assessment Projects:**

Wildfire Risk Modeling

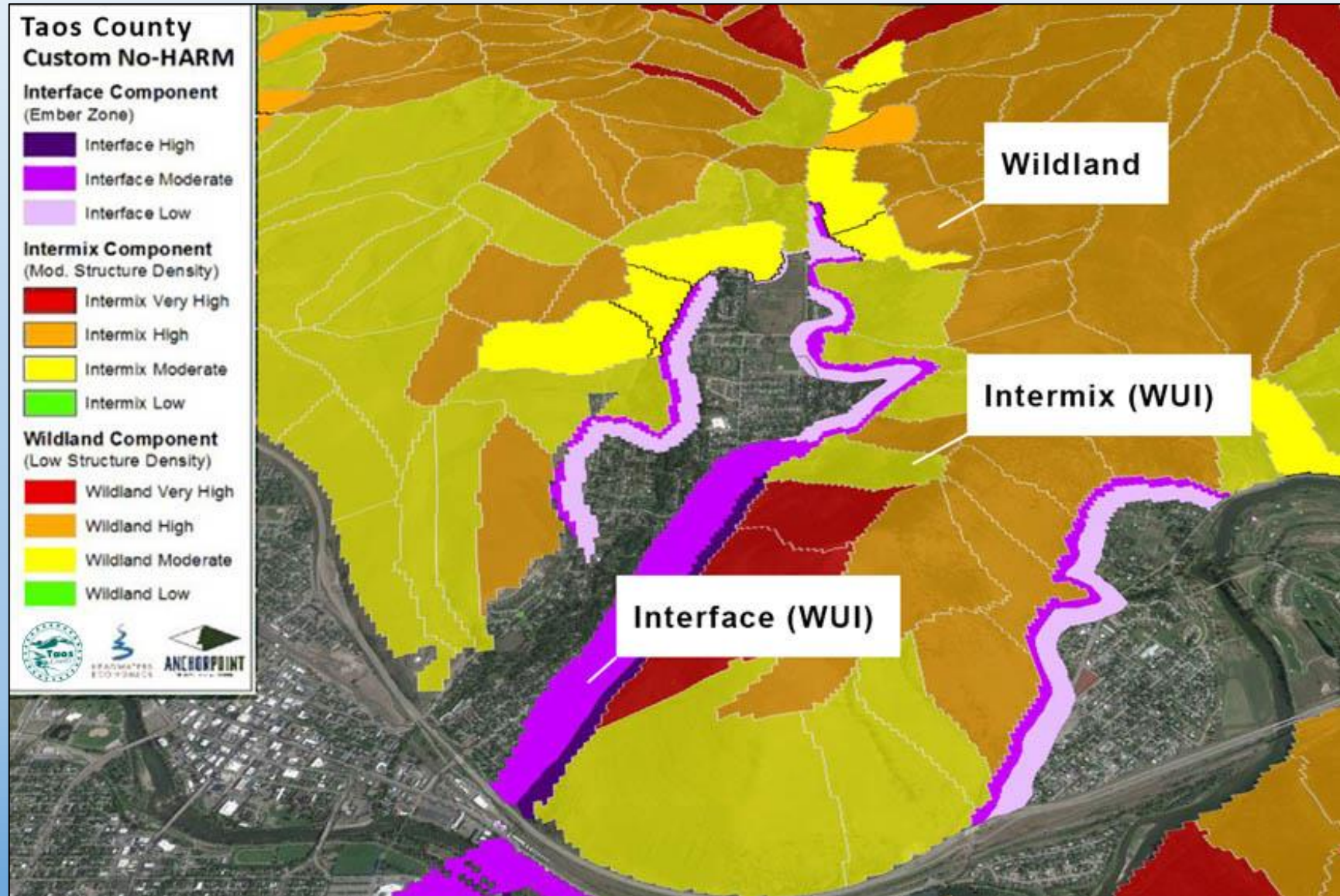
Identify Fuels Treatment Project Locations

Recommendations to Integrate Wildfire Risk Reduction Measures into Development Processes

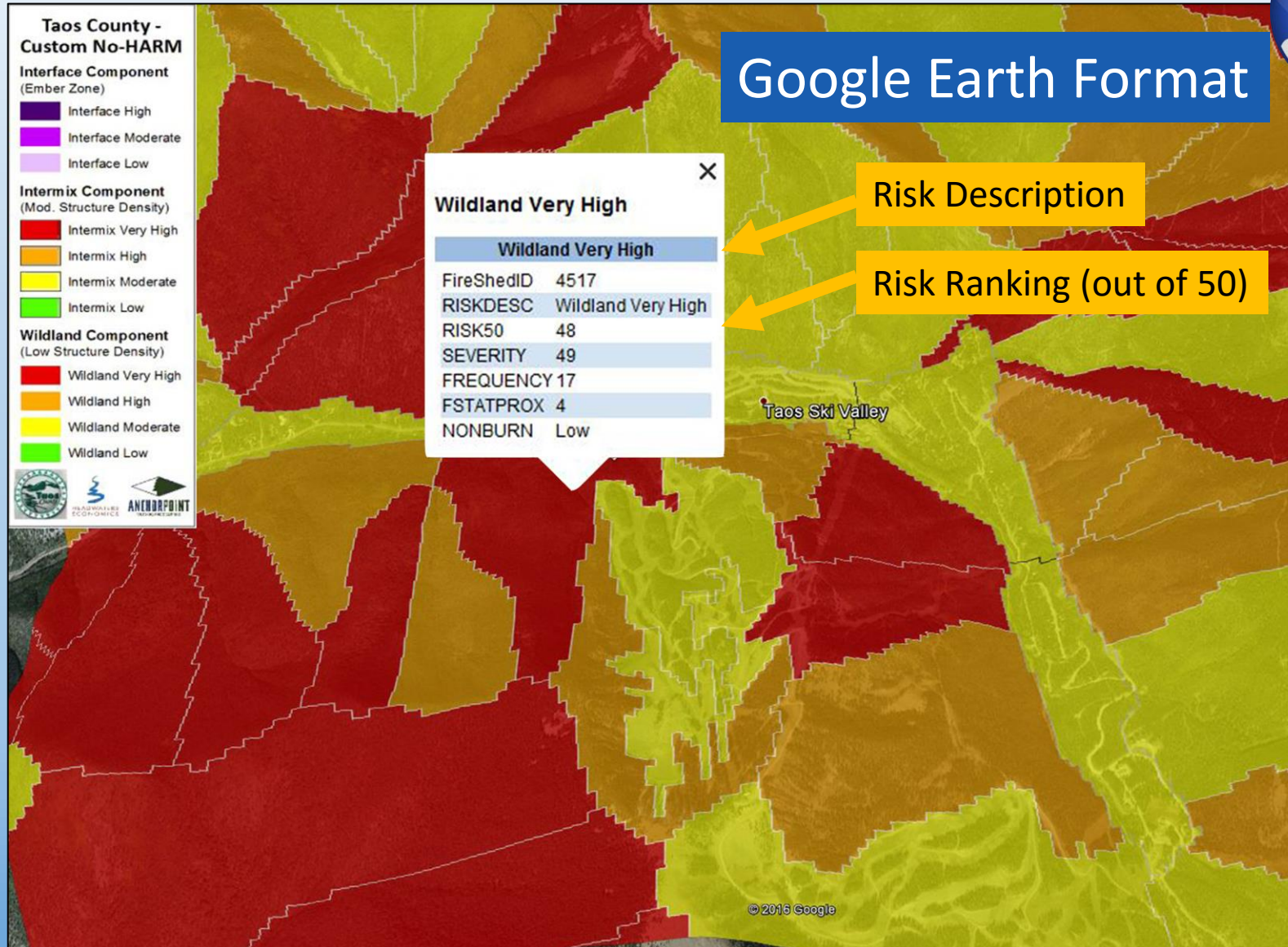
Wildfire Risk Modeling



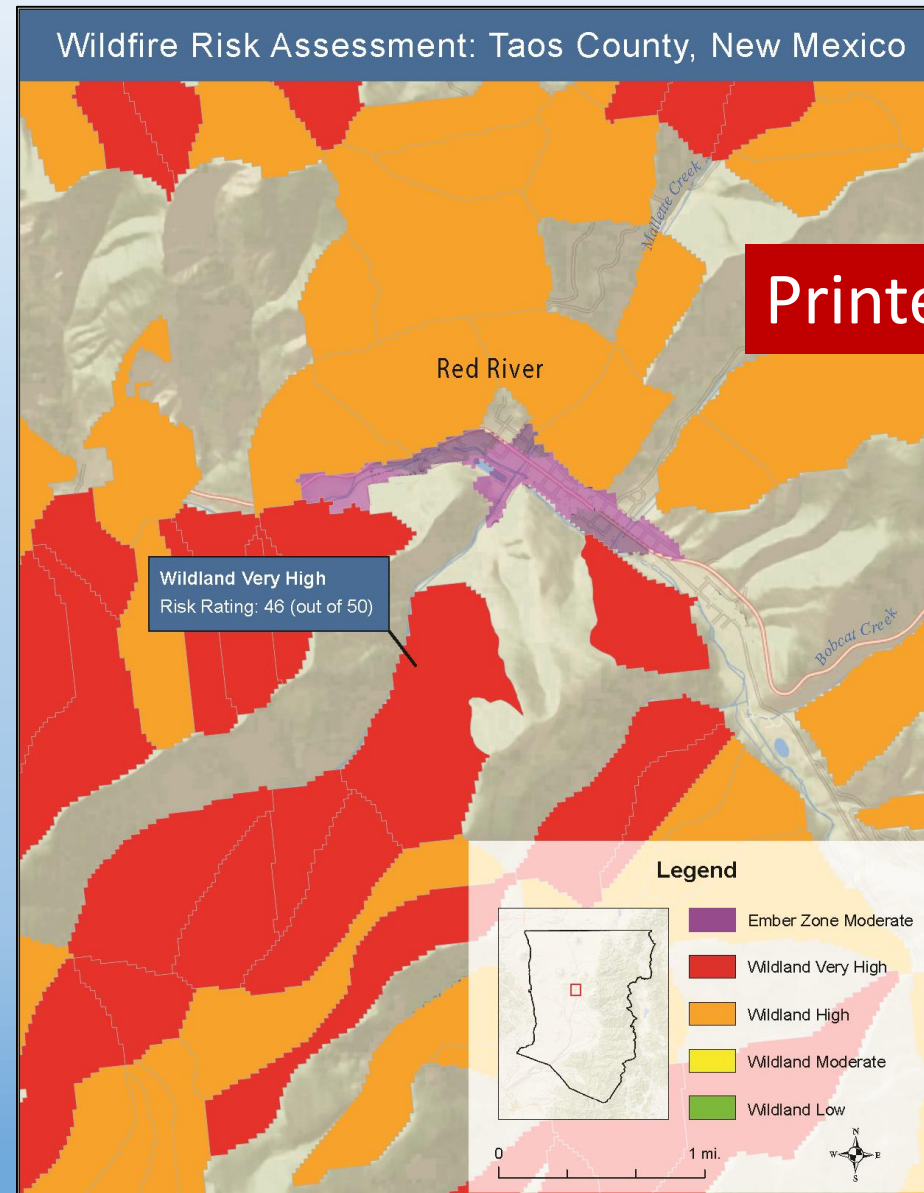
Wildfire Risk Modeling



Wildfire Risk Modeling



Wildfire Risk Modeling

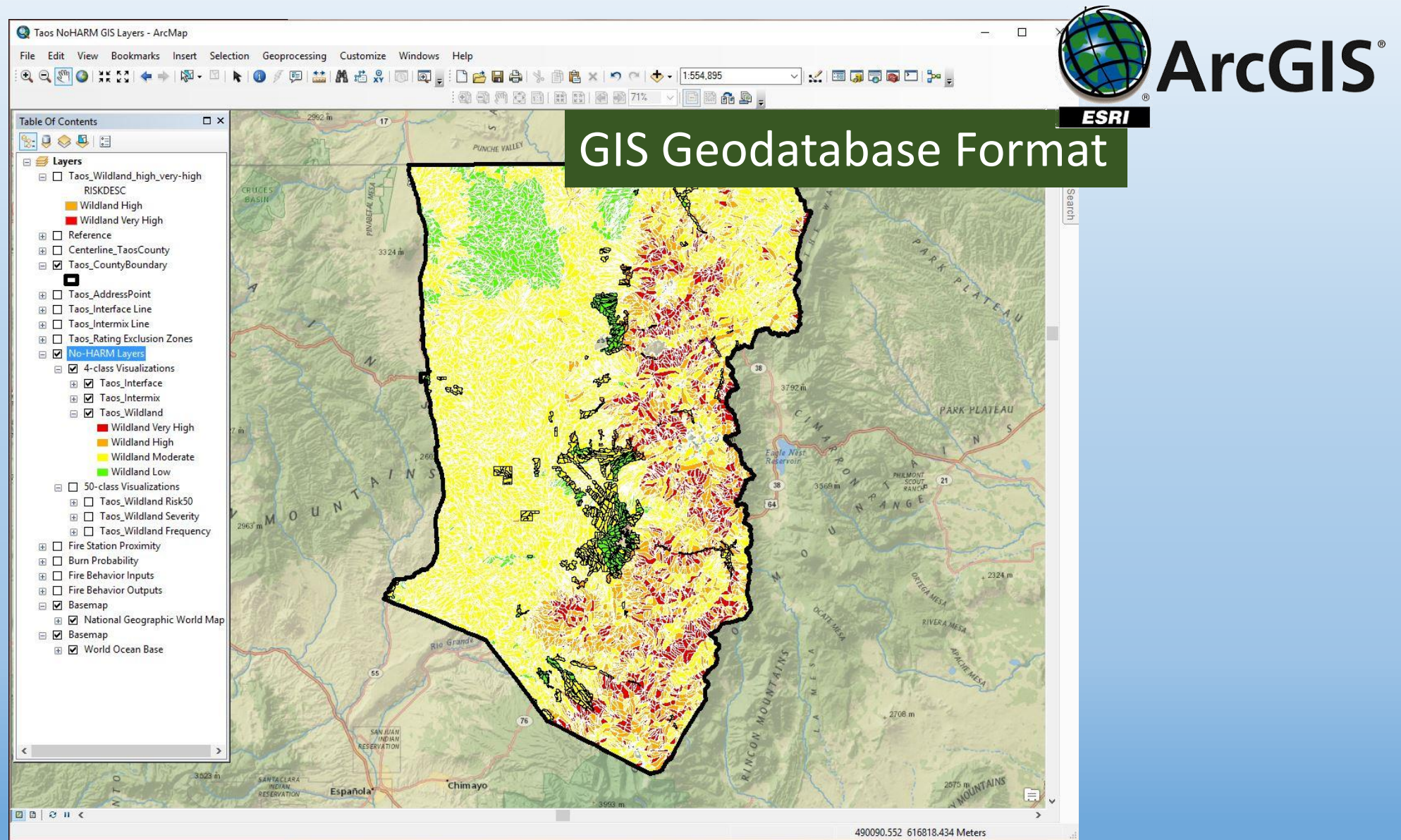


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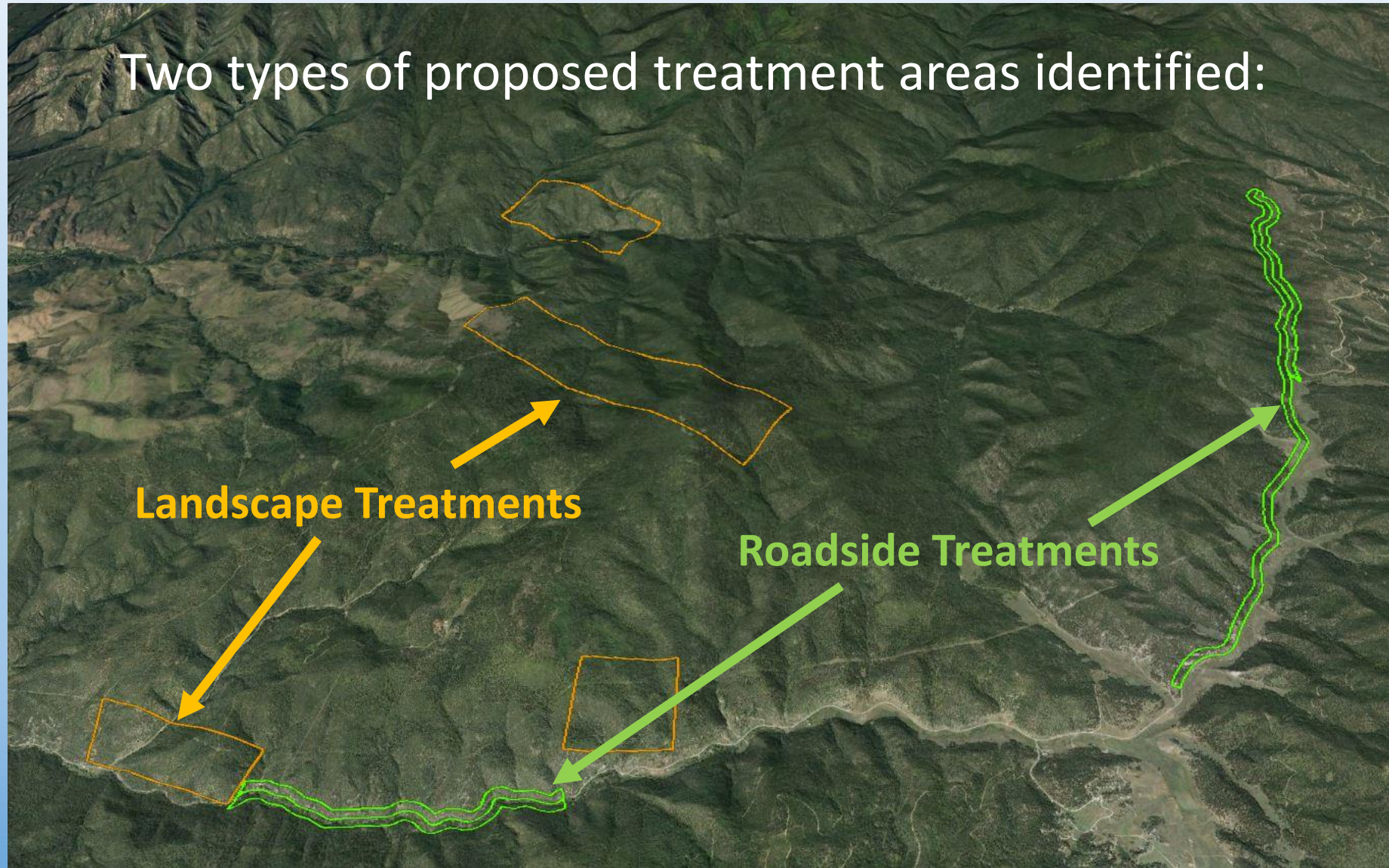


Printed Map Format

Wildfire Risk Modeling

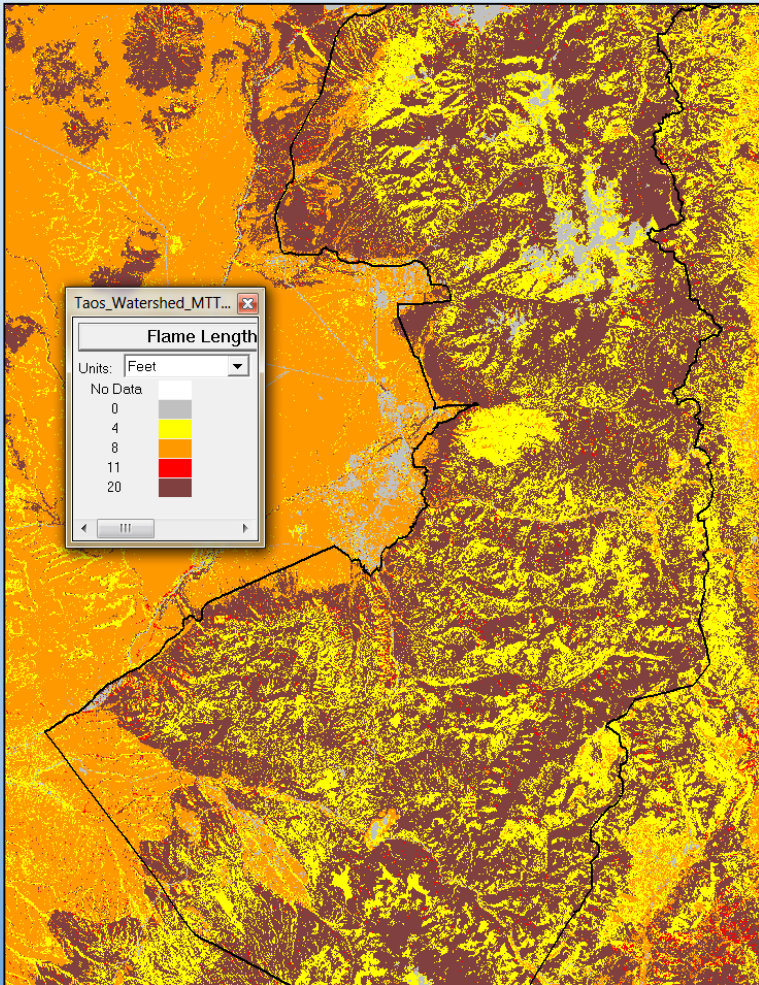


Identify Fuels Treatment Project Locations

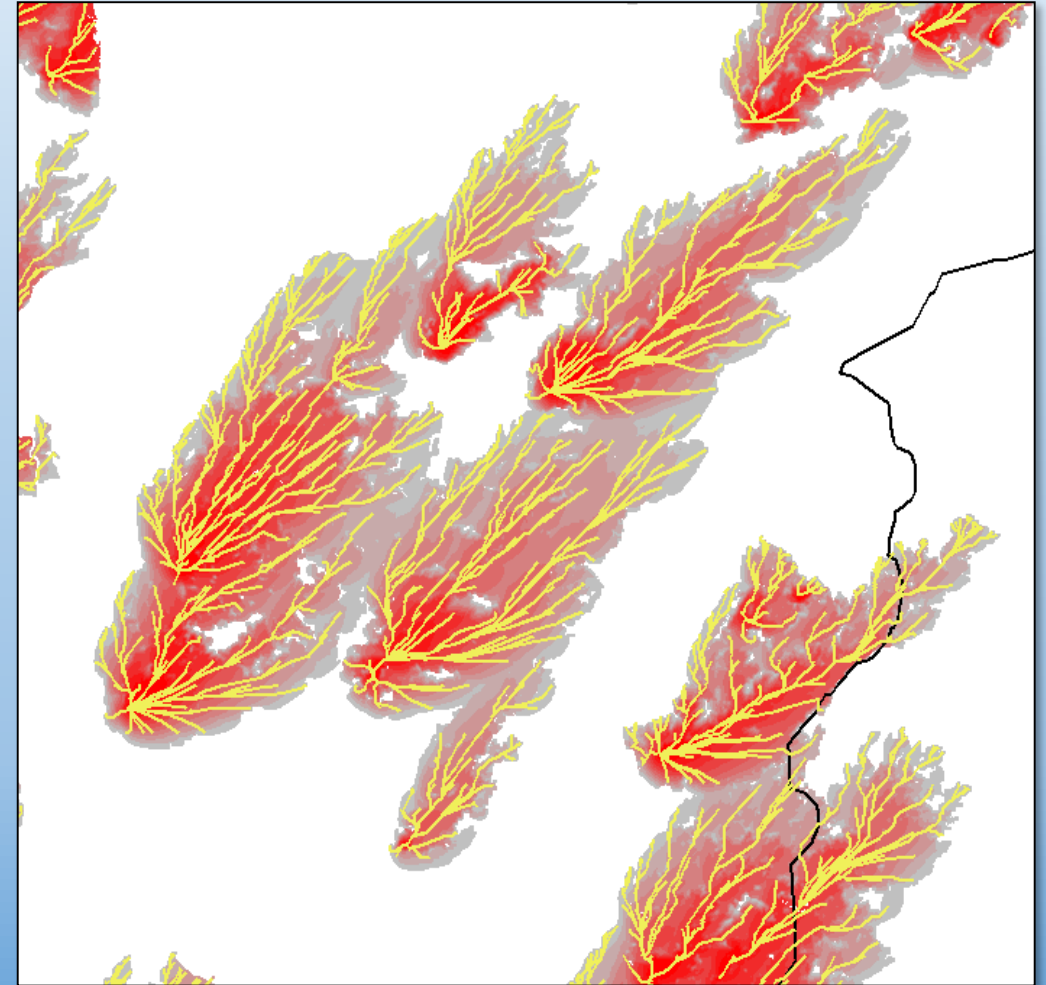


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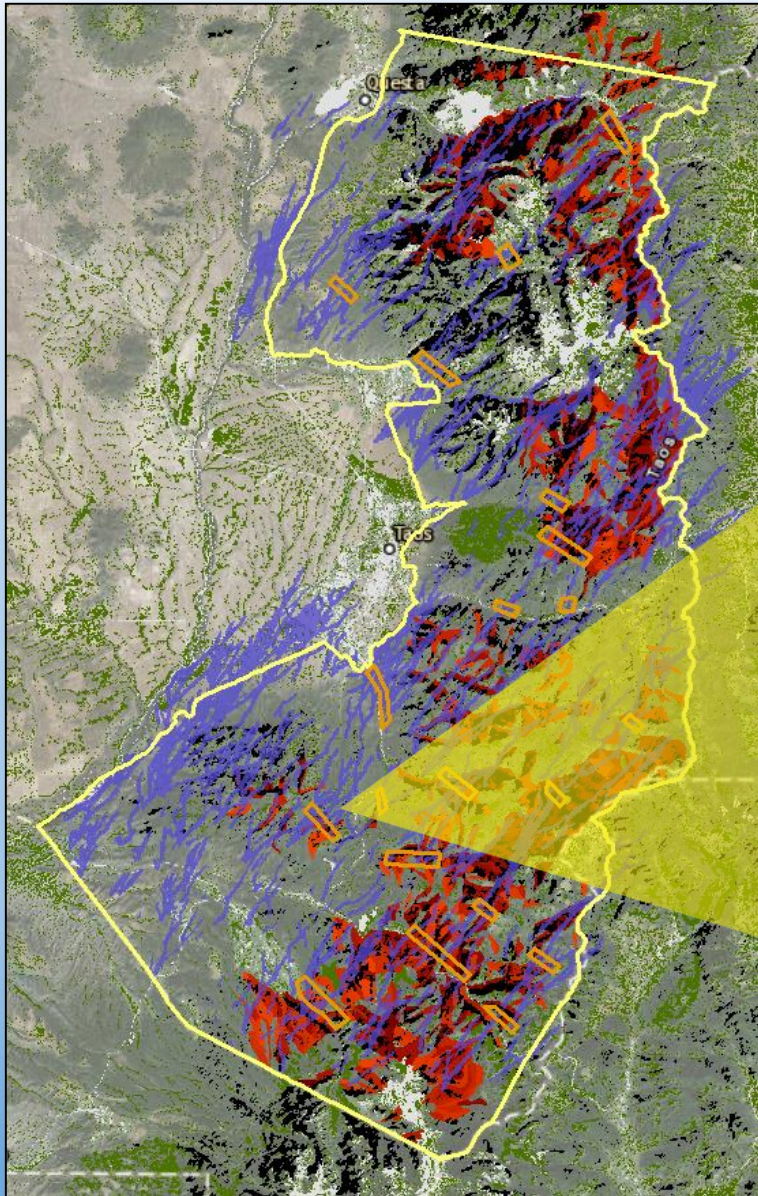
Step 1: Areas most threatened by wildfire identified



Step 2: Most likely "Fire Paths" identified

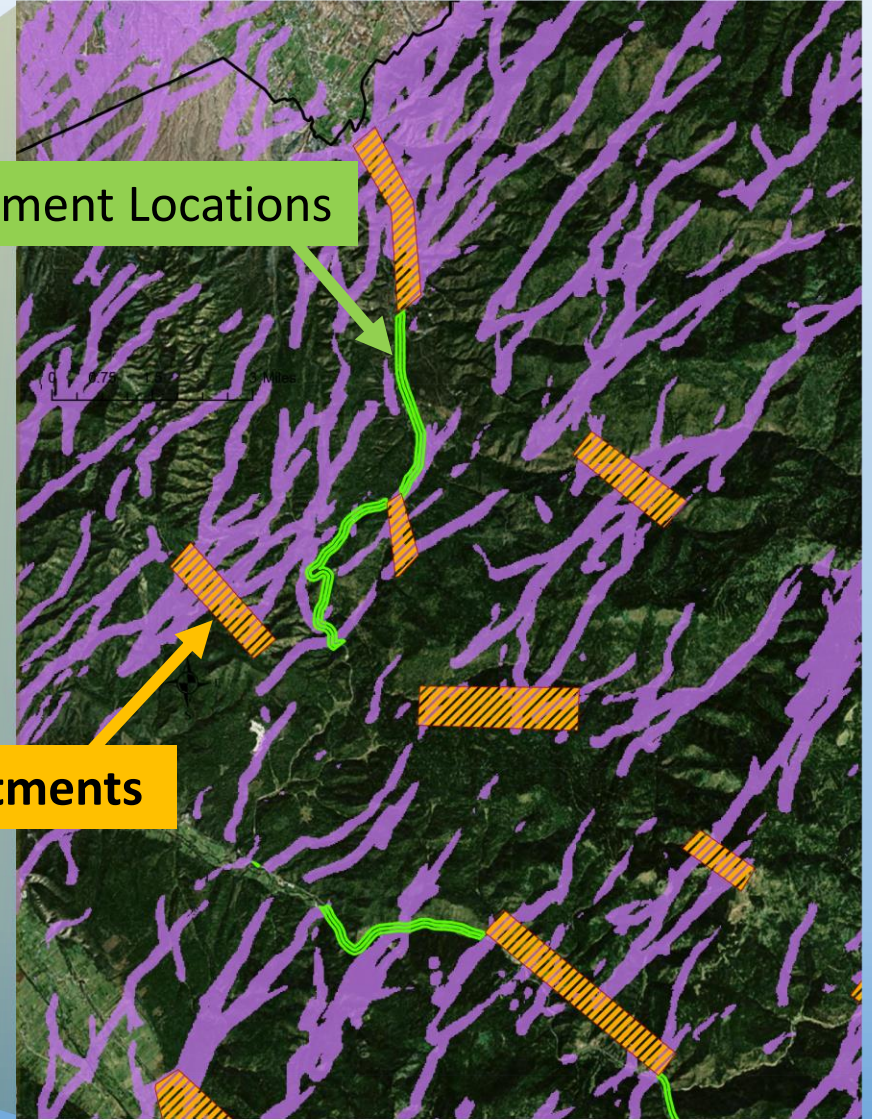


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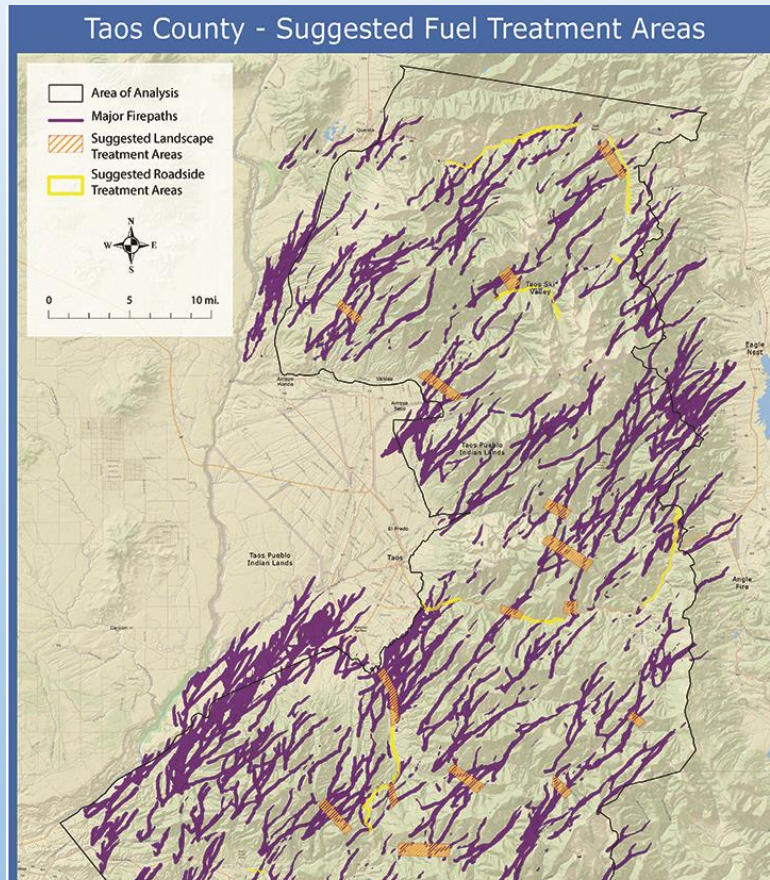


Roadside Treatment Locations

Landscape Treatments



Identify Fuels Treatment Project Locations



Google Earth Format



PDF



Printed Map Format



ArcGIS®

ESRI

GIS Geodatabase Format

Not meant to delineate actual treatment perimeters but guide treatment locations in lieu of access, sensitive habitat, land ownership, and other considerations.



Recommendations to Reduce Wildfire Risk

Planning Process (Contracted to Wildfire Planning International):

1. Obtain and Review Key Planning Documents.
2. Draft Recommendations and Reference Material.
3. Share Policy and Regulation Recommendations with Taos County for Review.
4. Integrate Revisions and Discuss Recommendations.



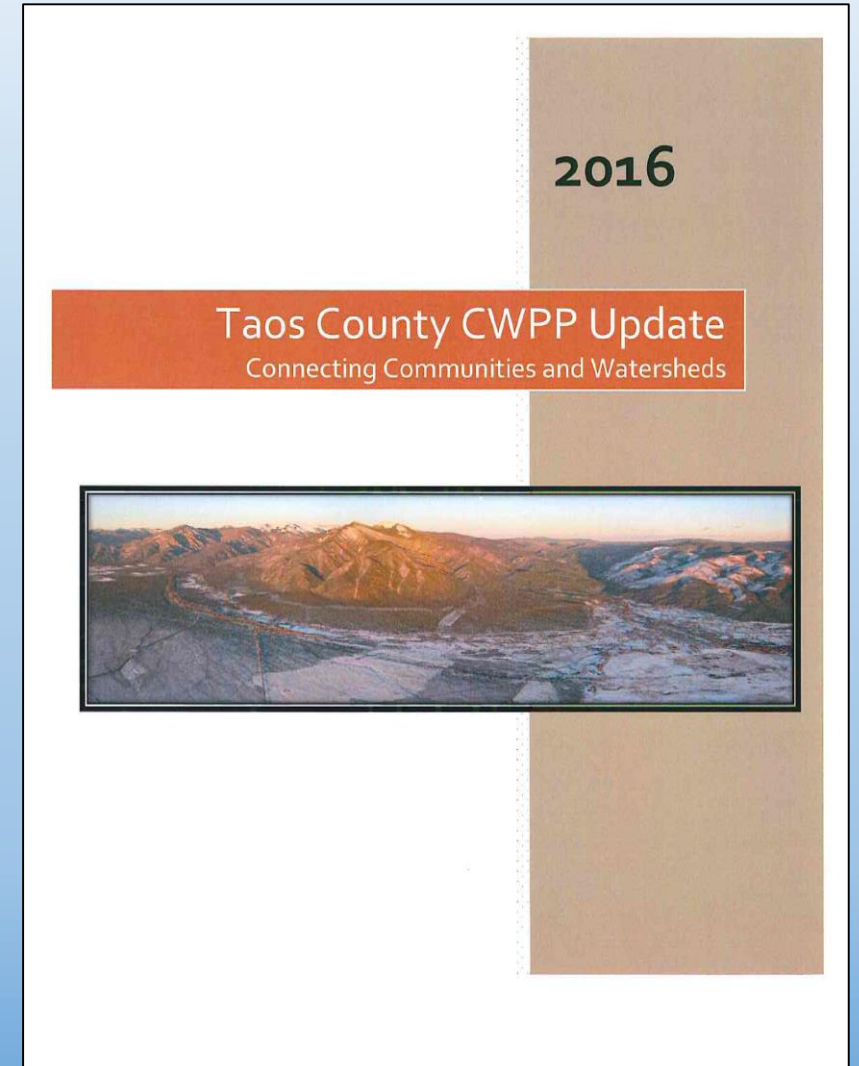
- Comprehensive Plan Update (2004)
- Land Use Regulations (2015)
- Subdivision Regulations (2005)
- Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update (2016)

Objective: Provide Taos County Planning Department with a roadmap to reduce community wildfire risk within their wildland-urban interface (WUI).

Recommendations to Reduce Wildfire Risk

Two Priority Areas Identified:

1. Revise content and expand wildfire policies as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update:
 - Update “Environment Element” chapter to include wildfire risk within the WUI; and
 - Identify and integrate synergies between updated CWPP (2016) and Comprehensive Plan Update.

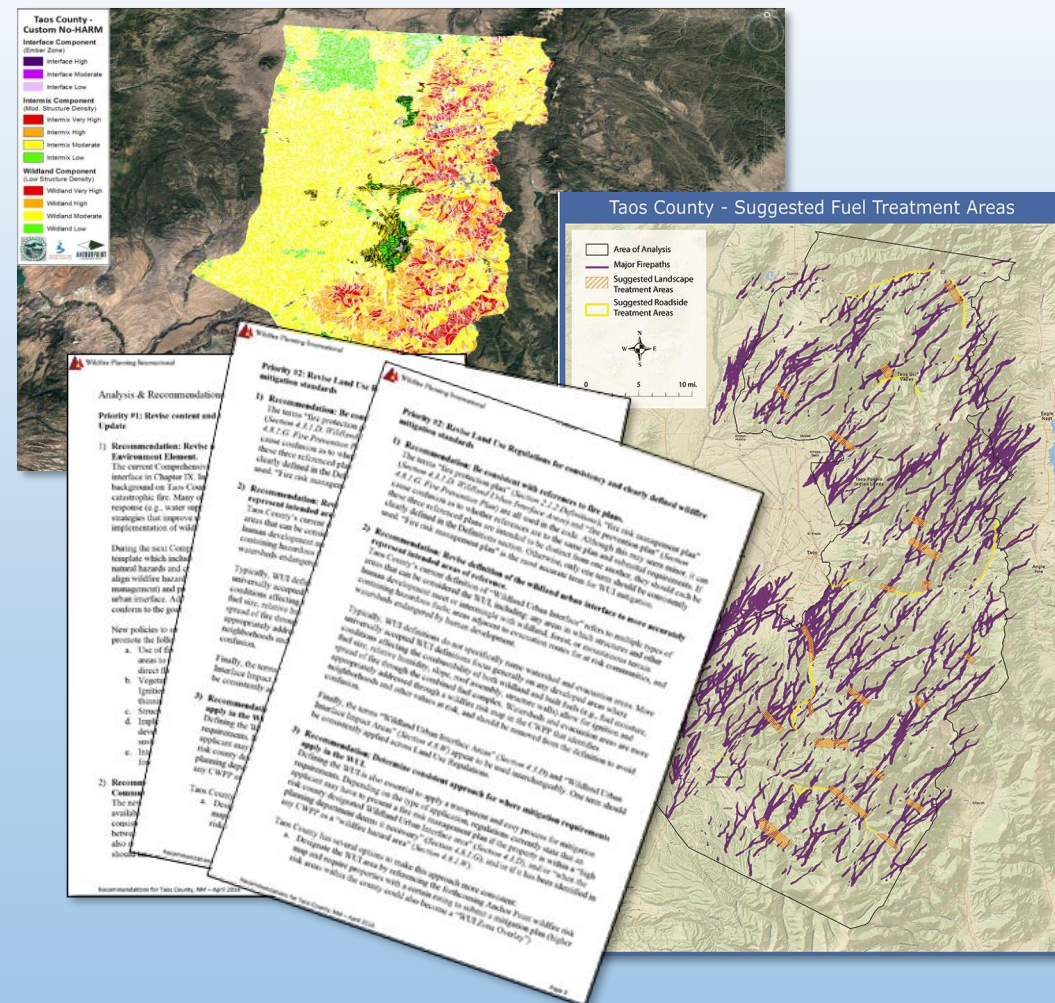


Recommendations to Reduce Wildfire Risk

2. Revise Land Use Regulations for consistency and clarity regarding wildfire mitigation standards:
 - Be consistent with terminology (ex: “Fire Risk Management Plan” vs. “Fire Prevention Plan,”
 - Refine definition of the “WUI” into explicitly identified locations,
 - Identify geographic scope of required mitigation requirements,
 - Develop set of standards for development within the WUI,
 - Reconcile existing conflicts and avoid creating new ones (ex: “Aesthetic landscaping” vs. defensible space standards); and,
 - Consider short- and long-term compliance mechanisms.

Wildfire Risk Modeling

Identify Fuels Treatment Project Locations



What's Next?

Work with Collaborative Partners to Identify:

- What is the best way to implement the risk modeling outcomes?
- What resources are additionally needed within the County to reduce wildfire risk?
- What role can Headwaters Economics play in achieving the above?



Approaches & Ideas So Far...

- Online “Story Maps” to illustrate larger community narrative of watershed protection, wildfire impacts, and local socioeconomic health.
- Peer networking opportunities and sharing lessons learned (November 2016).
- Publications and literature dissemination,
- Presentation to Washington D.C. Wildfire Leadership; and,
- Other ideas to be discussed and proposed by CWPP Core Team, Land Use Planning Dept., agency partners, and other local stakeholders.



Are there any questions?



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