

FINAL

**Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin Area
Community Wildfire Protection Plan**

January 2008

Prepared by
Cascadia Conservation District
with assistance from the
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1. Introduction

Some residents living in and around the communities of Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area are concerned about the effects of wildfire on their community. Recent wildfires in the area have prompted local residents, government officials, and fire department personnel to join together to proactively plan and implement actions to protect human life and property and to reduce the risk of future wildfire related disasters.

For the purpose of this project, the entire planning area is considered to be in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

Vision and Goals

Through the development of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), residents of the Fire District #6 area aim to protect their community from the effects of wildfire through outreach of educational information, strategic planning, and action. They wish to face each fire season confident that they have done everything possible to prepare for and mitigate the effects of a potential forest fire in their area.

The primary goal of the CWPP is to protect human life, private property, and essential infrastructure and resources through the implementation of fire prevention projects that work to increase public awareness, improve forest health, sustain local wildlife, and preserve the natural beauty of the area.

Community Awareness

Residents in the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area are aware of the impact from wildfires and the need to develop a comprehensive wildfire prevention and protection plan. The planning area is bordered on all sides by public lands that are a source of vegetative fuels and wildfires are a common occurrence. Concerned residents began organizing in winter 2007. Their input and guidance have played an essential role in the creation of this CWPP.

A CWPP was developed for the Peshastin Creek drainage portion of Fire District #6 in September 2005. The Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin Area CWPP does not include the Peshastin Creek drainage. That portion of Fire District #6 completed a CWPP specific to that drainage last year.

Values

The residents in the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area value their homes, privacy, wildlife habitat, and beauty of the surrounding forest. They want to improve the safety of their community and play an active role in land management decisions affecting adjacent federal and state lands.

2. Planning Area

General Description of the Area

The Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area community wildfire protection planning area is located in the south west portion of Chelan County. It includes areas within Chelan County Fire District #6, as well as adjacent private, state and federal forestlands (Figure 1). The entire planning area is considered to be in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Total acreage in the planning area is approximately 76,436 acres. Federal and State agencies manage 42,615 acres (55.8%), (50 acres managed by Washington State Parks), and private makes up. Private & Other: 33,821 acres (44.2%).

Drainages in the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area are primarily glacial U-shaped valleys with steep sidewalls. Dominant vegetation includes mixed conifer and open pine forests. Residential development is largely rural in nature and density varies with topography and proximity to the lake and other scenic areas. According to 2000 Chelan County records approximately 10,000 people currently live in the planning area. The approximate assessed value of homes and other improvements in the planning area total \$365,406,85. Many residences are located up the numerous narrow canyons that feed into the Wenatchee River valley. In some cases the homes are very large and interface with both agricultural areas as well grass and forest environments. The area is a popular recreation destination, particularly during the summer and winter months. The Peshastin Pinnacles, a Washington State Park, is located within the planning area.

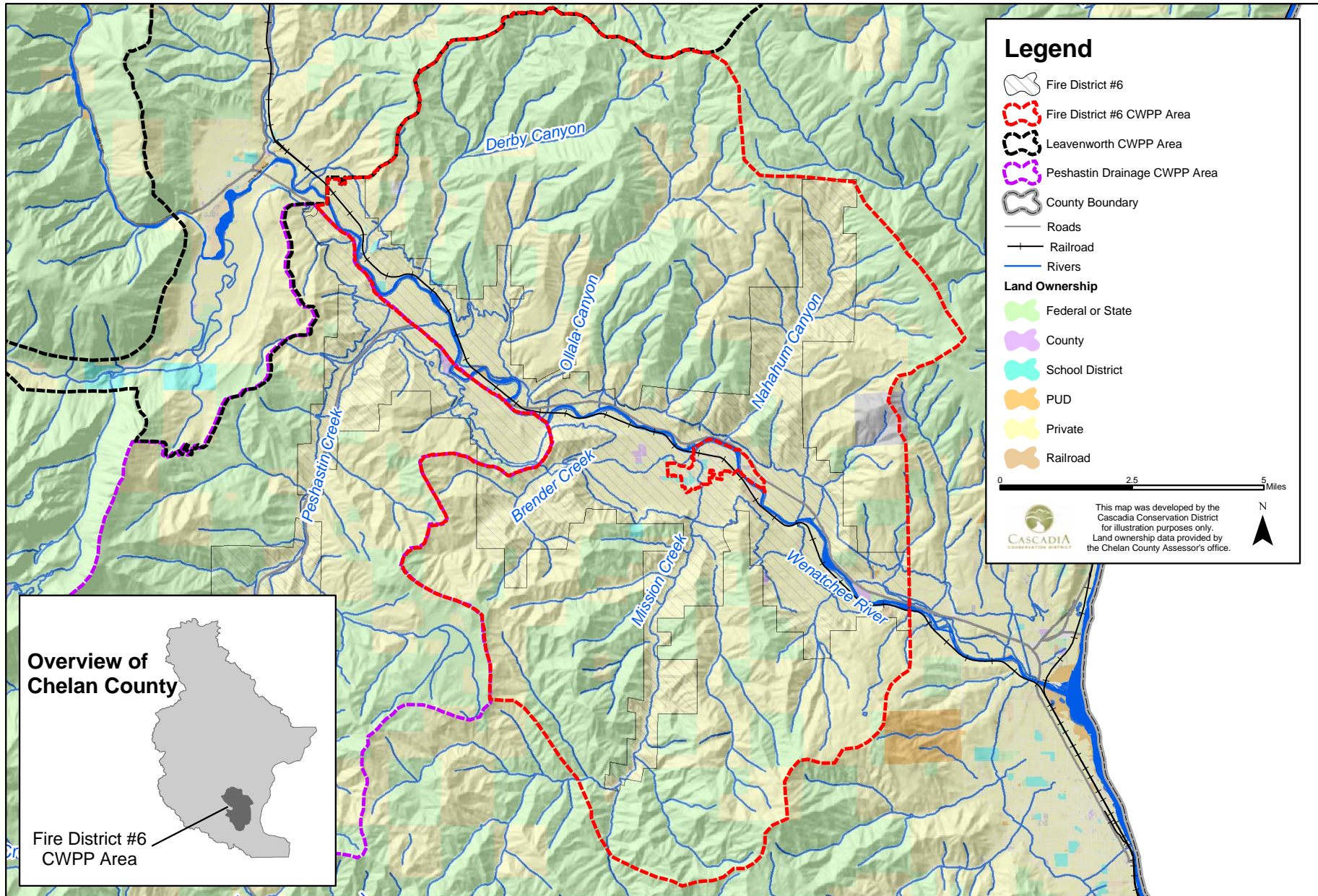
Highway 2/97 provides the main access in and through the planning area. Other primary roads are County Roads that turn into Forest Roads that lead up Mission and Brender Creeks and up Nahahum, Hay, Olalla, Williams, and Fairview Canyon. Some roads leading up the canyons are one way in and one way out roads, while other county roads leading up canyons turn into Forest Roads and allow an outlet. Many areas are served by a single point of access providing only one way in and one way out. Most of these roads are too narrow for fire protection vehicles to easily access and maneuver in.

Primary land uses in the planning area consist of agriculture, forest land, recreational areas (golf course, campgrounds and State Park), and rural residential.

For the purpose of this CWPP, the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area planning area has been divided into six regions. From east to west the regions are 1) Monitor, 2) Cashmere, 3) North side Canyons, 4) Dryden area, 5) Mission and Brender Creeks, and 6) Peshastin area.

Fire District #6 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Overview of the CWPP Area



General Description of Planning Area Regions

- 1) **Monitor** – A small community located along the Wenatchee River at the east side of the planning area. A post office, store, tavern and fruit packing warehouse make up the “city center” and is surrounded by orchards and scattered homes.
- 2) **Cashmere** – Is the largest town in the planning area with a population of approximately 3,500. Mission, Brender and Yaksum canyons extend to the south of Cashmere and make up the area most at risk in Cashmere region.
- 3) **North Side Canyons (Warm Springs, Nahahum, Hay, Olalla, Williams)** – These canyons extend north from the Wenatchee River and have a relatively large number of homes scattered throughout each canyon. Most of the canyons are dead ends with one way in/out.
- 4) **Dryden Area** – A small unincorporated community at the west side of the planning area that is located between Highway 2/97 and the Wenatchee River. A church, store and fruit packing warehouse make up the “city center” and orchards surround the community.
- 5) **Mission and Brender Creeks** – These two relatively large drainages extend to the south from Cashmere. Orchards are found in the valley bottoms and a fair number of homes are located in these canyons.
- 6) **Peshastin Area** – A small unincorporated community on the north side of the Wenatchee River. A church, store, post office, library, tavern, school and a few other businesses make up the “city center”.

3. Planning Process

Background

The enactment of the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) of 2003 created the opportunities for counties to participate in community based forest planning and vegetation treatment project prioritization. This landmark legislation includes the first meaningful statutory incentives for the US Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to give consideration to the priorities of local communities as they develop and implement forest management and hazardous fuels reduction projects.

In order for communities to take full advantage of this opportunity, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan must first be prepared. The Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin Area CWPP is meant to conform to the intent and letter of HFRA and consistent for Chelan County which is an at risk community of catastrophic wildfire.

The process of developing a CWPP is intended to help the communities of Chelan County clarify and refine priorities for the protection of life, property, and critical infrastructure in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). It can also lead community members through valuable discussions regarding management options and implications for the surrounding watersheds.

The language of in the HFRA provides flexibility for a community to determine the substance and detail of CWPP's and the procedures used to develop them. Because the legislation is general in nature, Chelan County is providing assistance in the preparation of CWPP. Currently, CWPP's are being developed on the County Fire District boundary scale in coordination between the landowners of the county, County Fire District staff and representatives of the United States Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and Washington State Department of Natural Resources are providing assistance to the effort. There are ten Fire Districts in Chelan County and CWPPs are being developed for each. These CWPP's will be addendums to the Chelan County-Wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Priorities developed for each Fire District will be ranked for the County.

The CWPP's for Chelan County will be updated as appropriate (no more than once every three years) by the Chelan County Conservation District. It is expected that updates will be necessary in order to reflect work done to address issues identified in the CWPP's. Another important aspect of these plans will be the monitoring of effectiveness of projects implemented under these plans.

The wildland urban interface (WUI) is the zone where structures and other human development meet and intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels. This WUI zone poses tremendous risk to life, property, and infrastructure in associated communities and is one of the most dangerous and complicated situations firefighters face.

Both the National Fire Plan and the Ten-Year Comprehensive Strategy for Reducing Wildland Fire Risks to Communities and the Environment place a priority on working collaboratively within communities in the WUI to reduce their risk from large-scale wildfire.

The HFRA builds on existing efforts to restore healthy forest conditions near communities and essential community infrastructure by authorizing expedited environmental assessments, administrative appeals, and legal review for hazardous fuels projects on federal land.

The Act emphasizes the need for federal agencies to work collaboratively with communities in developing hazardous fuel reduction projects and it places priority on treatments identified by communities themselves in a CWPP.

The HFRA provides communities with a tremendous opportunity to influence where and how federal agencies implement fuel reduction projects on federal lands and how additional federal funds may be distributed for projects on nonfederal lands. A CWPP is the most effective way to take advantage of this opportunity.

The HFRA requires that three entities (listed below) must mutually agree to the final contents of a CWPP:

- The applicable local government (County or Cities)
- The local fire departments; and
- The state entity responsible for forest management

In addition, these entities are directed to consult with and involve local representatives of the USFS and BLM and other interested parties or persons in the development of the plan. The process is intended to be open and collaborative, as described in the Ten-Year Strategy, involving local and state officials, federal land managers, and the broad range of interested stakeholders.

In the absence of a CWPP, the HFRA limits the WUI to within ½ mile of a community's boundary or within 1½ miles where mitigating circumstances exist, such as steep slopes or the presence of a critical evacuation route. At least 50 percent of funds appropriated for projects under the HFRA must be used within the WUI as defined by either a CWPP or by the limited definition provided in the HFRA where no CWPP exists. For the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area CWPP, the WUI is defined as the entire project area (see map on Page 3).

Process and Partners

The Fischer fire occurred just north of the communities of Peshastin, Dryden and Cashmere in 2004, burning 16,439 acres and forcing the evacuation of 600 people from their homes. It spread into Eagle Creek in the Chumstick Creek watershed before it was stopped. Fires since 1994 have burned to the west and north of the planning area. Land managers, Fire District staff and residents of the Mission and Brender Creek areas are very concerned about fire danger in those areas.

The Fischer Fire illustrated the need for wildfire preparedness to residents many residents of the planning area. It brought about an increased awareness of wildfire in the community and motivated many individuals to clean up around their property in an effort to reduce their risk. Around this same time local residents became aware of Community Wildfire Protection Planning efforts in the state and county. By the spring of 2007 a group of seven landowners, along with assistance from Chelan County Fire District #6, United States Forest Service, Washington

Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Park and Chelan County Conservation District staff initiated the effort to develop a CWPP. This effort is coordinated with the adjacent CWPP effort for the Leavenworth area (Fire District #3).

Community meetings were organized and held on May 22, and September 26 2007. Approximately 1,700 direct mailings were sent to landowners in the area and included a broad cross-section of stakeholder's citizens and property owners, representatives from CCFD#6, WDNR, Conservation District and USFS staff attended and discussed the objective of creating such a plan. Subsequent meeting were held to further develop the plan and solicit landowner feedback.

The Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP is the result of a locally led effort and partnerships between private, local, state, and federal interests. The Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP is part of the foundation of the county-wide community wildfire protection plan. By basing the county-wide plan on individual CWPP's, such as the Lake Wenatchee/Plain plan, the goals, objectives, and recommended projects will be developed by and remain specific to each community (See Section 8. Mitigation Action Plan).

4. Assessment

Existing Information

Primary data used in this plan came from the USFS-Wenatchee-Okanogan National Forest, Wenatchee River Ranger District, National Forest Fire Management Plan, Mainstem Wenatchee Watershed Assessment, 1999, Chelan County Fire District No. 6 (structure protection plan and evacuation plan, etc.), and WDNR (historic/potential vegetation, topography, fire cause statistics). *Note: Portions of this document include intellectual property of the WDNR and are used herein by permission. Copyright 2004, WDNR. All Rights Reserved.*

Vegetation

The CCFPD#6 Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin Community Wildfire Protection Planning area is located towards the eastern edge of the Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest in north-central Washington. The planning area varies in elevation from points above 4100' (Blag Mountain, Tibbetts Mountain, Eagle Rock and Burch Mountain) to 800' along the Wenatchee River. The annual precipitation ranges from approximately seven inches per year at the east end, south of Burch Mountain, to nearly twenty inches per year (most in the form of snow) as you travel westward to Peshastin. This range of precipitation combined with elevation and aspect provides a vegetation gradient from hot, dry grass and shrub-steppe types to warm, dry forests of predominately ponderosa pine with inclusions of Douglas-fir.

The large majority of the planning area (47%) is of dry forest stands of predominately ponderosa pine with some small amounts of Douglas-fir. Ponderosa pine stands dominate the landscape covering 34,664 acres (45%) of the planning area. More mesic sites (e.g. north slopes and creek beds) have developed stands of Douglas-fir and some deciduous tree species (e.g. aspen and big-leaf maple) on 1,763 acres (2%). Shrub-steppe vegetation, primarily grasses, sagebrush and other shrub species cover 37% (28,312 acres) of the planning area, mostly on south and west aspects. Private and agricultural lands comprise the remaining 15% of cover (11,345 acres) on the flatter, lower elevation arable lands.

Historically, the area around the communities of Cashmere, Monitor, Dryden, and Peshastin were open canopy, large diameter ponderosa pine stands with some Douglas-fir in sheltered valleys and at upper elevations on north slopes. Shrub-steppe vegetation was also a dominant vegetation type toward the Columbia Basin. Early settlers initiated vegetation changes with cutting of dry forests for timber products and dimensional lumber, irrigation of arable land and focused fire suppression. With time, forests became denser as younger trees grew in and shrub-steppe vegetation matured and spread without periodic fire to remove accumulated fuels (branch and litter fall) and young regenerating trees.

Currently, the primary timber type for CCFPD#6 Cashmere, Monitor, Dryden, and Peshastin Area is overstocked ponderosa pine forest with large amounts of Douglas-fir regeneration. Ponderosa pine is a shade intolerant species naturally adapted to survive in areas that experience fire on a regular basis. This frequent fire regime setting with a fire interval every 2-20 years was standard for the entire lower Wenatchee River valley. Although north aspect slopes may act as fire refugia and not experience fire on the same interval and/or intensity. Fire plays a major role in how ponderosa pine is established and sustained on the landscape. Regular burning allows

pine stands to flourish by removing underbrush and smaller competing trees. As the pines mature their bark thickens and their lower branches are self-pruned, which also makes them better adapted in a fire environment. Older, pure ponderosa pine stands subjected to frequent fire often have a wide, open, park-like feel with scattered large trees (12-25/acre) with a grass and scattered brush species understory. Fire in shrub-steppe country reduces fuel loading beneath existing plants that accumulates over time. Regular fire occurrence in this vegetation type produced open shrub lands with green vigorous growth that was very palatable to wildlife species, particularly on south aspect slopes during late winter and early spring.. Fire also provides benefit by providing a mosaic of microhabitats across the landscape by creating openings, snag patches, and opportunities for a variety of plant species. In addition, these naturally occurring low intensity frequent fires would keep insects and plant diseases in check. The resulting increase in vegetative diversity benefits wildlife, as well as improving forest health and providing disease resistance. Conversely, the exclusion of fire over the last 60-90 years has allowed for the continuous horizontal and vertical fuel profiles of ponderosa pine and Douglas-fir to develop and increase the susceptibility for high intensity, stand replacement fires.

Fire Ecology

In addition to the vegetation structure (e.g. tree density) and individual species adaptations to fire, the local fire regime (i.e. pattern, intensity, frequency, extent and severity) greatly influences vegetation and fuel accumulation patterns. When the natural fire regime within these dry forests has been altered (primarily through fire suppression or fire exclusion) ponderosa pine stands become denser. Shading and competition will inhibit the growth of pine and allow more shade tolerant species, such as Douglas-fir to become established along with other understory brush species. This overstocked condition will produce vertical and horizontal fuel profile continuities which often result in high intensity stand replacement fires. Additionally, denser stands are often more susceptible to the spread of insects and disease which provide more dead standing and down fuels. Vegetation within frequent fire regimes (with fires at intervals of 0-35 years) become unstable as fire frequency is disrupted (e.g. by fire suppression or fire exclusion). These forest types rely on the dynamics of fire to lower competition amongst species, keep areas of disease and insects in check and clean up the accumulated dead and downed materials (fuel). If there are no fires in a 0-35 year period to manipulate the dry forest (and in the absence of other treatments which emulate fire such as thinning), the forest becomes less sustainable and more fire prone. No fires over a longer period (>70 years) produce a densely stocked stand of pines and shade tolerant species. This condition will result in the loss of large areas of forest cover, appreciable damage to watersheds, significantly altered wildlife habitat, and a high potential for soil damage when the inevitable uncharacteristic high intensity fire occurs.

Most of the dry forested areas in the CCFPD#6 Peshastin to Monitor area are in the advanced conditions which tend toward large damaging fires. Recently burned areas (e.g. Fischer and Easy Street fire areas) have significantly reduced fuel loadings in their respective locations which have converted landscapes to an improved condition and a normally functioning state.

Thinning may be warranted in an effort to emulate fire as a process (that is, to remove and break up the pattern of fuels) and increase the area conducive to lower intensity fires which also allows access to fire suppression forces. Thinning and prescribed burning activities can take place within or adjacent to the CCFPD#6 Cashmere, Monitor, Dryden, and Peshastin area in an

attempt to lower the trend of increasing fuels. As stated above, the Easy Street Fire occurred in the flashy grasses and shrub-steppe fuels reducing fuel loadings. Other fires of this scale and intensity can still occur locally given the landscape fuel conditions. It was extremely fortunate that the Easy Street fire did not destroy homes but the potential was high and remains elevated in other adjacent unburned areas.

Fire History

Since 1970, over 557 fires have occurred within the CCFPD#6 Cashmere, Monitor, Dryden, and Peshastin Area (See Fire History map on page 16 for summary and location of fire starts). Fires are started naturally by lightning in the planning area nearly annually and are typically concentrated along ridge tops though random strikes may occur anywhere. In addition, human-caused fire starts are also occurring (and increasing with additional development and recreational use) as a result of other activities, such as dispersed motorized recreation, fireworks and debris burning. The Wenatchee River drainage has seen a very high number of human-caused fire starts including a few which have grown quite large due to occurring on hot, dry, windy summer days. The size of the fires may vary, but typically small fires of a few to several acres occurred on a 5-10 year interval. Larger fires have been experienced near and within the planning area. Large fires (those greater than 1000 acres) have occurred in 1988 (Dinkelman Fire, 55,000 acres), 2004 (Fischer Fire, 16,513 acres) and 2007 (Easy Street Fire, 5800 acres). Conditions are still conducive for a large, high severity fire, particularly in the upper Olalla and Nahahum canyons to Burch Mountain and on the south side of the Wenatchee River and State Highway 2/97.

General Fire Behavior Potential

Weather, topography, and fuels affect wildfire behavior. CCFPD#6 Cashmere, Monitor, Dryden, and Peshastin Area, like other areas of Chelan County, is prone to severe weather conditions (hot, dry and windy) in late summer that can support extreme fire behavior. The terrain as well as vegetation is an extremely important aspect of expected fire behavior in this area.

The landscape is dominated by the Wenatchee River as it flows eastward to its confluence with the Columbia River just west of the town of Wenatchee. The west to east oriented drainage funnels frontal winds or afternoon diurnals as the Columbia Basin heats up and develops a strong pressure gradient, drawing in cooler air from the Cascade crest. Historical fire activity has reflected predominately wind driven fire behavior. When winds align with slope, extreme fire activity can occur. The densely populated areas along the Wenatchee River from Peshastin to Wenatchee have many areas of dense stands dominated by ponderosa pine and thickets of Douglas-fir, along with large areas of continuous flashy fuels (e.g. grasses and shrub-steppe vegetation) where wildfire rates of spread can be measured in miles per hour.

Many forest stands have closed canopies and abundant ladder fuels. Continuous, tall underbrush also predominates. Insect infestations of western pine beetle and/or fir engraver beetle are becoming more prevalent as are root rot pathogens which kill patches of all ages of trees providing jackpots of fuel.

Residences in the mid to lower portions of the Wenatchee River drainage may experience fire often and the density and stratification of fuels is such that an initially small fire could grow

quickly to a large high intensity fire with potential for spotting well ahead of the main fire front. Focused treatments around homes and other improvements to maximize defensible space include thinning, incorporating fire resistant building materials, and providing negotiable emergency access. These are critical to the protection of these homes and minimize the potential for fatalities of residents and firefighters.

Since the weather and topography of a community cannot be changed, the best approach to minimize the risk to people and potential property losses is to modify and/or reduce fuels surrounding the home, as well as at the landscape level. Fuels treatments within and adjacent to a community can improve safety for the public and fire fighters, help overall fire suppression efforts be successful, and reduce potential risk/damage to individual structures/property. Wildlife habitat benefits can also be gained through fuels reduction and natural vegetation restoration projects (i.e. sustainable habitat, cover and forage).

Fuels/Hazards

The WDNR has classified the areas surrounding and including the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin areas as ranging from moderate risk (see map on Page 13) to 'extreme risk' WUI. The variation is, in part, due to the large planning area. A substantial portion of the planning area is considered to be at a high risk of fire danger. Past activities such as logging, grazing, and fire suppression have altered the normal fire regime, stand species composition, and affected forest health. Dense, overstocked stands of trees, particularly in the Brender and Mission Creek areas are increasing the fire hazard in this CWPP planning area. Many stands of ponderosa pine are dominated by trees less than 18 inches in diameter. Numerous dense pockets of standing and dead fallen trees have been/or are being affected by low level (~0.3 to 4.5 trees/acre) infestation by mountain pine beetle and/or fir engraver (WDNR GIS; see previous Vegetation map) and root rot (disease). Stands often have contiguous crowns and ladder fuels in the form of young conifers and tall brush species. These variables provide a continuous fuel profile which can create conditions for an intense and fast moving fire.

Protection Capabilities

Chelan County Fire District #6 is single departments consisting of five separate stations that are located in the communities of Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin and Blewett Pass and are responsible for private property in the area surround those communities as well as the communities themselves. The WDNR is the primary agency responsible for fire protection on forested private and state lands while the USFS is the primary agency responsible for management of fires on federal land. Areas outside the boundaries of the Fire Protection District #6 are not guaranteed fire response from the District. DNR will respond to forest fires; however, they do not have responsibility for structures. The District maintains mutual aid agreements with WDNR and fire districts within Chelan and Douglas Counties.

Fire District #6 is a small volunteer department covering approximately 20 square miles. District boundaries extend from the eastern outskirts of Monitor to the western outskirts of Peshastin and include the bottoms and/or mouths of the canyons to the north (Warm Springs, Nahahum, Hay, Olalla and Williams) and south (Fairview, Brender, Mission and Peshastin). The District has about 60 volunteers based out of five stations (four of which are addressed in this plan). The District contracts with Cashmere Fire Department which has an additional 35 volunteers.

District 6 Equipment:

- 7 type 1 structure engines
- 5 type 6 brush trucks
- 1 3,000 gallon water tender
- 1 Command vehicle

The objective of the CCFD#6 structure protection plan is to safely and efficiently manage resources to protect life, property, and resources in the event of an approaching wildfire. Strategy decisions shall take into account the following tactical considerations:

1. Bottomlands are commonly grasslands with some scattering of timber and creek beds. Steep slopes range from heavily timbered to patches of scattered trees. Fire may move rapidly through bottomlands igniting slopes where spotting, torching, and crowning can occur. Slopes and bottomlands are heavily populated with structures.
2. Most homes will require maximum effort to defend, requiring prompt implementation of this plan and the need to triage (determine which can safely be defended) structures for defensibility.
3. Access to areas differs in locations. Bottomlands are commonly accessed by county road or state highway. Slopes are accessed by long private drives in varying conditions. Access to localized structures is critical in completing structure triage.
4. Homes range from small trailer homes to very large stick frame and log dwellings in the district to large community buildings dispersed through out the District.
5. Small community water systems exist in Olalla Canyon, at the community of Peshastin, and in Cashmere. Several other small community water systems exist in the planning area, but none that could support fire fighting efforts.
6. CCFD#6 and its cooperators cannot assemble enough structure protection capabilities to protect all resources within the District. Successful defense from wildfire will depend upon structural triage and time for pre-treatment with mobile tactics. Resources from state and federal agencies will be necessary to implement the strategies described.

Structural Vulnerability

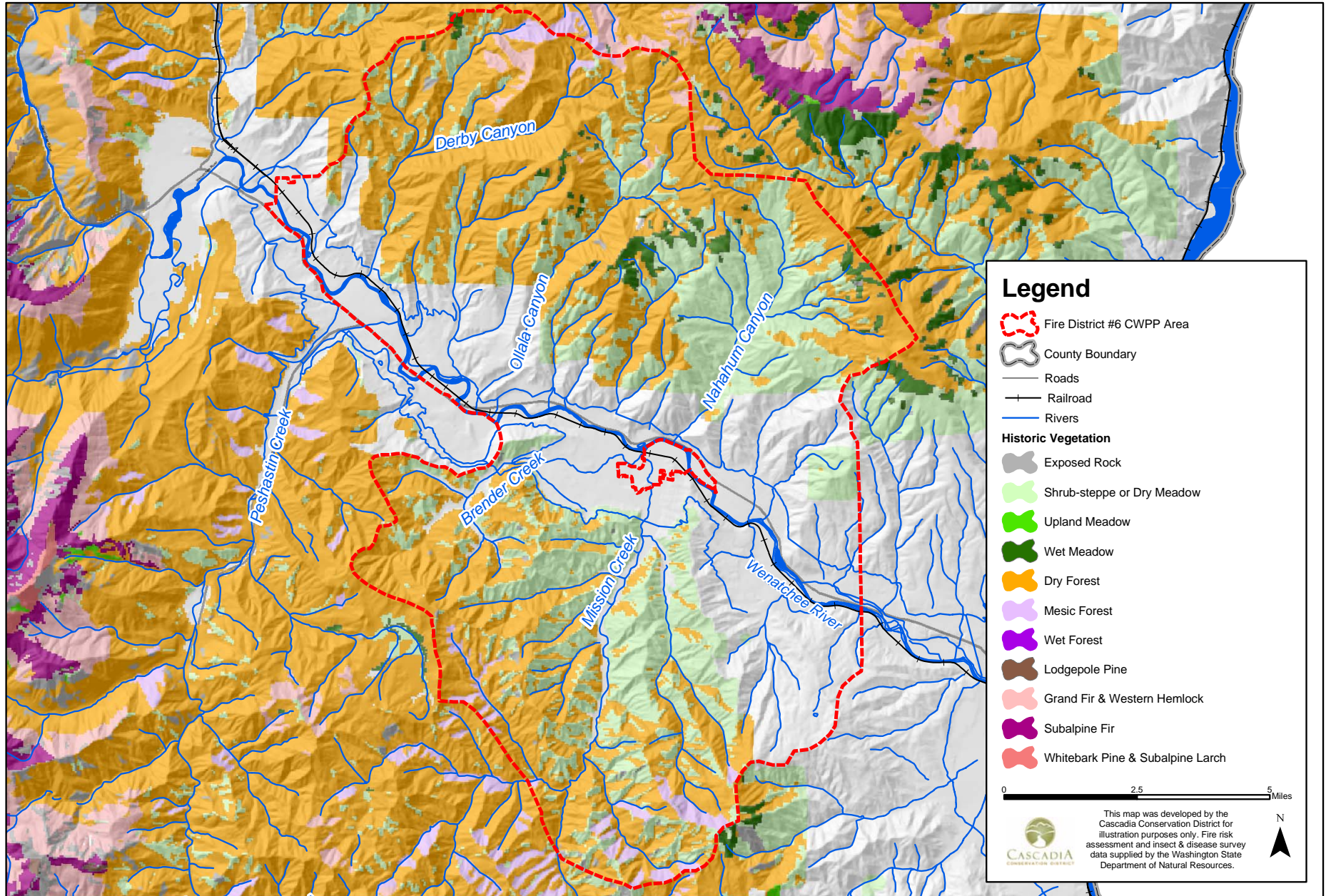
Residences within the boundaries of CCFD#6 are typically widely dispersed and are somewhat entwined into the agriculture and/or forest landscape. Concentrated areas of development exist around the communities of Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, and Peshastin and along the bottoms of canyons (Nahahum, Olalla, Hay, Williams, Mission, Brender and Yaksum). Access, topography, slope, and fuels play a role in each structure's fire risk; timber mixed with light fuel is conducive to fast moving wildfires. For these reasons, residences located in areas of heavy fuels and poor access roads are at the highest risk for fire loss. Not having water systems in the planning area limits the amount of protection the district can supply.

Key Contacts

Organization	Contact	Phone Number
Chelan County Fire District #6 Monitor Station	Chief Scott Strutzel	(O) (509) 663-1678
Chelan County Fire District #6 Monitor Station	Chief Rob Sweigard	(O) (509) 663-1678
Cashmere Fire District #6 Monitor Station	Chief Phil Guthrie	(O) (509) 663-1678
Cashmere Fire District #6 Monitor Station	Chief Mike Spies	(O) (509) 663-1678
Chelan County Sheriff	Sheriff Mike Harum RiverCom	(O) (509)667-6851 (C) (509)630-1700 911 or (509) 667-6851
Wenatchee River Ranger District (USFS)	FMO Michelle Ellis	(509) 548-6977 Ex - 240
Central WA Interagency Comm. Center (CWICC)	Mark Hayes	(O) (509) 662-4393
Chelan County P.U.D.	Main Office	(O) (509) 663-8121 (E) (877) 783-8123

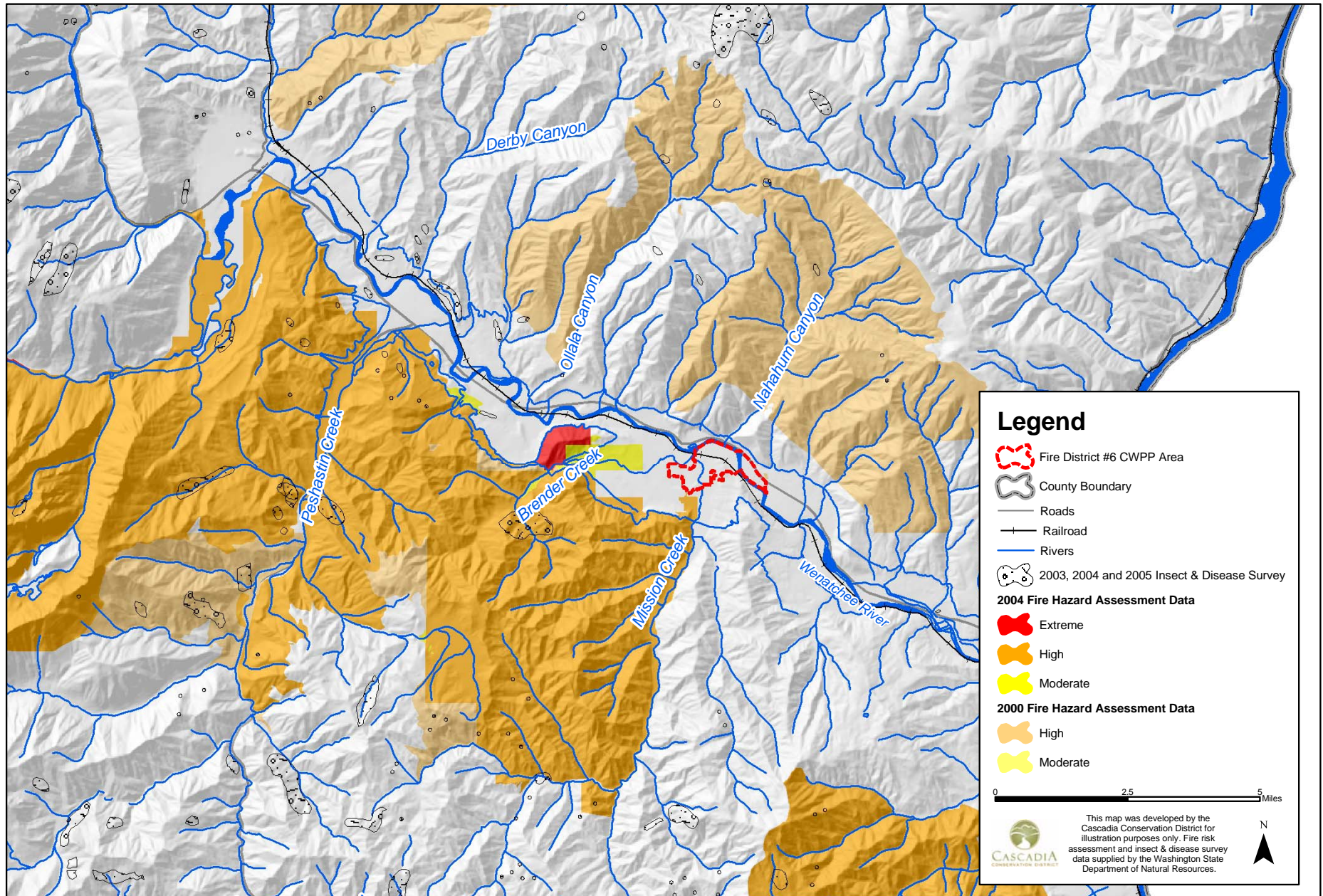
Fire District #6 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Vegetation Types



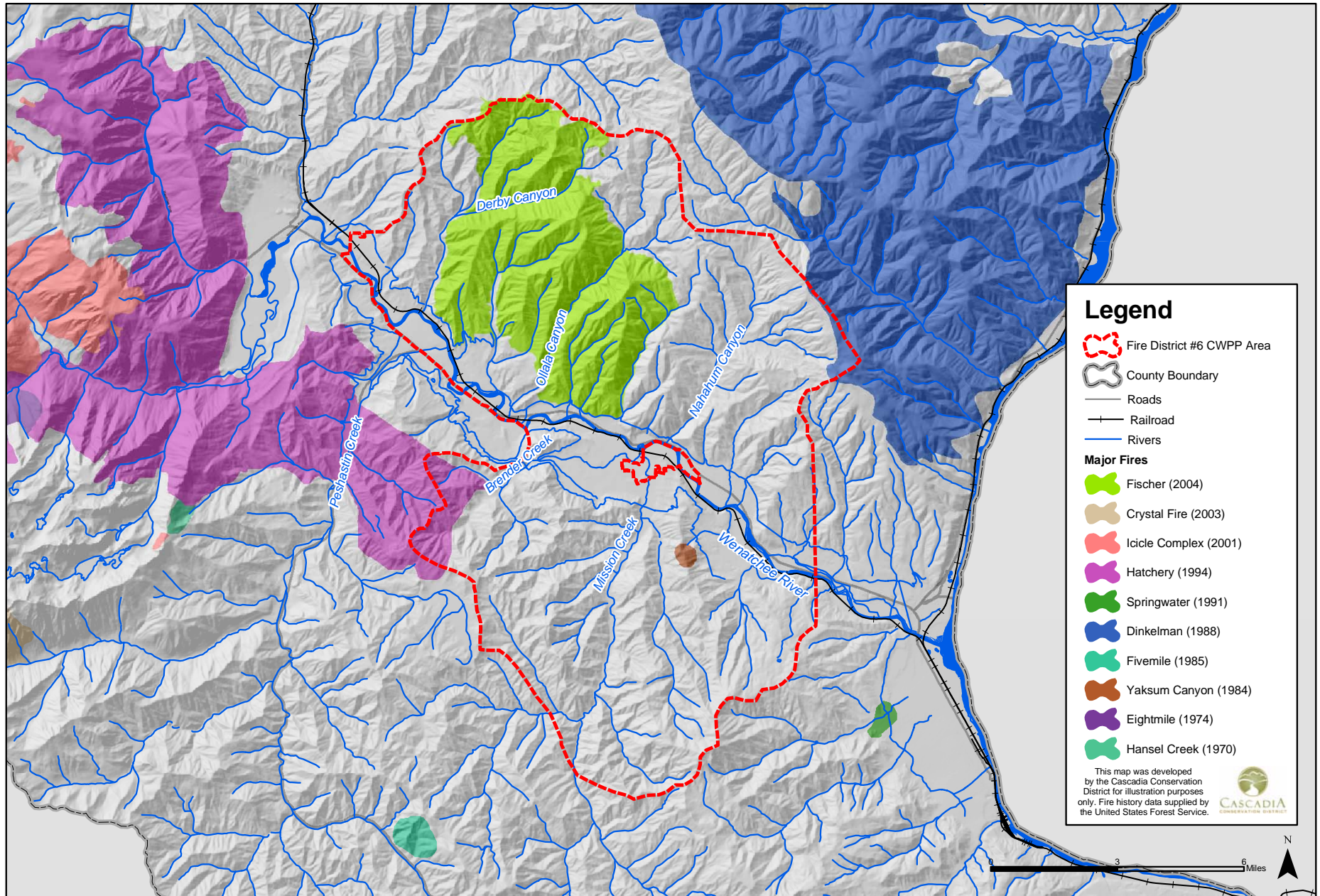
Fire District #6 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Fire Risk Assessment and Insect & Disease Survey Data



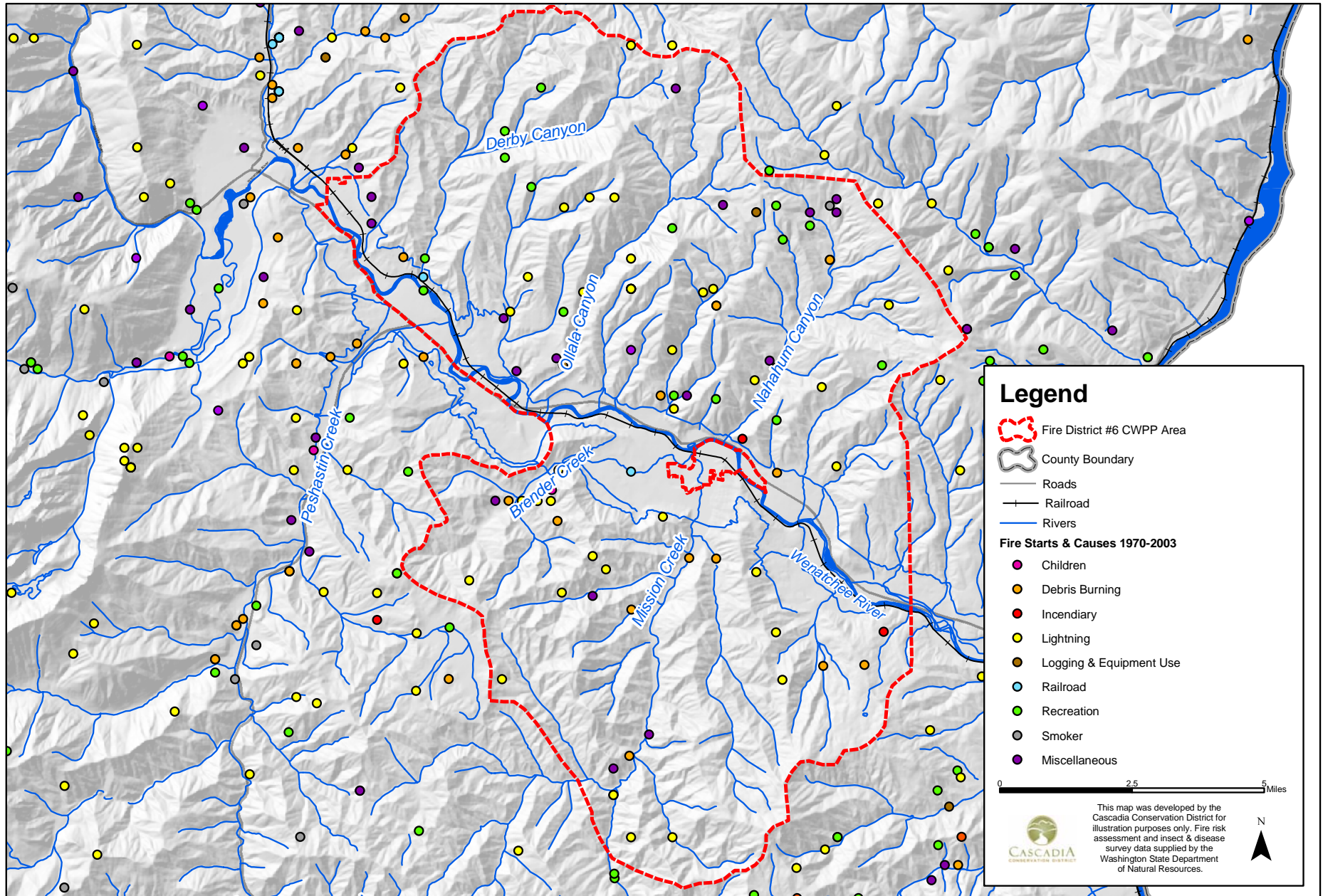
Fire District #6 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Fire History 1970-2006



Fire District #6 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Reported Fire Starts & Causes 1970-2003



5. Risk Evaluation

An area risk assessment was completed by WDNR (NFP-299 area risk assessment) that grouped the area rather than analyzing risk to individual structures. That risk assessment classified the areas surrounding and including the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin areas as ranging from moderate risk (see map on Page 13) to 'extreme risk' WUI.

Access

There are several main roads that serve as designated emergency evacuation routes. The primary access through the planning area is Highway 2/97 (east/west). Other main roads exist and provide access up the canyons, such as Mission, Brender, Yaksum, Fairview, Hay, Nahahum, Olalla, and Williams. Most of the roads that provide access up the canyons are dead end roads. However, several of the roads that access canyons provide access out of the upper ends, such as Nahahum, Mission. Not all roads in the planning area are paved or in suitable condition for fire equipment. Therefore, road access has been identified as a concern. The lack of improved roads that could serve for two access roads for emergency evacuations has been identified as a concern in some areas.

Evacuation

The Chelan County Emergency Management Program administers the evacuation of the area surrounding Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin areas in the event of a wildfire.

Staging Area for Tactical Resources

If a fire threatens the area surrounding Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin area, WDNR is primary agency for fire protection on forested private and state lands and USDA Forest Service is the primary agency responsible for management of fires on federal lands. Chelan County Fire Protection District #6 will provide first response with mutual aid resources available throughout the county. These resources may respond to a pre-designated staging area.

Possible staging area options include;

- Chelan County Fair Grounds
- Monitor Park
- Pinnacles Park

If fire threatens any portion of Fire District #6, the District will respond with mutual aid resources throughout Chelan and Douglas County. These resources may use any one of the following locations.

- Chelan County Fire Protection District #6, Monitor Department,
- Cashmere County Fire Protection District #6, Cashmere Department, 101 Applets Way, Cashmere, WA
- Cashmere County Fire Protection District #6, Dryden Department,
- Cashmere County Fire Protection District #6, Peshastin Department,

Command Post Locations

Chelan County Fire Protection District #6, Cashmere Department

Mainline	(509) 663-1678
Fax line	(509) 663-1678
Email	rscashmere617@verizon.net

Two other possible command post locations include Cashmere Airport and the Chelan County Fair Grounds. Additional Phone lines would need to be connected.

Water Supplies

The location of water sources available for fire fighting efforts are well known by the local fire chiefs. Water sources are primarily surface water withdrawal sites located on private land and right-of-ways at stream crossings. Three known water sources also exist on private land and they are located in Nahahum Canyon (approximately the middle of the Nahahum Canyon), at Hay Canyon Ranch and in upper Hay Canyon.

Additional locations on private property will be pursued through the information/education portion of the Mitigation Action Plan portion of this CWPP.

Domestic Animal Placement

In the event of a fire, the Wenatchee Valley Humane Society will work with landowners to find a safe location for livestock as well as domestic animals for homeowners who can not take their animals with them. A likely location is the Chelan County Fair Grounds.

6. Current Activities

Protection Measures

Fire protection for the communities of Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin and surrounding areas is provided by CCFD#6. Depending on the location within the planning area, response times range between 2-25 minutes.

Existing Procedures

A small group of landowners in the planning area responded to information about fire planning in the community. This group hopes to provide direction, through this plan, on the management of federal and state lands inside and adjacent to the planning area. In addition, the group desires to implement actions identified in the Mitigation Action Plan portion of the plan, page 25.

Project Proposals

No specific projects have been submitted yet. However, as the result of developing this plan specific project areas have been identified on federal and private lands (See Planned and Proposed Projects on page 14). Additionally, the CWPP effort expects to prioritize where future project proposals will take place.

Coordination with Public Agency Activities

In order to maximize the fuels reduction work planned for private land, it would be desirable for complementary projects to take place on adjacent federal and state managed lands in and adjacent to the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP planning area. The CWPP is recognized as the instrument necessary to organize and educate the public to further encourage and suggest design of such future projects.

The USFS-Wenatchee River Ranger District is preparing a 5-year Action Plan that will prioritize fuels reduction projects in the WUI. Within the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP, there is a planned Forest Service project (Canyons) that include pre-commercial thinning, commercial thinning, pruning, piling, burning, and under burning treatments. The development of this document will facilitate the inclusion of areas identified in the Mitigation Action Plan that will meet the objective of landscape fuels reduction and discontinuity in the pattern of fuels in the proximity of WUI. In the future, the entire Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP planning area will be annually reviewed for potential landscape fuels treatments in order to maintain a 5-year Action Plan.

Efforts will continue to be made to coordinate projects that maximize the benefits of landscape fuels reduction involving other public and private entities, and as outlined within the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP Mitigation Action Plan, can be considered for inclusion in the USFS-Wenatchee River Ranger District 5-year Action Plan as it is amended in the future.

State agencies manage approximately 50 acres or 0.1% of the planning area (Washington State Parks). The Washington State Department of Natural Resources has a continuing management strategy for state trust land parcels. The prescriptive practices are accomplished at various times throughout the management cycle for each parcel. The DNR recognizes the need to accomplish

fuels reduction on state trust land parcels and works to include fuels reduction into management prescriptions as well as times when design of joint ownership projects will benefit all landowners involved.

Landowner Committee

A small group of landowners provided assistance with development of the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP. This committee (a few of which signed the plan) was made up of concern homeowners who live, work, and play in the WUI and responded to information about developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the area. Many of these homeowners were already involved with fuels reduction efforts in the area on their own. The committee provided the bulk of feedback from community members during the development of the plan. It was decided by the participating landowners that the focus of this CWPP is to help ensure human safety and structure protection on private land. Based on this, it was decided to have the Mitigation Action Plan concentrate on safety issues in the following categories: education and outreach, fuels reduction, and improved protection capabilities. Projects that address human safety issues will be of a higher priority than projects that benefit homes. No home is worth a life.

Education and outreach was identified as one of the most important tools and first priority to be included in the plan. It was recognized by the committee that landowners will need to be informed of the need and means to “FireWise” their property and ensure safety. In addition, education and outreach will need to reach people who are only part time residents or visit frequently, but may not live in the planning area. A high percentage of the homeowners do not live full time in the area. Several items were identified as a means to get fire information out to the public (See 8. Mitigation Action Plan, page 25). The objective of this portion of the plan is to provide information to landowners and visitors to increase knowledge and understanding of fire related issues. Education will also provide landowners the knowledge needed to begin reducing the fire risk around homes. Some things considered to accomplish this include hosting future “FireWise” presentations and workshops and work to support the volunteer firefighter program.

Fuels reduction, both around homes and across the landscape was the second priority of the landowner committee. The committee agreed that implementing defensible space around homes was the first priority for fuels reduction and the second priority was the general landscape. Landowners will be encouraged (and information provided on how) to create a defensible space around their own homes. Financial assistance should be provided to assist those landowners that do not have the funds or ability to do it all on their own. Landscape level treatments (such as shaded fuel breaks or thinned areas) provide a substantial means of defense from the spread of wildfire and will be pursued for implementation. The scale of this work will not return the immediate benefits that come from creating defensible space around individual homes. Creating defensible space and maintaining it to protect structures will provide additional form of “back-up” if/when fires spread to private lands. Landscape treatments and shaded fuel breaks should be located based on terrain, fuel conditions, etc. and the treatments take place where needed regardless of ownership.

The landowner committee will assist with investigating and prioritizing on-the-ground wildfire prevention and protection projects in the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP

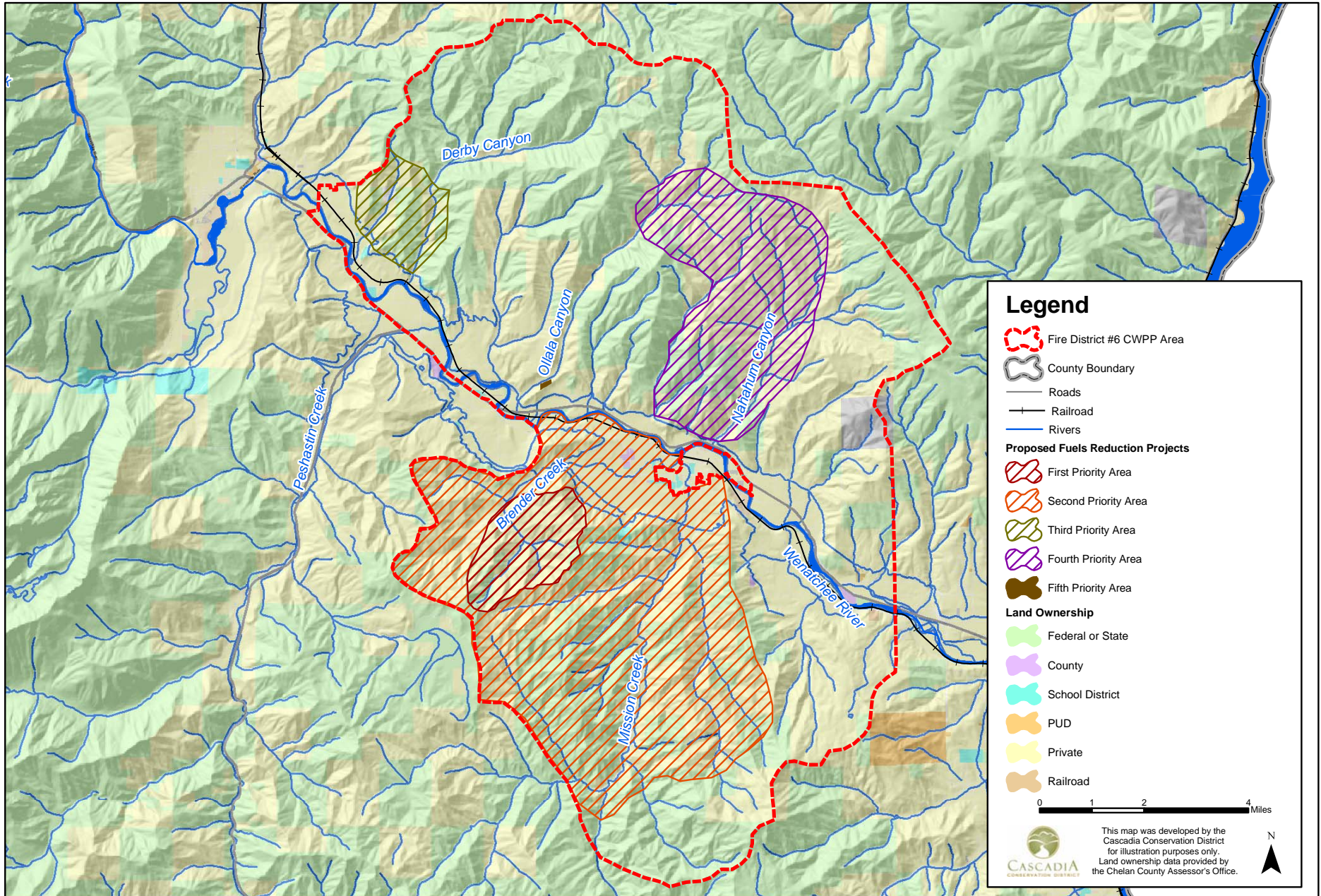
(Mitigation Action Plan, Page 25). In general, projects will be prioritized based upon their proximity to densely developed areas within the planning area and work outward toward adjacent public lands. The focus will first be on protecting areas of densest developments within the planning area.

Communication was identified as another item to be addressed in the plan. Specifically, immediate communication of accurate information to landowners and appropriate emergency personnel in the event of a fire related emergency is critical. Through this planning effort, the best means of developing an improved method of communication between landowners will be established.

The steep, rugged topography of the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP limits most roads to valley bottoms and ridge tops. Limited roads, particularly a lack of secondary access roads into populated areas of the planning area were identified as a substantial concern to safety. Means to improve/upgrade existing roads to provide for secondary access during emergency evacuation conditions should be pursued with the appropriate landowner.

Fire District #6 Community Wildfire Protection Plan

Proposed Fuels Reduction Projects



7. Plan Maintenance

The landowner committee, with support from county, state and federal partners, will be responsible for monitoring existing projects and communicating that information to the Conservation District so that accomplishments can be tracked. The landowner committee will propose and prioritize future projects aimed at wildfire prevention and protection in the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP. Members of this committee will take on the task of coordinating with outside groups and agencies to investigate, write, and submit future grants. This group is also responsible for partnering with appropriate agencies to review and update this CWPP on an annual basis (no less than once every three years) with assistance of CCFD#6 and the Chelan County Conservation District and with assistance from state and federal land managers.

8. Mitigation Action Plan

There are three main categories of mitigation actions identified by members of the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden, Peshastin Area CWPP committee. Categories include fuels reduction, education and outreach, and fire prevention and suppression in the WUI area. Natural vegetation and habitat restoration activities are incorporated into fuels reduction projects. Recommendations are organized into categories, but are not listed in order of priority. Rather, each project type identified is of equal value to the community.

- Fuels Reduction

1. Implement “FireWise” recommendations within 200 feet of private homes and essential infrastructure. Actions include the establishment of defensible space, adequate turn-around space for emergency equipment, and clear consistent address signs.
2. Implement fuels reduction on strategically located areas that will have the greatest benefit for the entire project area. The objective is to help reduce the potential of a wildfire moving from public to private lands and vice versa across the landscape. Particular attention will be placed on Forest Service and private property in the Sky Meadows area of Brender Creek.
3. Treat vegetation along roads and driveways to improve site access and fire fighting. This can include shaded canopy defensible space on both sides of the roads.
4. Encourage the USFS to continue current fuels reduction activities at the landscape scale with an emphasis of restoration of low intensity fire regime and creating strategic fuel breaks that will enhance local fire suppression efforts and utilize “natural” fuel breaks where feasible (such as orchards, ridge tops, highways, rock outcrops and irrigated pastures). Encourage similar activities on other National Forest lands adjacent to private ownership within the CWPP area as risk assessment and prioritization process continues (see map on Page 23 for areas identified during this planning process).
5. Encourage Chelan County to acquire a smaller, more mobile chipper(s) that can be used by folks in the CWPP area to dispose of brush generated through fuels reduction efforts rather than burning. This will reduce the potential that homeowner managed burns develop into wildfires.
6. Investigate biomass conversion technology for opportunities to implement biomass utilization technology in the CWPP area and County wide as part of fuel reduction projects.

- Education and Outreach

1. Circulate fuels reduction and fire precaution pamphlet yearly that includes essential “FireWise” information and distribute it to landowners in and adjacent to the Monitor, Cashmere, Dryden and Peshastin CWPP area. Information presented should cover landowner responsibilities and residential security options (i.e. creating defensible spaces and fire breaks, “FireWise” construction materials, etc.), and individual preparedness (i.e. how to create a Personal Emergency Action Plan, what to do and what not to do in the case of a wildfire, etc).
2. Utilize existing billboards on main roads and establish new ones on other roads to provide fire-related information such as fire danger level, burn ban regulations, informational messages or reminders (i.e. “No campfires” or “use your ashtray”), and/or what to do if smoke or a fire is detected. Explain what current conditions mean and what that obligates people to do (or not do). Describe penalties for non compliance with regulations.
3. Along with Federal lands, State agencies such as the DNR should be “encouraged” to work in conjunction with federal and private landowners when possible on joint projects or work into management objectives for state parcels appropriate fuels reduction projects that will compliment the overall fuels reduction strategies for the area.
4. Work with the County planning department - to get FireWise building materials information provided to developers and home builders during the permitting process.

- Improving Protection Capabilities/Human Safety

1. Emergency Safety Issues

- Re-establish addresses in a logical fashion for all roads/homes.
 - Emergency Evacuation Escape routes – get information from Emergency Management Services (EMS) on current emergency evacuation plan/routes and provide this information to the public. Update plan or provide input as appropriate.
 - Develop Emergency Communication Strategy and safe escape routes, including the following:
 - Mark exit routes on maps (Emergency Management may already have).
 - Make directional emergency exit signs (may require State and County involvement).
 - In case of Emergency tune radios to KOMO and KPQ.
2. Fuel reduction and maintenance along County roadways. The Fire District should prioritize roadways for fuel reduction actions and maintenance needs in order to keep certain critical roads passable (specifically upper Nahahum and Brender Canyon roads). Neighbors should be encouraged to organize their own clearing projects too (these might include driveways and clearing along non-county roads). The Fire District should

collaborate on roadway projects with the County, neighbors and landowners. Mitigation actions should improve access for fire equipment and evacuation for residents while maintaining and enhancing the neighborhood's sense of place and aesthetic value.

- 3. Fuel reduction along Primitive roadways.** Chelan County has established road standards, conditions of design and construction. However many of the rural roads in the County and District are classified as primitive. These primitive roads can be steep, narrow, dead-ended, and seasonal or in some other way limit access to fire fighting equipment. The considerable expense of upgrading these roads means that most will remain primitive for the foreseeable future.