

## Notes from Sept. 16, 2019 Initial CWPIP meeting

[Preface: I am not the greatest note taker! If I've made mistakes or you have anything to add, please let me know.]

I thought this was a great turnout. In addition to me and our 2 speakers: John Mandl (Inter-Canyon) and Scott Adams (Evergreen Fire/Rescue) we had 19 attendees, including people from all the streets covered in our area. For CWPIP purposes, our area is called the North Turkey Creek CWPIP. The area includes about 64 houses on Starlight Dr., Starlight Road, North Turkey Creek Road (between High Drive and Hwy 285), Ridgeview Dr. and Northway Dr.

The houses in our community are all within Inter-Canyon's jurisdiction, but Evergreen Fire/Rescue has been working to put together CWPIPs for a longer period of time, which is why Scott attended. Inter-Canyon has a CWPP for its department, but our community, along with the Homestead, will be the first CWPIPs for Inter-Canyon. Since Evergreen Fire/Rescue has more experience in this, that department and Scott will be mentoring and supporting John and Inter-Canyon.

There's a company called CoreLogic (see [corelogic.com](http://corelogic.com)) that provides risk assessments for a variety of topics, including wildfires. Their data gets used by insurance companies, mortgage companies, etc. A previous analysis of theirs listed Paradise, California as the #1 area at highest risk for wildfire in the U.S., with our area of Colorado ranked at #2. Then in Nov. 2018 the Camp Fire occurred in northern California and demolished the town of Paradise, moving our area up to #1. This is why homeowner insurance rates have jumped in our area, and why some homes have actually been denied homeowner's insurance. EFD (Evergreen Fire District) and ICFPD (Inter-Canyon Fire Protection District) are working together on a plan to inspect houses upon request, and to make recommendations about fire mitigation issues that need resolution for each house. If the homeowners resolve the listed issues, a certification can be given by the fire department to hopefully help with the insurance woes we've been experiencing.

Most people have heard of "Reverse 911". This allows your landline to be contacted in case of an emergency situation. Nowadays, most people have mobile phones. The equivalent to Reverse 911 for cell phones is Code Red. If you are not yet registered for Code Red, please sign up at:

<https://public.coderedweb.com/CNE/en-US/655AC5D55998>

If you are already registered, you may want to check your information to make sure it is still accurate.

Slash collection is run by the county, not by the fire departments. The Elk Creek Fire Protection District ([elkcreekfir.org](http://elkcreekfir.org)) has a chipping program you can sign up for even if you do not live in their district. However, this program is best used by an entire neighborhood and all on the same day. ICFPD has also asked for a grant to buy its own chipper.

At the meeting we passed out a brochure from Firewise.org entitled “How to Prepare Your Home For Wildfires”. I have plenty of these brochures, so if you did not get one or need more, please contact me. It is a very informative brochure and discusses how to make your house more “house hardy” to resist a wildfire. Making your house more fire resistant is the most important thing you can do to protect yourself and your home. Especially useful is the Home Safety Checklist on the back. That same information is used by the fire departments or other professionals inspecting your house. The one item on that checklist that John and Scott did not agree with was the idea of putting mesh below your patio or deck to prevent debris and other materials from accumulating. Both felt that this became messy and was too difficult to clean out. Following the steps on the checklist creates an 86-90% chance that your house will survive a fire.

Most homes burn due to “ember wash” which is indirect ignition due to burning embers from a fire possibly a mile away that are carried by the wind to your house. We discussed the possibility of using a spray-on gel to protect your home. I hadn’t heard of these, but apparently two types exist. John and Scott weren’t too enthusiastic about either. They tend to be expensive, have a relatively short shelf life, and dry out quickly if applied too early. It has to be applied just as a fire is reaching the house, and this all too often endangers the life of whomever is trying to apply the foam, even if they only have to flip a switch to apply it.

A research paper by Ethan Foote in 1994 (see <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/af89/b76fcabd7b2fe709475a5bb1ad230419e514.pdf>) discusses the importance of roof composition and defensible space around a house in preventing a house from burning.

If you would like someone to come out and assess your property for wildfire resistance, you can find assessors on the Jefferson County Sheriff website (<https://www.jeffco.us/sheriff>). Professional assessors who are assessing the house in preparation for selling it will be rather expensive. They basically are just following the Home Safety Checklist points on the previously discussed Firewise brochure so you can save money and do the assessing yourself.

Our CWPIP area is between two Denver Mountain Parks, one at the top of Northway called the Birch Hill tract, and another near Hwy 285. Many homes in our area are also adjoin 92.3 acres owned by the Bear Creek Development Corporation. The latter is a large real estate development company that operates in multiple states. The property they own in our area is in great need of mitigation. John has been in contact with them to hopefully get something done. As for the Denver Mountain Parks, Andi Perri is our contact there. The Birch Hill tract had mitigation done several years ago, but the downed logs were left in tepee piles that are flammable and need to be burned or removed. John is in contact with Andi about this.

Scrub/gambel oak has oily leaves, is quite flammable and has an invasive root system. See: <https://extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/natural-resources/gambel-oak-management-6-311/>. It

can catch neighboring trees on fire. During the 1994 Storm King Mountain fire near Glenwood Springs, 14 firefighters died while battling the fire amidst scrub oak.

I'd never heard this terminology before, but a "cat face" is a burned indentation within a tree. I will attach a photo of one.

EFD and ICFPD are both here to support us and can help us as we put together our CWPIP. John is trying to get a grant to help groups as they work on their CWPIPs. A CWPIP is not legally binding, so no one can be forced to comply with it. John suggested we put together a team to work on the CWPIP (I can't do it myself!). This will be a community project with all of us juggling our time. Possible job positions he mentioned and discussed for this team:

CWPIP leader: uh...me? (See me if you are interested in doing this!)

Marketing/Communications/Outreach: This could be someone who puts together a newsletter, posts signs, sets up a website, etc.

Work day coordination: Sets up days and workers for neighborhood yard work, slash chipping, etc.

New homeowner outreach: A real estate agent might be good for this if we have one in our neighborhood. This person would contact new residents to our community, welcome them, and make them aware of our CWPIP work.

Grant research: Someone to write/apply for grants that could provide funding for our fire prevention or mitigation work.

CWPIP review/creation: Multiple people to create the CWPIP and review it as we base it off of Inter-Canyon's CWPP (see <https://intercanyonfire.org/community-wildfire-protection-plan/>). ICFPD and EFD will provide assistance.