



# The **RIDGEWOOD ESTATES**

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## Community Wildfire Protection Plan



### AN ACTION PLAN FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION

DATE: 08/07/2012

Prepared by: Matt Flock  
Organization: Oregon Department of Forestry  
Contact Information:  
Address 24533 Alsea Hwy, Philomath, Oregon 97370  
Phone (541) 602-8119 cell (541) 929-5549 office  
E-Mail [mflock@odf.state.or.us](mailto:mflock@odf.state.or.us)  
FAX (541) 929-5549

The following report is a collaborative effort between various entities. The representatives listed below comprise the core decision-making team responsible for this report and mutually agree on the plan's contents.

*It is one of the goals of this document to help educate the public on the ramifications of living in the wildland-urban interface, including their responsibilities as landowners to reduce the fire risk on their property and to provide safe access to their property for all emergency personnel and equipment. Homeowners building in a high fire risk area must understand how to make their properties more fire resistant using proven firesafe construction and landscaping techniques, and they must have a realistic understanding of the capability of local fire service organizations to defend their property.*

**Community Representative(s):**

Name Steve Hobbs – Chairman Ridgewood Estates Firewise Committee (REFC)  
 Address 8070 NW Ridgewood Dr, Corvallis, OR 97330  
 Phone Number (541) 753-4943  
 Other Contact Information [hobbs2@peak.org](mailto:hobbs2@peak.org)

Name Goran Jovanovic – Ridgewood Estates Firewise Committee Member  
 Address 1060 NW Heather Dr, Corvallis, OR 97330  
 Phone Number (541) 758-0301  
 Other Contact Information [goran@enr.orst.edu](mailto:goran@enr.orst.edu)

Name Al Holmes – Ridgewood Estates Firewise Committee Member  
 Address 1225 NW Heather Dr, Corvallis, OR 97330  
 Phone Number (541) 757-2377  
 Other Contact Information [holmes561@comcast.net](mailto:holmes561@comcast.net)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other Contact Information \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other Contact Information \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Fire Department Representative(s):**

Name Div. Chief Douglas Baily – Corvallis Fire Department  
 Address 400 NW Harrison Blvd, Corvallis, Oregon 97330  
 Phone Number (541) 766-6953  
 Other Contact Information [douglas.baily@ci.corvallis.or.us](mailto:douglas.baily@ci.corvallis.or.us)

Name Div. Chief Fire Marshal – Jeff Prechel  
 Address 400 NW Harrison Blvd, Corvallis, Oregon 97330  
 Phone Number (541) 766-6970  
 Other Contact Information [Jeffrey.Prechel@ci.corvallis.or.us](mailto:Jeffrey.Prechel@ci.corvallis.or.us)

**Local Oregon Department of Forestry Representative(s):**

Name Blake McKinley – Community Wildfire Forester  
 Address 24533 Alsea Hwy., Philomath, Oregon 97370  
 Phone Number (541) 602-8119 cell (541) 929-9165 office  
 Other Contact Information [bmckinley@odf.state.or.us](mailto:bmckinley@odf.state.or.us)

Name Allison Blair – Wildland Fire Supervisor  
 Address 24533 Alsea Hwy., Philomath, Oregon 97370  
 Phone Number (541) 929-9156 office  
 Other Contact Information [ablair@odf.state.or.us](mailto:ablair@odf.state.or.us)

The following federal and other interested parties were consulted and involved in the preparation of this report.

Name	Organization
Chris Bentley	Benton County Community Development – (541) 766-6819
Jason Kirchner	Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife – (541) 265-8306
Nancy Ashlock	BLM & Forest Service Fire Staff – (541) 750-7084
Randy Hereford	Starker Forests, Inc – (541) 740-4459
Mary King	Benton County Sheriff's Office – (541) 766-6864
Jay Dixon	Benton County Board of Commissioners – (541) 766-6800
Barb Fick	Benton Co. OSU Extension – (541) 766-6750
George Crosiar	Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office – (541) 967-2043

**Participants that directly performed data-gathering for this plan:**

Blake McKinley - Oregon Department of Forestry  
 Allison Blair - Oregon Department of Forestry  
 Div. Chief Douglas Baily – Corvallis Fire Department  
 Div. Chief Fire Marshal Jeff Prechel – Corvallis Fire Department  
 Steve Hobbs - REFC  
 Goran Jovanovic - REFC  
 Al Holmes - REFC  
 Chris Bentley - Benton County

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**Home Ignition Zone:** includes the home and an area surrounding the home within 100 to 200 feet. The potential for ignition depends on the home's exterior materials and design and the amount of heat to the home from the flames within the home ignition zone. Firebrand ignitions also depend on the home ignition zone either by igniting the home directly or igniting adjacent materials that heat the home to ignition. See the attached article containing research and examples from Jack Cohen, Research Physical Scientist, Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory, Rocky Mountain Research Station.

## 1) COMMUNITY BACKGROUND AND EXISTING SITUATION

### Community Description:

County: Benton County Latitude/Longitude: 44° 34' 46.771"N, -123° 19' 56.073"W  
 Frontage Road: Oak Creek Road Nearest Intersection: Ridgewood Dr/Oak Creek  
 Nearest Fire Department (name/location): Corvallis Fire Department Sta. 4 – City of Corvallis, Oregon  
 Tax Map #: 0925 Year Established: 1969

Ridgewood Estates is a Wildland Urban Interface community located in Benton County, Oregon. The community is nestled in the foothills of the Oregon coast range. Slope is steep, averaging 30%-70% throughout the community. Aspect is generally northeast. The dominant vegetation includes a Douglas-fir/grand fir conifer overstory, with a dense understory component of brush and shrubs. Poison oak, fern, and blackberry are common in the understory. The fuels have a horizontal and vertical continuous structure. Heavy fuel loading and continuous fuels are a problem. There is only one way in/out for the entire community. Roads have limited turn around locations. There are no water sources throughout the community.

### Community Size:

Number of Lots: 85 Number of Structures: 54  
 Estimated Acres: 68 Development Status: Completed

### Community Infrastructure:

Home Owners Association/Organization:  Yes  No

### Contacts:

Name Tony Vander Heide – Chair Ridgewood Estates HOA  
 Address 1260 Heather Dr., Corvallis, OR 97330  
 Phone Number (541) 754-1032  
 Other Contact Information [tony@vanderheides.com](mailto:tony@vanderheides.com)

### Resident Population:

Full Time  
 Part-Time:  100-75%  75-50%  50-25%  less than 25%

### Wildfire Hazard Rating: (check one)

Low  Moderate  High  Extreme

Date Evaluated: 6/30/2012

**Evaluation Process:** The Community Evaluation to determine the Wildfire Hazard Rating and action items for the community was completed by Div. Chief Douglas Bailey and Div. Chief Jeff Prechel Corvallis Fire Department, Blake McKinley and Allison Blair ODF and all of the members of the Ridgewood Estates Firewise Committee. Participants were given a blank Community Evaluation form and asked to give responses to each of the items. Opportunity was given for answering questions or clarifying items. All of the evaluation responses were compiled and averaged together to get an overall score on each of the items and final Hazard Rating. This evaluation will be performed annually to update the CWPP and action items.

**Community Evaluation Highlights (Important Considerations):**

- 1. Access – Steep incline, limited turnouts, limited or no turnaround locations.



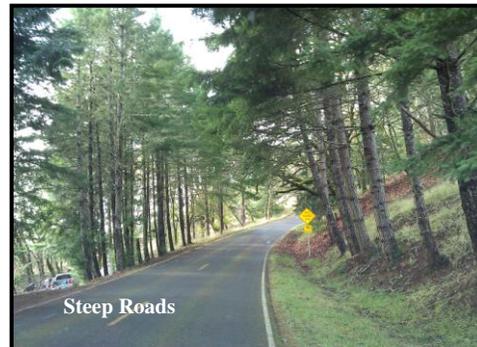
- 2. Heavy fuels within the community – closed canopy of conifer and hardwoods and a dense brush understory.



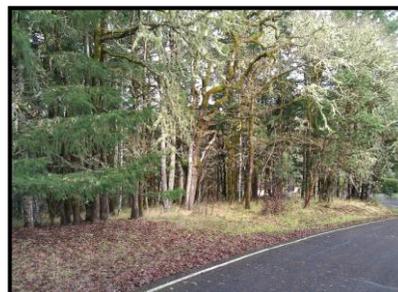
- 3. Ingress/egress – There is only one way in and out for most of the community.

**Observations and Recommendations (during data-gathering phase):**

- Access – Roads through the community are very steep making it difficult for a large structural fire engine or tender to maneuver. There are dead-end roads with little turnaround options, creating a scenario where backing out is the only option. Turnouts are limited throughout the community. It is recommended to enhance and create new turnouts in designated locations, enhance turnaround options at dead end streets, and remove brush and trees in the right-of-way.



- Heavy fuels within the community – A dense overstory throughout the community creates a continuous fuel scenario that would allow fire to continue to spread. Overstory thinning is recommended to break up the horizontal continuous fuels. Fuel breaks in the form of trails or cleared roads will also break up the fuel.



- Ingress/egress – There is only one way in and out of the community. An evaluation of the possibility of connecting Magnolia Dr and Oxbow Dr would provide a second means of egress.

**Successful Firewise Modifications (Noted Assets):**



- Access – Road right-of-way clearing projects in the community have started to open up and widen the available road widths within the community. Work has focused on areas for turnout development. Corvallis Fire Department has worked with the community to prioritize locations for improvement. These areas are now easily maintained by mowing grass and brush annually.



- Heavy fuels within the community – Many residents of Ridgewood Estates have started clearing fuel in their Defensible Space/Home Ignition Zone. Examples are pruning trees to reduce the horizontal continuous fuels, and removing brush. Annual chipping events have been established to reduce hazardous fuels from piling up once they have been cut. Current and future grant dollars will increase awareness of these techniques, and help financially assist landowners to complete more of these treatments throughout the community.

**Community Wildfire History:**

Relative Frequency:	Moderate amount of annual initial attack situations, occasional extended attack situations.
Common Causes:	Human (debris burning & equipment)
Areas of Future Concern:	WUI communities directly adjacent and associated activities (public & landowner).
Additional Comments:	<i>Adapted from the Benton County CWPP 2009.</i>

The historic fire regime model in Benton County shows that the transition zone between the valley bottom and forestlands similar to Ridgewood Estates historically experienced low and mixed severity fires; however, the return interval ranged from 35 to 200 years. Much of this area would have likely been vegetated by oak savanna and native grasses. Today there is an increase in forested conditions in this zone; creating localized pockets where stand-replacement severity fires with a longer return interval closer to 200 years will be more typical.

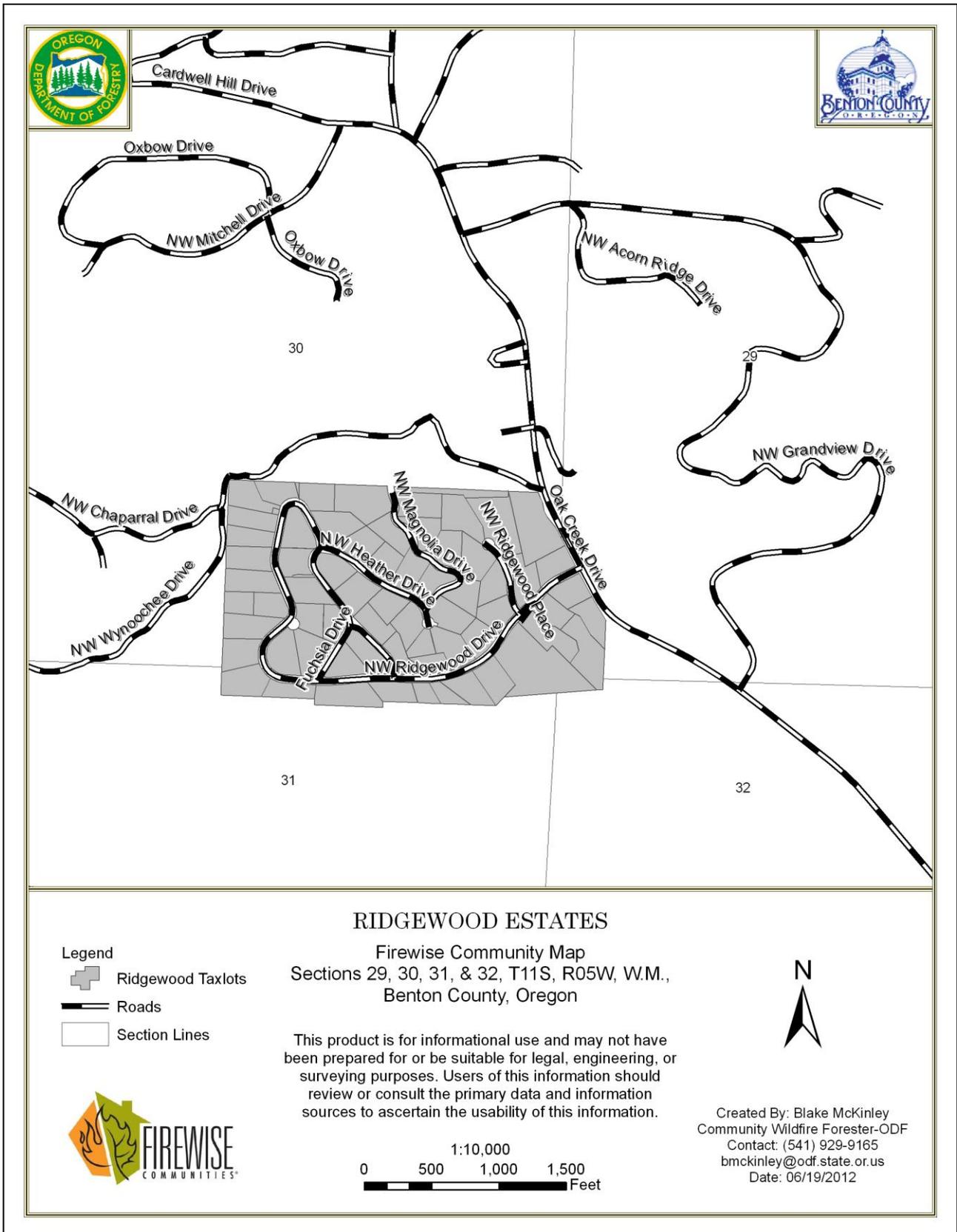
With the current and past fire suppression efforts and changes in land use, we have dramatically increased this interval. By suppressing fires, we have changed this ecosystem, allowing coniferous trees, such as Douglas fir, to establish and overtop the oak trees that once dominated the landscape. In many cases these forests have been altered to the point where oak is no longer the primary tree species and the understory is dominated by woody shrubs, rather than grasses and forbs.

Because wildland fires are being effectively suppressed, the patterns and characteristics of fires are changing. Vegetation that historically would have been minimized by frequent fires has become more dominant. Over time, some species have also become more susceptible to disease and insect damage, which leads to an increase in mortality. The resulting accumulation of dead wood and debris creates the types of fuels that promote intense, rapidly spreading fires.

Areas subject to wildland-urban interface fires have very different fire hazard characteristics. The defining characteristic of the wildland-urban interface area is that structures are built in areas with essentially continuous (and often high) vegetative fuel loads. In other words, structures are built in areas subject to wildland fires. When wildland fires occur in such areas, they tend to spread quickly and structures in these areas may, unfortunately, become little more than additional fuel sources for wildland fires. The siting of homes has also changed over time. Historically pioneering families built their homes in low lands, close to water and the fields they intended to work. In the last 30 years or so, rural homes have increasingly been built in locations chosen because of the view or other amenities. Thus, many newer homes are in locations more difficult to defend against wildland fires.

Fire risk to structures and occupants in wildland-urban interface areas is high due to high vegetative fuel loads and limited fire suppression resources compared to urban or suburban areas. Homes in wildland-urban interface areas are most commonly on wells rather than on municipal water supplies, which limits the availability of water for fire suppression. Less availability of water resources makes it more likely that a small wildland fire or a single structure fire will spread before it can be extinguished. In many areas of Benton County, narrow winding roads, dead end driveways, and inadequate bridges impede access by firefighting apparatus. As with water supplies, the lower availability of firefighting personnel and apparatus and longer response times increase the probability that a small wildland fire or a single structure fire will spread.

**2) COMMUNITY BASE MAP**



### 3) OBJECTIVES / GOALS

#### Objectives:

The objectives of this plan/report are to set clear priorities for the implementation of wildfire mitigation in the Ridgewood Estates community. This includes prioritized recommendations for the community as a whole and also for individual homeowners where appropriate.

#### Goals:

The goals are fuel reduction and structure ignitability reduction that will protect Ridgewood Estates and its essential infrastructure. It also includes a wildfire pre-suppression plan.

### 4) PRIORTIZED MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were developed by the Ridgewood Estates Firewise Committee as a result of the community wildfire risk evaluation and follow-up communication with local, state, federal, private and community stakeholders. A priority order was determined based on which mitigation projects would best reduce the hazard of wildfire in the assessment area.

#### Proposed Community Hazard Reduction Priorities:

1. Community Clean-up Day. Cut, prune and mow vegetation in right-of-ways and shared community areas.
2. Install additional turnouts and/or widen access roads, and install evacuation route signs throughout the community.
3. Improve access road connectivity.
4. Explore the possibility of connecting Oxbow and Magnolia Dr for secondary point of egress.

#### Proposed Structural Ignitability Reduction Priorities:

Actions to be taken by homeowners.

1. Create a Firewise Defensible Space around structures. This includes fuel reduction techniques like cut, prune, and mow vegetation at least 50 feet around homes and structures.
2. Clean roofs and gutters.
3. Replace wood siding and roof materials with less flammable synthetic options such as HardiPlank siding and asphalt roofing shingles.
4. Create fuel breaks at least 3 feet wide consisting of bare dirt or non-flammable paved or rock materials.

#### Proposed Education and Outreach Priorities:

Activities planned and implemented by community, Corvallis Fire Department, and Oregon Department of Forestry

1. Hold an annual Firewise education day. This will include concepts, techniques, and training to complete fuel reduction and structure improvements on individual properties.
2. Hold an annual “Home Evaluation Workshop” that will train landowners on how to complete home evaluations.
3. Create a neighborhood “Fire Prevention” newsletter with a page on the Ridgewood Estates web site. Electronic or hard copy versions.
4. Distribute information packets to homeowners in the community.

### 5) ACTION PLAN

#### Funding Needs:

(highest priority projects first)

1. Community Clean-up Day. \$2,000/yr Ridgewood Estates, \$2,000 ODF, \$2,000 landowners, \$250 Benton County, Corvallis Fire Department \$640.

2. Homeowner Defensible Space creation. Estimated cost of \$2,000 per acre. Additional hazard trees close to structures will cost at least \$1,000 per tree removal. Potential funding sources Benton County Title III, ODF grants, landowners, Benton Soil & Water District, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.
3. Evacuation Route signs. Estimated cost of \$4,000. Potential funding sources ODF grants, landowners, Benton County Title III.
4. Create Secondary ingress/egress. Estimated cost of \$200,000 (New construction of road connection). Potential funding sources Benton County Title III, ODF grants, landowners.

#### **Timetables:**

(highest priority projects first)

1. Community Clean-up Day. Two week homeowner preparation and a one day chipping event to complete the final clearing. Annual Spring event, optional Fall event. This will be an annual event.
2. Homeowner Defensible Space creation. Total work period of three days per acre. Start date: Fall of 2012. Targeted completion date: Spring of 2014.
3. Evacuation Route signs. Total work period estimated to be 1 month consisting of eight weekend days, for layout, design, and installation. Project completion prior to Summer of 2015.
4. Create Secondary ingress/egress. Total work period estimated to be three months for improvement. Project completion within 2 years.

#### **Assessment:**

Strategy used to assess the plans progress and effectiveness.

1. Quarterly review. REFC input. This will review short term goals and objectives.
2. Yearly review. Community wide input. Agree, change, or update community wide events.
3. Yearly review and update of the Community Evaluation. REFC members, ODF, and Corvallis Fire Dept.
4. Yearly review and update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. REFC, ODF, and Corvallis Fire Dept.
5. Yearly renewal of Firewise Community certification.

## **6) WILDFIRE PRE-SUPPRESSION PLAN**

### **A. Wildfire Protection Responsibility**

Structural Protection: Corvallis Fire Department

Wildland Protection: Oregon Department of Forestry

### **B. Incident Command Post Location**

Benton County Fairgrounds, 110 SW 53<sup>rd</sup> St, Corvallis, Oregon 97330 - (541) 766-6521

### **C. Incident Staging Area Location**

Bald Hill Trail parking lot off Oak Creek Dr, 0.1 miles east of Ridgewood Dr.

### **D. Medical Unit Staging Area Location**

Bald Hill Trail parking lot off Oak Creek Dr, 0.1 miles east of Ridgewood Dr.

**E. Alarm Response****First Alarm**

Fire Department/Rescue Squad	Travel Distance	Response Time
Corvallis Fire Dept. Station 6 – Type 6-X Engine, **	2.1	4.5 min.
Corvallis Fire Dept. Station 3 – Type 3 Engine	4.5	8
Corvallis Fire Dept. Station 1 – Type 3-X Engine,	6.9	14
Type 1 Tender,	6.9	17
Duty Chief (BC)	6.9	14
Tender response is the closest of either the second due or third due.		
ODF – Type 4 & Type 6 Engine	15 miles	19 min.

\*\* To determine distance the intersection of NW Concord and NW Cardinal was used.

**Second Alarm (report to designated staging area)**

Fire Department/Rescue Squad	Travel Distance	Response Time
Corvallis Fire Dept. Station 5 – Type 6 Engine	5.1	10
Corvallis Fire Dept. Station 4 – Type 2-X Engine	7.4	12
Corvallis Fire Dept. Station 2 – Type 1 Tender from Station (CFD) 3	5.9	9.5
Recall all off duty personnel would also occur in a second alarm. The duty BC would also be using mutual aid resources to backfill stations. Second alarm wildland responses also utilize a mutual aid tender to the scene.		
ODF – Type 4 & Type 6 engine	15 miles	19 min.

**F. Air Support****Fixed Wing**

West Oregon District orders retardant through the ODF Salem Coordination Center (SCC). Refer to the Aviation Procedures Manual. Call Philomath Oregon Department of Forestry for more details, (541) 929-3266.

**Helicopter**

West Oregon District orders helicopters. Refer to the Aviation Procedures Manual. Call Philomath Oregon Department of Forestry for more details, (541) 929-3266.

**G. Water Availability (accessible to fire engines)**

Location: Throughout community Description: Low pressure/volume hydrant

**H. Communications**

Name	Phone Number	Radio Frequencies
<b>Dispatch/Emergency Services</b>		
Corvallis Dispatch	(541) 766-6911	TX/RX: 154.340
Benton County Sheriff	(541) 766-6858	TX/RX: 155.490
West Oregon Dispatch (ODF)	(541) 336-2273	TX 159.3225, RX 151.1675
<b>Local Department of Forestry Office</b>		
Philomath ODF	(541) 929-3266	TX 159.3225, RX 151.1675, PL 167.9 (Mary's Peak Relay) 151.340 (Red Net) 151.310 (White Net) Aircraft
<b>Other</b>		

US Forest Service	(541) 750-7024	
Bureau of Land Management	(541) 750-7024	

**I. Evacuation**

All of the community has only one way in/out, and evacuation would feed out Ridgewood Drive to Oak Creek Drive. Emergency services will also need to use Oak Creek Drive and Ridgewood Drive for moving resources into the community. Evacuation route signs should be placed in the community to assist people not familiar with the roads or evacuation plan.

**J. Resource List**

Name	Contact Information	
<b>Support Agencies</b>		
Oregon State University	John Mann (541) 737-3562	(541) 306-7031 cell
Starker Forests Inc	Randy Hereford (541) 740-4459	Office (541) 929-2477
US Forest Service	(541) 750-7024	
BLM	(541) 750-7024	
Benton County – Roger Irvin	(541) 766-6821	
<b>Tractor Operators</b>		
DTL Logging – Larry Cook	(541) 740-4310 cell	(541) 456-4824 office
Ramco Logging – Roy Parks	(541) 740-8290 cell	(541) 453-5931
<b>Crews</b>		
Coria Contracting	(503) 399-1044	(503) 399-7685 after hours
Ferguson – Michael Husted	(503) 510-2501 office	(541) 924-1872 fax
First Choice	(503) 588-7294	(503) 581-5063 fax
Miller Timber Services – Lee Miller	(541) 929-2840	
South Fork – Gordon Dana	(503) 842-7213	
<b>Utilities</b>		
Consumers Power Inc.	800-872-9036	(541) 929-3124
NW Natural Gas	800-882-3377	800-422-4012
CenturyLink	877-348-9007	800-491-0118
Comcast	(541) 316-5797	800-266-2278
<b>Fuel</b>		
Carson Fuel	(541) 926-1817	Applegate St., Philomath
Pacific Pride		Main St., Philomath
Safeway Fuel		53 <sup>rd</sup> /Philo Blvd, Corvallis
Shell		2635 NW 9 <sup>th</sup> St., Corvallis
<b>Food and Supplies</b>		
Kentucky Fried Chicken	(541) 757-0722	1775 NW 9 <sup>th</sup> St., Corvallis
Safeway	(541) 753-2970	590 NE Circle, Corvallis
Best Pots	(541) 926-0099	Toilets
Day Trucking	(541) 905-3755	Potable Water
<b>Lodging</b>		
Hilton Garden Inn	(541) 752-5000	2500 Western, Corvallis
Salbasgeon Suites	(541) 753-4320	1730 NW 9 <sup>th</sup> St., Corvallis
Holiday Inn Express	(541) 752-0800	781 NE 2 <sup>nd</sup> St., Corvallis

## 7) ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The Oregon Department of Forestry West Oregon District has prepared a Mobilization Plan. This is a detailed document used by the department during wildfire emergency situations. The document outlines dispatch strategies for resources and protocols used during emergency situations. The Mobilization Plan is updated annually.

Residents should consult a professional geotech prior to heavy thinning treatments or clearcut style harvesting is performed to ensure site specific guidelines are established and followed to minimize the risk of slope failure.

## 8) ATTACHMENTS

Community Wildfire Hazard Evaluation

### Literature Cited

Benton County. 2009. Benton County Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Benton County Community Development Department. Corvallis, OR.

Benton County. Benton County Website. Available online at [www.co.benton.or.us](http://www.co.benton.or.us) .

Firewise. Firewise Website. Available online at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) .