



Colorado State Forest Service
5060 Campus Delivery
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523-5060
970.491.6303; FAX 970.491.7736
<http://csfs.colostate.edu/>

NEWS

For Immediate Release

August 27, 2010

Contact for Reporters: Kelly Rogers

970.216.4171

kelly.rogers@colostate.edu

Delta County to Develop Wildfire Plan with Colorado State Forest Service

DELTA, Colo. – Emergency services and fire department officials from Delta County met with Colorado State Forest Service and other government officials yesterday to discuss the mandatory development of a county-wide wildfire protection plan.

State legislation that passed last year requires every Colorado county to identify fire hazard zones in unincorporated areas by January 1, 2011. Within six months of identifying these zones, counties also must develop Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPPs) that establish guidelines for fire mitigation in each hazard zone. Currently, only 26 of Colorado’s 64 counties have an approved county-wide CWPP.

The meeting at the Delta County Sheriff’s Office included representatives from the Colorado State Forest Service; Delta County Office of Emergency Management; Delta, Cedaredge, Hotchkiss and Paonia fire departments; U.S. Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; and two fire management consulting firms.

“Participation from Delta County’s fire departments is critical in preparing this CWPP. Together we can identify and map specific communities at risk within each fire district, and come up with solutions for protecting those communities,” said Kelly Rogers, district forester for the CSFS Grand Junction District. The district serves Mesa, Delta, Pitkin, Garfield and Rio Blanco counties; of these, Mesa, Garfield and Rio Blanco counties already have county-wide CWPPs in place.

Many state and federal grants designated for forest treatments require communities to have a CWPP approved by the Colorado State Forest Service to compete for funds. Communities with approved plans also receive assistance from professional foresters to help develop and implement their plans.

This February, open meetings will be held to obtain public input on the direction and scope of the Delta County CWPP. At that time, county residents will have the opportunity to identify the values at risk in their communities, help define the local wildland-urban interface boundary, prioritize fuels treatment goals and establish wildfire preparedness objectives.

“Many Delta County residents live in ecosystems that naturally experience a high fire frequency,” Rogers said. “Having this plan in place is vital for their safety.”

-more-

Delta County has contracted fire management consultants from Anchor Point Group and AMEC Earth and Environmental Inc. to organize the development of their plan. The CSFS will provide input throughout the process and will be responsible for signing off on the final plan.

For more information about the development of the CWPP, contact CSFS Grand Junction District Forester Kelly Rogers at 970-248-7325.

###