



Wildfire Matters Review Committee Legislative Session

Thursday, July 29, 2021

Pine Gulch Fire

- The Pine Gulch Fire started on BLM land on 7/31/2020 and burned onto private land in unincorporated Mesa County on 8/2/2020.
- The final cost of the Pine Gulch Fire was in excess of \$26 Million.
- We were able to mitigate county exposure to costs by participating in the Emergency Fire Fund through the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control.
- The Pine Gulch Fire became a State Responsibility Fire at 12:01AM on 8/3/2020.
- Mesa County's cost share with the BLM on 8/2/2020 was for 20% of aviation expenditures for that day which made our portion \$80,000.

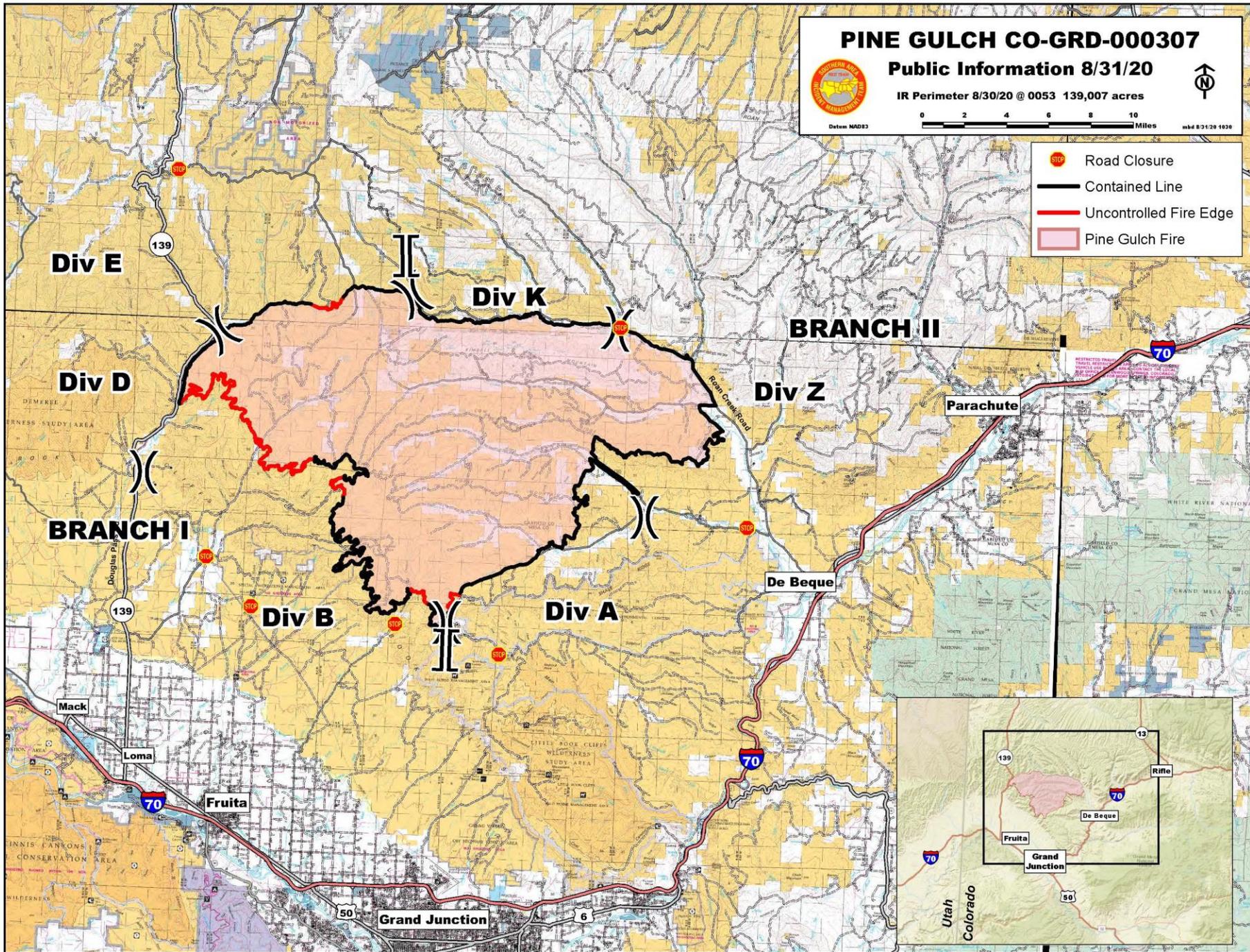
PINE GULCH CO-GRD-000307

Public Information 8/31/20

IR Perimeter 8/30/20 @ 0053 139,007 acres

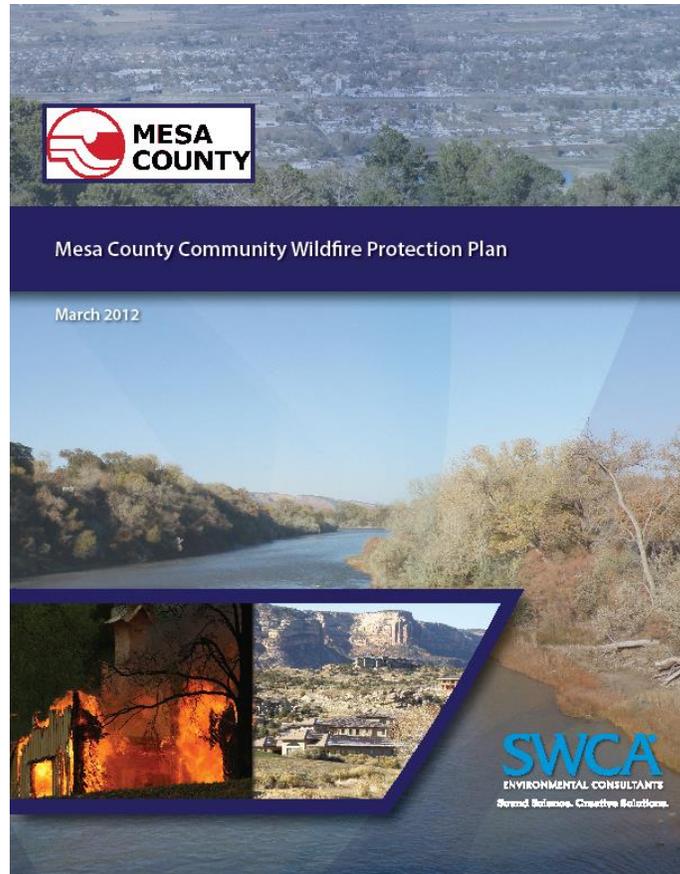


- Road Closure
- Contained Line
- Uncontrolled Fire Edge
- Pine Gulch Fire



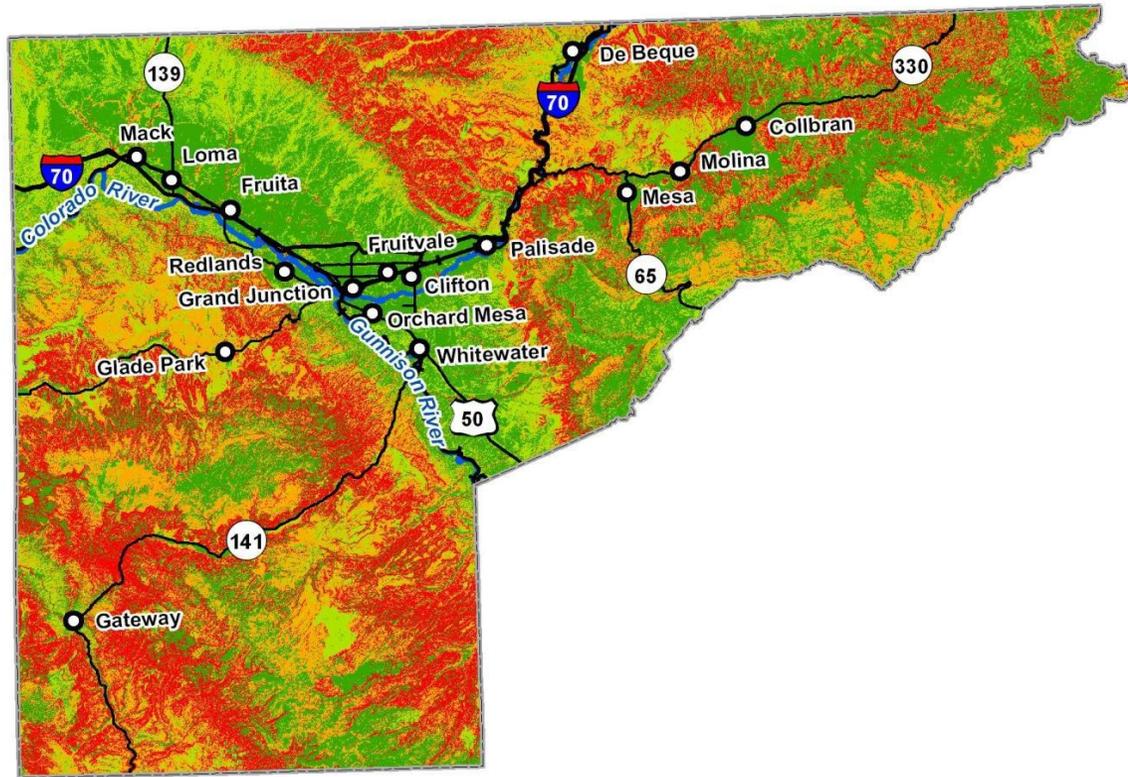
Mesa County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

- Mesa County has a countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that was drafted in 2012 by SWCA Environmental Consultants. The Community Wildfire Protection Plan defines the wildland urban interface, assesses risk, and identifies possible fire mitigation projects.



Click [HERE](#) to view Mesa County CWPP

- The purpose of the MCCWPP is to assist in protecting human life and reducing property loss due to wildfire throughout Mesa County.
- The MCCWPP meets the requirements of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act by:
 - 1) Having been developed collaboratively by multiple agencies at the state and local levels in consultation with federal agencies and other interested parties.
 - 2) Prioritizing and identifying fuel reduction treatments and recommending the types and methods of treatments to protect at-risk communities and pertinent infrastructure.
 - 3) Suggesting multi-party mitigation, monitoring, and outreach.
 - 4) Recommending measures and action items that residents and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures.
 - 5) Facilitating public information meetings to educate and involve the community to participate in and contribute to the development of the MCCWPP.



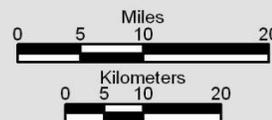
Source: The National Map LANDFIRE:
40 Scott and Burgan Fuel Model,
accessed November 2011.
Map Created: 12/29/2011

**Rate of Spread
(feet per minute)**



- Town / City
- Highway
- +— Railroad
- River
- County Boundary

**Mesa County CWPP
Rate of Spread**



1:950,000



Colorado

The CSFS provides defensible space recommendations in its article “Creating Defensible Space Zones” (Dennis 2006). Effective defensible space consists of an essentially fuel-free zone adjacent to the home, a treated secondary zone that is thinned and cleaned of surface fuels, and (if the parcel is large enough) a transitional third zone that is basically a managed forest area. These components work together in a proven and predictable manner. Zone 1 keeps fire from burning directly to the home; Zone 2 reduces the adjacent fire intensity and the likelihood of torching, crown fire, and ember production; and Zone 3 does the same at a broader scale, keeping the fire intensity lower by maintaining a more natural, historic condition (Figure 5.8).

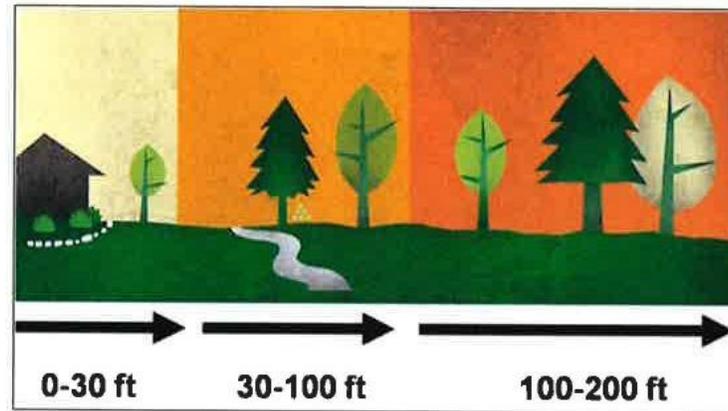


Figure 5.8. Defensible space zones.

Source: www.firewise.org

Summary Statement from SWCA Environmental Consultants

Fire management cannot be a one-size-fits-all endeavor; this plan is designed to be flexible. Treatment approaches and methods will be site-specific and should be adapted to best meet the needs of the landowner and the resources available. Moreover each treatment recommendation should address protection of CVAR particularly the protection of threatened and endangered species. For treatments in or close to wetland and riparian areas the practitioner should consult the Colorado Natural Heritage Program Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Mesa County (Rocchio et al. 2003) to determine that treatments would not impact designated sensitive areas. It is the intent of this plan to be an evolving document that will incorporate additional areas of the County as they change in risk category over time.

Fire Mitigation Funding Efforts

- Mesa County currently has a \$40,000 Community Assistance Grant from the BLM and we are focusing on fire mitigation projects on overgrown Mesa County owned land on the valley floor. Previously we had a \$50,000 grant and focused on projects on private land on Glade Park.
- In budget year 2019, the Mesa County Sheriff funded a \$20,000 masticating head for a County owned excavator. Road and Bridge uses this equipment for their roadside projects and they partner with the Sheriff's Office on mitigation projects.
- In budget year 2020, the Mesa County Sheriff funded a \$37,000 wood chipper for onsite disposal of slash from fire mitigation projects.
- In total, Mesa County has invested \$150,000 in fire mitigation over the past several years.
- Additional resources will allow Mesa County to mitigate potential fire hazards and flooding (aftermath – Glenwood Canyon) from burn areas.