

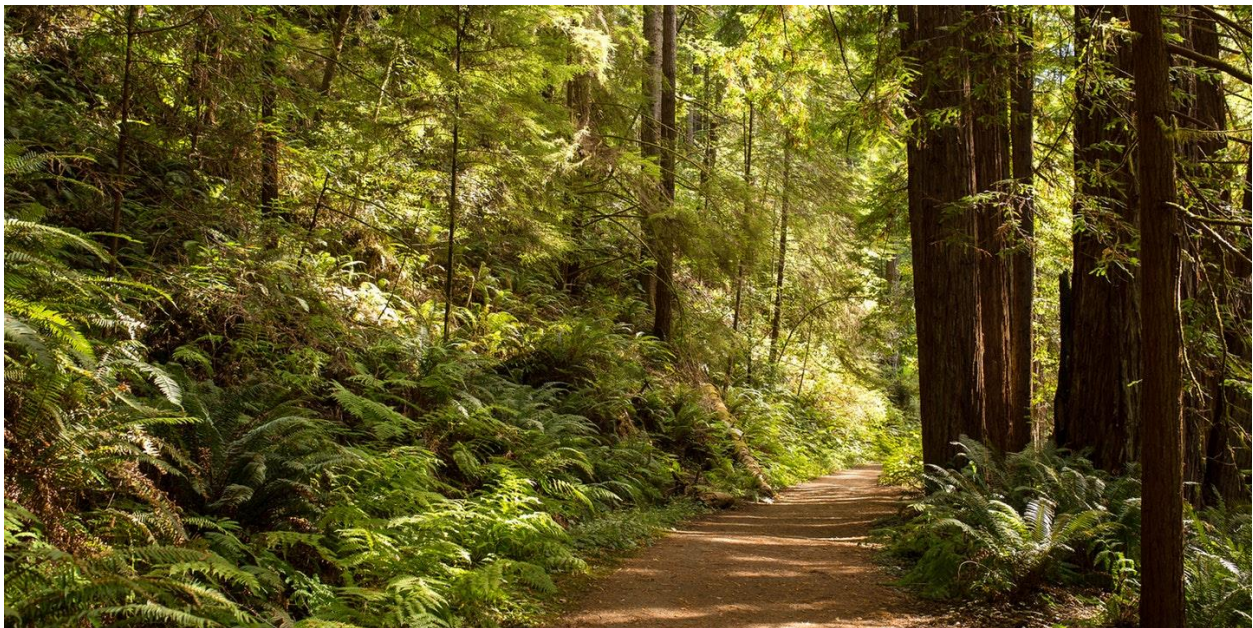
# Mendocino County



## Public Outreach Plan

An Addendum to the  
Fire Vulnerability Assessment  
and  
Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan

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May 2020

# Mendocino County Public Outreach Plan

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# Mendocino County Public Outreach Plan

## I. PROJECT BACKGROUND

In collaboration with local governments, fire and law enforcement agencies, transportation agencies and other community stakeholders, Category Five Professional Consultants, was hired in October of 2019 by the Mendocino Council of Governments (MCOG) to develop a Fire Vulnerability Assessment and an Emergency Evacuation Preparedness Plan in order to improve local wildfire preparedness. MCOG applied for and received a 2019/20 Caltrans Adaptation Planning grant for this project which entails identifying local areas and populations that are most vulnerable to wildfire, assessing evacuation needs, and planning for evacuation routes and assistance. Additionally, the consultant will identify necessary improvements to the transportation networks for emergency access. Another component of this project is this Public Outreach Plan wherein the consultant will develop communication strategies, establish agency roles and responsibilities, and engage and educate the public about these plans.

## II. PLAN OVERVIEW

### A. Plan Purpose

Mendocino County recognizes that community participation and input is a vital component of the planning process. The purpose of this plan is to provide an opportunity for public feedback and encourage Mendocino County residents to be involved in their community. Additionally, it identifies various means of educating residents about fire safety and emergency evacuation. This plan delineates how Mendocino County residents and community stakeholders will be involved throughout the planning process. It provides a guideline for community engagement and will be modified as opportunities for additional community participation present themselves.

### B. Outreach Objectives

The goal of this outreach initiative is to increase the community's awareness of the wildfire risk, encourage residents to take steps to protect themselves, their family and property, improve their knowledge of evacuation planning and increase their confidence in local first responder agencies' ability to handle a major disaster.

Specific objectives to achieve this goal include:

- Solicit feedback from the general public and community stakeholders
- Engage in early outreach to community stakeholders to serve as a foundation for public engagement
- Involve community members in the emergency preparedness planning process

## **Mendocino County Public Outreach Plan**

- Gain an understanding for the concerns Mendocino County residents have with respect to the community's wildfire vulnerability
- Gain insight into the understanding Mendocino County residents have regarding local evacuation routes
- Obtain an understanding of the concerns residents have if an emergency evacuation were necessary
- Prioritize community concerns
- Gain an understanding of the diverse needs of local area residents
- Determine the effectiveness of local alerting systems
- Gain a sense of the residents' comfort level with local communication systems and preferred means of communication
- Devise a means of communicating planning decisions to the public
- Construct a means for educating the general public on wildfire safety and preparedness
- Offer a plan for informing the public about primary and alternate evacuation routes
- Provide a means for directing preparedness and evacuation information and messages to the County's vulnerable populations
- Provide community members with a sense of confidence in local first responder agencies

### **C. Internal Engagement**

The following local agencies and governments were made aware of this project and were strongly encouraged to participate in planning decisions:

- Mendocino Council of Governments
- Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
- Mendocino County Chief Executive Officer
- Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services
- Caltrans District One
- CAL FIRE
- Ukiah Police Department
- Ukiah Valley Fire Authority
- Laytonville Fire Department

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- Little Lake Fire District
- South Coast Fire Department-Gualala
- City of Willits Police Department
- City of Willits Public Works Dept.
- Mendocino County Department of Transportation
- Mendocino County Sheriff's Office
- Mendocino Fire Safe Council
- Mendocino Red Cross
- Mendocino Transit Authority
- Mendocino County Planning and Building Services
- Mendocino County Executive Office
- Mendocino County Air Quality Management District
- Mendocino County Office of Education
- City of Ukiah
- City of Willits
- City of Fort Bragg
- City of Point Arena
- Redwood Valley Rancheria
- Cahto Tribe of the Laytonville Rancheria
- Coyote Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Guidiville Rancheria
- Hopland Band of Pomo Indians
- Manchester Band of Pomo Indians
- Pinoleville Pomo Nation
- Potter Valley Tribe
- Round Valley Indian Tribes
- Sherwood Valley Band of Pomo Indians
- Middletown Band of Pomo Indians
- LACO Associates

## Mendocino County Public Outreach Plan

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) was formed in November of 2019 to provide oversight and guidance for this project. The TAG consisted of the following representatives.

**Table 1: Technical Advisory Group Roster**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Project Role</b>
<b>Michael Carter</b>	Mendocino Council of Governments	Board Member	Liaison/Technical Specialist-Communications
<b>Jesse Davis</b>	Mendocino County Planning and Building Services	Senior Planner	Technical Specialist-Planning and Building
<b>Dan Gjerde</b>	Mendocino County	4 <sup>th</sup> District Supervisor	Liaison
<b>Tatiana Ahlstrand</b>	Caltrans District 1	Transportation Planner	Technical Specialist-Transportation/Contract Manager
<b>Howard Dashiell</b>	Mendocino County Department of Transportation	Director	Transportation Specialist
<b>Nash Gonzalez</b>	Mendocino County Executive Office	Recovery Director	Technical Specialist-Planning and Recovery
<b>Scott Cratty</b>	Mendocino County Fire Safe Council	Executive Director	Fire Safe Council Liaison
<b>Imil Ferrara</b>	Mendocino County Fire Safe Council	Program Coordinator	Fire Safe Council Liaison
<b>Steve Turner</b>	Mendocino County Office of Education	Director of Maintenance and Operations	Liaison County of Education
<b>Tom Allman</b>	Mendocino County Sheriff's Office	Mendocino County Sheriff <i>Retired 1/2020</i>	Technical Specialist-Law Enforcement
<b>Shannon Barney</b>	Mendocino County Sheriff's Office	Lieutenant Investigative Services Bureau	Technical Specialist-Law Enforcement



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<b>Brentt Blaser</b>	Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services	Emergency Services Coordinator	Emergency Management Specialist
<b>Tami Bartolomei</b>	City of Ukiah Office of Emergency Services	Office of Emergency Management Coordinator	Emergency Management Specialist
<b>Colin Wilson</b>	Mendocino County Ad Hoc Road Committee	Retired Anderson Valley Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire and Roads
<b>Scott Warnock</b>	Willits Police Department	Chief of Police	Technical Specialist- Public Safety
<b>Richard Shoemaker</b>	City of Point Arena	City Manager	Liaison
<b>Michael Rees</b>	Albion-Little River Fire Protection District	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Andres Avila</b>	Anderson Valley Fire Department	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Bob Matson</b>	Elk Volunteer Fire Department	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Steve Orsi</b>	Fort Bragg Fire Department	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Mitch Franklin</b>	Hopland Fire Protection District	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Sue Carberry</b>	Laytonville Fire Department	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Chris Wilkes</b>	Little Lake Fire Protection District	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Dave Latoof</b>	Mendocino Volunteer Fire Department	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>John Piasias</b>	Mendocino Volunteer Fire Department	Fire Captain	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Michael Rees</b>	Albion-Little River Fire Protection District	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Greg Warner</b>	South Coast Fire Department-Gualala	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Dan Maxey</b>	Westport Fire Department	Fire Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire
<b>Paul Duncan</b>	CAL FIRE	Operations Chief	Technical Specialist-Fire

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<b>Patricia Austin</b>	CAL FIRE	Public Information Officer	Public Information Specialist
<b>Richard Goldfarb</b>	American Red Cross Mendocino County	Disaster Program Manager	Red Cross Liaison
<b>Mary Desautels</b>	American Red Cross Fort Bragg	DAT Captain	Red Cross Liaison
<b>Ian Osipowitsch</b>	Redwood Valley Little River Band of Pomo Indians	Environmental Director Assist.	Liaison/ Environmental Specialist
<b>Jordon Blough</b>	LACO Associates	Economic Development Specialist	Technical Specialist- Economic Development
<b>Jeff Tunnell</b>	Bureau of Land Management-Ukiah Field Office	Fire Mitigation and Education Specialist	Technical Specialist- Fire Mitigation and Education
<b>Megan Schlichter</b>	Mendocino County Office of Emergency Services	Emergency Services Specialist	Emergency Specialist
<b>Nephele Barrett</b>	Mendocino Council of Governments	Executive Director	Grant Administrator
<b>Loretta Ellard</b>	Mendocino Council of Governments	Deputy Planner	Project Manager



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### III. PLANNING AREAS

The following emergency evacuation planning areas are consistent with the County’s Community Wildfire Protection Plan and are based on a number of factors. These Planning areas:

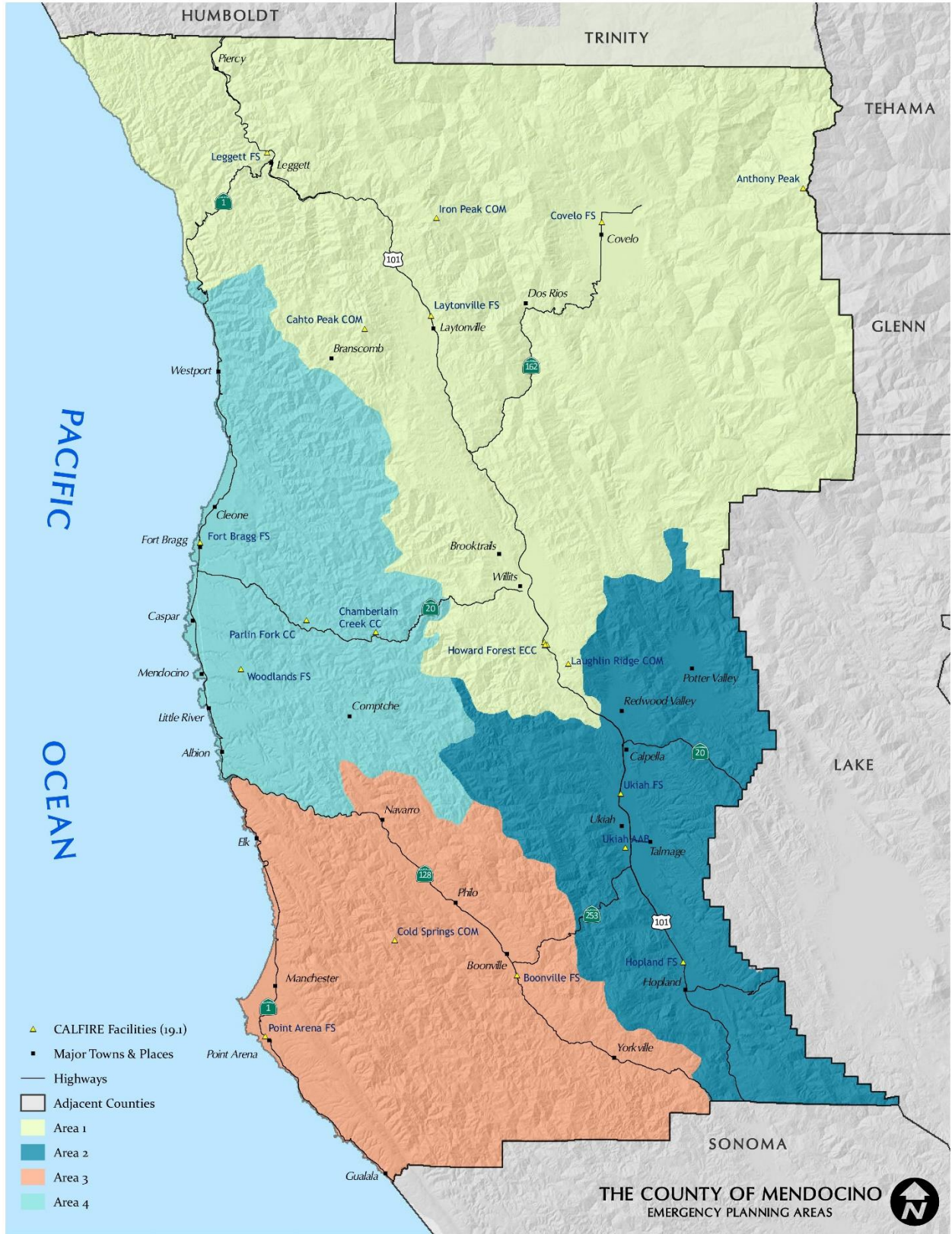
- Match the Mutual Aid Zones utilized by local emergency response personnel (fire and medical)
- Generally, follow watershed boundaries
- Correlate closely with CAL FIRE battalions
- Are based on weather, and to some degree fuels and topography
- Take into account local jurisdictions and fire districts boundaries
- Consider population density
- Utilize transportation corridors

*Please see planning area map below.*

**Table 2: Mendocino County Evacuation Planning Areas**

<b>Planning Area</b>	<b>Area of County</b>	<b>CAL FIRE Battalion(s)</b>	<b>Towns and Fire Departments</b>	<b>Watersheds</b>
<b>1</b>	North and Northeast	1,2,4	Brooktrails, Covelo, Laytonville, Leggett, Piercy, Willits	Eel River including North Fork, Middle Fork, and South Fork
<b>2</b>	Southeast and Central	3	Hopland, Potter Valley, Redwood Valley, Ukiah, Talmage	Russian River, plus Eel River to the north of Potter Valley
<b>3</b>	Southwest	5	Anderson Valley, including Yorkville, Boonville, Philo, and Navarro, to Gualala, Point Arena, Manchester, and Elk on the South Coast of the County	North Fork Gualala, Garcia, Russian, and Navarro Rivers, and Dry Creek
<b>4</b>	West Central and Coastal Region	6	Albion, Little River, Mendocino, Fort Bragg, Cleone, and Westport on the coast, plus Comptche nine miles inland of Mendocino	Albion, Big River, Noyo, and Ten Mile River, and Salmon Creek

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### IV. POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS/ACCESS AND FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

To appropriately determine emergency evacuation plans and priorities, the unique population demographics of Mendocino County must be considered. Important facts include population age, disability, ethnicity/language spoken, income/poverty and other perceived needs.

**Table 3: Population Totals**

	United States		California		Mendocino County	
	Population	Percent	Population	Percent	Population	Percent
<b>Total Population</b>	318,558,162		38,654,306		87,409	
<b>Population 60 years and older</b>	64,950,861	20.3%	7,060,513	18.2%	23,966	27.4%
<b>Population 85 years and older</b>	6,056,891	1.9%	678,710	1.8%	2,081	2.38%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The population of Mendocino County grew by almost 1,500 residents from 2008 to 2017, roughly 1.6% population increase. Still, the population growth rate of the County is consistently slower than the State of California’s growth rate. As denoted above, Mendocino County has a higher percentage of seniors age 60 and older and also age 85 and older than the National and State average.

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**Table 4: Race and Ethnicity of Mendocino County**

<b>RACE</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>White</b>	<b>86.2%</b>
<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>1.1%</b>
<b>American Indian/Alaska Native</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>Asian</b>	<b>2.2%</b>
<b>Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander</b>	<b>0.3%</b>
<b>Two or more races</b>	<b>3.9%</b>
<b>ETHNICITY</b>	
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>25.6%</b>
<b>White, Not Hispanic or Latino</b>	<b>64.7%</b>

Source: 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, U.S. Census

In Mendocino County, both Native Americans and Hispanics encompass the largest ethnic groups amongst the older adult residents. Local service providers believe the number of elderly Hispanic/Latino seniors living in the County is higher than the census data indicates. Planning and outreach efforts will need to be bilingual to ensure emergency communication reaches this population.

Source: 2019-2020 Area Plan Update PSA26 AAA 2016-2020 Four-Year Planning Cycle

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### Poverty Rates

Federal poverty thresholds are set every year by the Census Bureau. The poverty rate is a general indicator of a region's economic health and well-being. As delineated in Table 5 below, from 2007-2016, Mendocino County's poverty rate was higher than the statewide average.

**Table 5: Mendocino County Poverty Rates**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Mendocino County</b>	<b>California</b>
2007	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>12.4%</b>
2008	<b>17.7%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>
2009	<b>17.5%</b>	<b>14.2%</b>
2010	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>
2011	<b>20.2%</b>	<b>16.6%</b>
2012	<b>21.3%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>
2013	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>16.8%</b>
2014	<b>18.8%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>
2015	<b>20.3%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>
2016	<b>19.0%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

As demonstrated below, from 2010-2014, one-fifth of Mendocino County residents of all ages were living below the poverty level which was higher than both the State and National average. Whereas, the percentage of County residents 65 years of age and older living below the poverty level was consistent with the National average and slightly lower than the State average.

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**Table 6: Population with Income Below Poverty Level**

	<b>United States</b>	<b>California</b>	<b>Mendocino County</b>
<b>Residents of All Ages Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>20.2%</b>
<b>Residents 65 years and Older Below Poverty Level</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>10.2%</b>	<b>8.9%</b>

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates. Selected Characteristics of People at Specified Levels of Poverty in the Past 12 Months, U.S. Census.

In 2018, the Federal Poverty Level for individuals was calculated as a single person living on less than \$12,140 per year, and a family of four with income less than \$25,100. The percentage of the population with incomes below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) in the County in 2018 was approximately 17% for men, and 21% for women. When categorized by race/ethnicity, 42% of African Americans living in Mendocino County in 2018 had incomes below 200% of the FPL, followed by Hispanic/Latino 27%, Native Americans 25%, Caucasians 15%, Asians 14%, and Pacific Islanders 14%.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates. Selected Characteristics of People at Specified Levels of Poverty in the Past 12 Months, U.S. Census.

### Language Spoken

**Table 7: Language Spoken at Home**

<b>Language other than English Spoken at Home for Individuals 5 years and older (2013-2017)</b>	21.85%
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Survey

78.15% of Mendocino County residents only speak English, while 21.85% speak other languages. The non-English language spoken by the largest group is Spanish, which is spoken by 18.95% of the population.

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### Disabled Population

**Table 8: Percent of U.S. People with a Disability by Age**

Location	Percent With Disability
<b>United States- All ages</b>	12.6
<b>Mendocino County- All ages</b>	17.6
<b>Mendocino County- Population under 65</b>	12.1
<b>Mendocino County- Population aged 65 and over</b>	40.3

Source: U.S. Disability Statistics by County 05-30-2017

**Table 9: Mendocino County Disability Characteristics**

Population Characteristic	Total Population Estimate	Population with Disability	Percent Population with Disability
<b>Population under 5 years</b>	5,141	7	0.1%
With a hearing difficulty		0	0.0%
With a vision difficulty		7	0.1%
<b>Population 5 to 17 years</b>	13,718	996	7.3%
With a hearing difficulty		60	0.4%
With a vision difficulty		29	0.2%
<b>Population 18 to 34 years</b>	16,704	1,617	9.7%
With a hearing difficulty		270	1.6%
With a vision difficulty		111	0.7%
With a cognitive difficulty		798	4.8%
With an ambulatory difficulty		342	2.0%
With a self-care difficulty		135	0.8%
With an independent living difficulty		480	2.9%



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<b>Population 35 to 64 years</b>	32,845	5,210	15.9%
With a hearing difficulty		1,746	5.3%
With a vision difficulty		727	2.2%
With a cognitive difficulty		1,391	4.2%
With an ambulatory difficulty		1,733	5.3%
With a self-care difficulty		545	1.7%
With an independent living difficulty		2,082	6.3%
<b>Population 65 to 74 years</b>	11,980	3,071	25.6%
With a hearing difficulty		1,969	16.4%
With a vision difficulty		983	8.2%
With a cognitive difficulty		160	1.3%
With an ambulatory difficulty		1,133	9.5%
With a self-care difficulty		238	2.0%
With an independent living difficulty		593	4.9%
<b>Population 75 years and over</b>	6,880	4,197	61.0%
With a hearing difficulty		1,905	27.7%
With a vision difficulty		674	9.8%
With a cognitive difficulty		901	13.1%
With an ambulatory difficulty		2,183	31.7%
With a self-care difficulty		834	12.1%
With an independent living difficulty		1,730	25.1%

Source: 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Disability Characteristics, U.S. Census

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### V. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Consultant has conducted community outreach activities for the purpose of soliciting public feedback to ascertain the general needs and worries of community stakeholders and the general public regarding wildfire safety and emergency evacuation. This feedback has been incorporated into the planning process and will be used to address the community's concerns while concurrently educating residents about the newly developed evacuation plans and to enable them to gain confidence in local first responder agencies managing a disaster.

#### A. Web Based Outreach

To ensure that wildfire safety and preparedness and evacuation planning address the needs and fears of residents throughout Mendocino County, community outreach was achieved through the use of a web-based survey. This survey was distributed to Technical Advisory Group (TAG) members and also to residents of Mendocino County to solicit feedback on areas of concern and also individual needs if an emergency evacuation were to occur. Instead of using multiple choice or yes/no answers, the survey was designed to encourage the public to provide detailed responses. Feedback received from the public survey was prioritized and incorporated into planning decisions, as applicable.

#### **The following questions were presented to the general public:**

- What area of the community do you reside in?
- What areas of your community do you feel are most vulnerable to wildfire?
- What challenges do you see in preventing your community from reducing its fire risk?
- What challenges do you feel your community faces if an evacuation was necessary?
- What personal concerns do you have for yourself or family members if an evacuation was necessary?
- Are you aware that the County has an emergency alert and notification system- MendoAlert? Have you enrolled in this system?
- What is the best way to alert you of an evacuation notice?
- When is the best time to hold public meetings to maximize involvement?
- What is the best location in your particular community to hold public meetings that will maximize involvement in emergency evacuation planning?

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- Do you have concerns regarding the availability of telephone and broadband service in your area?

Mendocino County residents were made aware of the survey as it was posted on:

- Mendocino Voice Facebook page with a paragraph explaining the project and the survey's purpose. The Mendocino Voice is an online newspaper widely read throughout the County.
- Mendocino County Office of Education website with a paragraph explaining the project and the survey's purpose.
- All Mendocino County School District websites
- Mendocino Council of Governments website

### **B. Public Input Summary**

The survey ran for six weeks and 252 survey responses were received (232 online plus 20 hand written). Respondents provided a thorough representation from all areas of the County. This information was used to address public concerns and improve communication to area residents during a wildfire or other major emergency. Additionally, applicable recommendations were used in evacuation planning efforts.

#### ***Primary issues uncovered include:***

Mendocino County residents feel the entire County is vulnerable to a significant wildfire threat with danger to the unincorporated community of Brooktrails ranking as the greatest concern. Additionally, Ukiah, East of Fort Bragg, Albion/Navarro Ridge, Willits, Anderson Valley and West Hills are deemed vulnerable. Residents are particularly concerned with the risk to highway corridors from wildfire. These include Highways 1, 20, 101, 128 and 162 and the danger inherent in the Wildland Urban Interface. Residents throughout the County also expressed tremendous anxiety over the many communities that have only one way in and out fearing the exits will be compromised by wildfire. They also expressed concern over the lack of proper street identification and addressing.

Area residents conveyed that a large number of challenges prevent their community from significantly reducing their wildfire risk. Of greatest concern is the lack of dedicated funding to support wildfire prevention and response efforts. Additionally, the accumulation of fuels present in many areas of the County coupled with what many respondents feel is a local opposition to fuel reduction and the lack of sufficient hazard abatement ordinances has

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understandably engendered tremendous fear. Similarly, people were concerned with the inability of fire agencies in performing prescribed burns due to increasing restrictions and residents' inability to conduct local backyard burning of accumulated fuels.

Many individuals expressed that wildfire prevention mitigation was inhibited for bureaucratic reasons and the result of complacency by local government. Residents also feel that many property owners/absentee landlords provide substandard housing, fail to meet building code standards and are delinquent in taking appropriate measures to reduce the fuel load surrounding their properties.

The absence of a local evacuation plan and fire and evacuation education was a concern voiced by many respondents. Also, the need for defensible space and secondary access was a frequently expressed challenge. Many respondents want the ability to enter private properties when the need for secondary access becomes essential.

With respect to the obstacles the community faces if an evacuation was deemed necessary, more than half of respondents worry about the fact that most County areas have one way in and one way out. Road congestion during an evacuation was voiced by many residents particularly in light of the recent Camp Fire in Paradise, California which left many evacuees stranded in their unmoving vehicles. There was also concern that they would have limited or blocked access to evacuation routes.

Residents again were apprehensive over the absence of a local evacuation plan and particularly their lack of knowledge regarding evacuation routes and where they should go to. Many felt existing alerting systems are inadequate and feared they would not be notified with sufficient time to safely evacuate. A large number of respondents are either unaware or confused about the MendoAlert and Nixle systems. Two-thirds of respondents have not enrolled and many claim these notification systems do not work or fail when the power is down. Compounding this notification concern is the unreliable cell phone coverage that exists in many areas of the County, spotty broadband service, and the recent increase in public safety power shutoffs (PSPS).

Regarding the best way to notify individuals of a major emergency, the majority of residents prefer to be contacted via cell phone/text. Additionally, a large number of residents prefer contact via telephone landlines. However, local fire chiefs estimate that only 5-8% of rural residents possess landlines. An area wide siren system is also strongly preferred in addition to an improved version of MendoAlert and Nixle.

When queried about personal concerns if an evacuation was necessary, a large number of respondents worried about what would happen to their pets and livestock. Additionally, there was anticipated worry over family members and particularly disabled and elderly relatives.

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The remaining questions were used to ascertain the best time and locations throughout the County to hold public education forums in order to reach as many residents as possible. Respondents provided a variety of locations throughout the County to hold Public Forums and feel late afternoon/evening and weekend meeting times are optimal.

*Survey responses can be found in Appendix A.*

### **VI. CURRENT COMMUNICATION CAPABILITIES**

The County of Mendocino and the individual incorporated cities have comprehensive websites that provide current emergency information as it becomes available. The local Fire Departments will typically utilize their city websites to update citizens during an emergency event. Most local Fire Departments do not have the capability/staffing to facilitate their own individual detailed websites.

In reviewing the County's policies and procedures on public outreach, it became evident that a formal Public Information Plan does not exist. To develop communities of prepared and informed residents, a coordinated approach needs to be taken amongst the County's various departments and divisions. The different departments have designated a number of Public Information Officers (PIOs) with varying degrees of training and experience, who all follow different procedures. The development of a uniform Public Information Plan will enable PIO's to provide a clear and cohesive public outreach response throughout the County.

#### **Emergency Event Communications**

Upon reviewing local communication systems, it is evident that CAL FIRE has a robust and well exercised public information program. When the existing County resources are insufficient, this consultant recommends that the Office of Emergency Services and/or the responsible fire agency request assistance through the California Mutual Aid System for qualified Public Information Officer(s). These highly trained individuals are capable of delivering both multi-lingual event information and messages that are coordinated and consistent throughout the County.

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### VII. FUTURE OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The following methods will be used to solicit public feedback and to educate the general public about wildfire safety and preparedness in addition to informing them about evacuation planning and primary and alternate evacuation routes. Additionally, it will provide a means for directing preparedness and evacuation information to the County's vulnerable populations.

#### A. Public Forum

To further engage and educate residents throughout Mendocino County, a general public forum addressing fire safety and evacuation planning will occur on June 22, 2020. Originally, four public forums were going to be held at different locations throughout Mendocino County. However, given the unanticipated COVID-19 pandemic that is currently occurring, it was decided for the sake of public safety to conduct a single countywide public forum via a Zoom webinar. This method would still enable the general public to participate and ask questions. To inform the community about this event, a news release will be developed which explains the nature of the project.

This news release will be publicized through the following venues:

- Mendocino Council of Government's website
- Mendocino County website
- Mendocino Voice news website
- Mendocino Beacon news website
- KOZT radio
- KXBX radio
- Willits Police Department web page
- Willits Police Department Facebook page
- Laytonville Municipal Area Advisory Committee

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The Public Forum format includes a PowerPoint presentation with multiple speakers followed by a question and answer period. The following topics will be covered:

- Fire Safety Preparedness
- Evacuation Planning and Preparedness
- Emergency Alerting Systems
- Animal Evacuation

In addition to the Community Outreach conducted by CFPC, the consultant suggests the following year-round outreach activities be pursued by the Mendocino County first responder community to improve fire safety and evacuation planning communication year-round. Recommendations include:

### **B. Public Safety Announcement (PSA) Program**

To develop communities of prepared and informed residents, a coordinated approach needs to be taken amongst local fire departments, Mendocino County OES and local government agencies. As firefighters tend to be well respected in their communities, it is advantageous for local fire departments to provide routine education to citizens about preparing for wildland fire threat and creating situational awareness. It is recommended that the Fire Departments throughout Mendocino County, acting under the lead of the County Office of Emergency Services and in conjunction with key public safety stakeholders (Local Fire Safe Councils, American Red Cross, Utility Companies, Law Enforcement Agencies and the County Health Department) develop a Fire Safety Community Outreach Program where different agencies take turns providing monthly public education programs aimed at reducing the risk of wildfires and preventing property damage.

It is recommended that throughout the year, participating public safety organizations take turns providing seasonally appropriate public safety messages for the entire County. The following schedule is proposed:



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**Table 10: Public Safety Announcement Program Schedule**

Month	Responsible Agency	Public Safety Announcement Goal
<b>January</b>	Tbd*	Cooking and Heating
<b>February</b>	Laytonville Fire Department	CPR/AED Training
<b>March</b>	CAL FIRE	Debris Burning Safely
<b>April</b>	CAL FIRE	‘Ready Set Go’
<b>May</b>	South Coast Fire Department	Defensible Space/Street Addressing
<b>June</b>	Little Lake Fire Department	Fire Works/Grilling
<b>July</b>	CAL FIRE	Roadside Fire Starts
<b>August</b>	County OES	Evacuation Preparedness
<b>September</b>	Tbd*	Smoke Detectors
<b>October</b>	Westport Fire Department	Earthquake Safety
<b>November</b>	Tbd*	Home Fire Safety/Candles
<b>December</b>	Tbd*	Holiday Season Safety

\*Fire chiefs are currently considering involvement.

### C. Web Based Education

It is recommended that County OES and all fire departments within Mendocino County place on their websites educational materials to increase residents’ awareness of the local risk of fire danger while concurrently educating the public regarding ways to protect themselves, their families and their property. In addition to educating the general public, educational materials for access and functional needs populations is essential and should include the elderly, disabled, individuals living in institutionalized environments, children, non-English speakers, and those with limited access to transportation.

Additionally, each fire department should post on their websites area specific evacuation routes and shelter/welfare sites. To minimize the risk of fire death to older adults, who represent 15

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percent of the U.S. population but suffer 40 percent of all fire deaths, public service announcements and safety tips developed by the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) can be used. These free safety materials are intended for adults age 65 and over and also for their caregivers.

Additionally, as a significant portion of the population live with physical and mental disabilities, it is necessary for this diverse populations to understand their fire risk, have an escape plan and practice their safety plan. Many organizations such as the USFA provide free safety materials that can be posted on each fire station's website.

*Please see Appendix B for links to General Public and Population Specific Outreach Materials.*

### **D. Educational Brochures**

The above listed general population and population specific educational materials are also available in brochure format through the U.S. Fire Administration. Local first responder agencies should also make sure that these population specific safety materials are distributed throughout their community. The easiest way to do this is to have a presence at existing community events. By increasing their visibility within their individual communities, residents will gain confidence in the first responder community's ability to handle a major disaster with the ultimate goal of improving public safety. It is recommended that the Fire Chief's Association adopt the CAL FIRE Ready Set Go! Program.

### **E. Public Notice Boards**

It is recommended that local Fire Departments and Cities utilize strategically placed Public Bulletin Boards to assist in the dissemination of fire safety information. Public Notice Boards are an inexpensive means of conveying concise messages to large numbers of people. The Ready Set Go! Program, managed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, provides extensive bilingual fire safety related public notice materials in addition to other educational material formats. In addition to the Public Notice Boards currently present in local fire stations, we recommend placing two in Brooktrails-one at the entrance to the Brooktrails Community Center. The second one at the Sherwood Market in the community of Brooktrails.

### **F. Social Media**

Social Media is a powerful means of reaching a large percentage of the community and engaging the public. It's recommended that social media platforms such as Facebook be utilized by local first responder agencies to post both safety tips and emergency response information. Yet, postings should also be interactive and provide opportunities for residents to offer feedback.

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Additionally, these agencies should be on the lookout for community events that will enable them to tie in their safety messages on social media. People will be more likely to read the messages if they are associated with a local event. CAL FIRE, with the resources of a full-time Public information officer, has been able to develop a robust social media presence with an estimated 27,000 followers on Facebook and 8,000 followers on twitter.

### G. Roles and Responsibilities

To implement future outreach activities, the delineated agencies have been assigned and agreed to taken on the following specific roles and responsibilities:

**Table 11: Agency Roles and Responsibilities**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Target Completion Date</b>
<b>Plan Maintenance</b>	County OES	None	Annually
<b>Evacuation Education Public Forums</b>	CFPC Consultants	Grant Funding	June 2020
<b>Public Notice Boards-Brooktrails</b>	Brooktrails CSD	Fire Safe Council	August 2020
<b>Social Media Evacuation and Fire Safety Outreach</b>	All Fire Agencies	General Fund	Ongoing
<b>Public Safety Announcement Program</b>	All Fire Agencies/ County OES	General Fund	Ongoing

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### APPENDIX A: GENERAL PUBLIC SURVEY RESULTS

252 responses received (232 online plus 20 handwritten) from all areas of the County

#### Q1 What area of the community do you live in?

Answer	# of Respondents
Fort Bragg-total	34
Ukiah	18
Fort Bragg- Mitchell Creek/Simpson Lane	16
Covelo	15
Willits	15
Laytonville	7
Redwood Valley/ Redwood Valley Rancheria	10
Philo	7
Round Valley	6
Anderson Valley	5
Boonville	4
Point Arena	3
Caspar	3
Comptche	3
Gualala	2
Hearst	2
Yorkville	2

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<b>Navarro</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Hopland</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Talmage</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Calpella</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Mendocino</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pine Mountain</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Branscomb</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Potter Valley</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Spyrock</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Icebox Canyon</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Vichy Springs</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Ten Mile Creek</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Cleone</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Albion</b>	<b>1</b>

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### Q2 What areas of your community do you feel are most vulnerable to wildfire?

Answer	# of Respondents
Entire County	43
Brooktrails	38
Ukiah	14
Wildland Urban Interface	13
Highway Corridors (including Highway 1, 101, 20, 128 and 162)	13
East of Fort Bragg	7
Any subdivision that's one way in/one way out	6
Albion/Navarro Ridge	5
Any area with fuel accumulation	4
Anderson Valley	4
Willits	3
West Hills	3
Pine Mountain	3
Point Arena	2
Redwood Valley (Hillside and Creek Bed)	5
Covelo	2
Mitchell Creek	2
Chicken Ridge	2
Pigeon Ridge	2
Vichy Springs	2

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<b>Rural and substandard housing</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Areas east of Comptche</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Deerwood</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Regina Heights (lots of fuel)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Wind events</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Woodman</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Hopland</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pigmy Forest</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Laytonville</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Reeves Canyon area</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Little Valley</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The green belt</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Southeast Mendocino County</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Southwest side of the valley</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Guideville Road</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Mendocino National Forest</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Downed power lines</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Demonstration Forest</b>	<b>1</b>



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### Q3 What Challenges do you see in preventing your community from reducing its fire risk?

Answer	# of Respondents
Lack of funding	44
Accumulations of fuels	38
Complacency by local government/bureaucracy	19
Need for secondary access (including across private property)	16
Opposition to fuel reduction	13
Absentee landlords/Property owner complacency	9
Lack of defensible space	7
Lack of education of general public	7
Lack of an evacuation plan	5
Limited firefighting resources	5
Inadequate communications	4
Power lines	3
Hazard abatement ordinances	3
Building code compliance/substandard housing	3
Lack of water system	2
Locked gates	2
Illegal cannabis	2
Restrictions on burning	2

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Lack of control burns	2
Non-bilingual communication	2
Climate change	2
Gun range open in the summer	1
Hot dry climate	2
Inadequate prevention activities	1

### Q4 What challenges do you feel your community faces if an evacuation was necessary?

Answer	# of Respondents
One way in/One way out	118
Congested Roads	31
Lack of evacuation plan/evacuation routes	20
Communication inadequacies (cell phone, landline)	14
Poor government communications (MendoAlert, Nixle)	14
Elderly/Disabled	9
Not knowing where to go	6
Shelter/welfare area not identified	5
Lack of siren activation	3
Lack of gasoline resulting from PSPS	3
Limited Time to Evacuate	2
Complacency by local government	2

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<b>Plan to transport carless population</b>	2
<b>No carpool plan</b>	1
<b>Power lines</b>	1

### Q5 What personal concerns or special needs do you have if an evacuation was necessary?

Answer	# of Respondents
<b>Pets and livestock</b>	36
<b>Blocked/limited access</b>	31
<b>Timely notification</b>	27
<b>Elderly</b>	20
<b>Children/family</b>	16
<b>Physically handicapped/limited mobility</b>	16
<b>Communication concerns (cell phone)</b>	10
<b>Lack of knowledge of what to do or where to go</b>	9
<b>Extended travel times</b>	5
<b>Ability to evacuation Brooktrails/Sherwood Road</b>	5
<b>Poor County notification system</b>	4
<b>Traffic congestion</b>	4
<b>Place to stay</b>	3
<b>Lack of power</b>	2
<b>Hearing impaired</b>	2

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Fuel for vehicle	2
Security of dwellings if evacuated	1
Lack of transportation	1
No evacuation plan	1
Mentally handicapped	1

### Q6 What is the best way to alert you of an evacuation notice?

Answer	# of Respondents
Cell phone/text	143
Landline	82
Area wide siren	43
MendoAlert/Nixle	24
Email	16
Social media	13
Radio	8
Door to door	7
Sheriff PA/siren system	4
TV	3
Ham radio	2
Town Cryer	1

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**Q7 Are you aware that the County has an emergency alert and notification system? Have you enrolled in the system?**

Answer	# of Respondents
Yes	157
No	36
Enrolled	61
Comments:	
➤ Alert and notification system doesn't work	23
➤ There is confusion between MendoAlert and Nixle	17
➤ Not sure how to register	3

**Q8 What is the best time to hold public meetings to maximize involvement?**

Answer	# of Respondents
Evenings	101
Daytime	40
Weekends (Friday evening through Sunday)	52
Weekdays (Monday through Friday)	19
Friday afternoons	4

## Mendocino County Public Outreach Plan

**Q9 What is the best location in your community to hold public meetings that will maximize involvement in emergency evacuation planning?**

<b>Answer</b>	<b># of Respondents</b>
Brooktrails	27
Willits (Community Center, Grange, Senior Center)	22
High Schools	10
Fort Bragg Community Center	8
Mendocino Community Center	7
Harwood Hall	6
Round Valley Community Room	6
Caspar	6
Board of Supervisors Chambers	5
Gualala Community Center	5
Anderson Valley	5
Comptche (Community Hall)	5
Mendocino County Office of Education	4
Albion School	4
Ukiah (City Hall/Civic Center)	7
Little Lake Grange	3
The Woods Community Center	3
Mendocino College	3
Fairgrounds	3

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<b>The Brew Pub-North Spur</b>	2
<b>Libraries</b>	2
<b>Grange Hall on East Road</b>	2
<b>Redwood Grange</b>	2
<b>Fire Stations</b>	2
<b>Tribal Office</b>	2
<b>Redwood Valley Rancheria</b>	1
<b>Point Arena City Hall</b>	1
<b>Redwood Coast Senior Center</b>	1
<b>Elk Community Center</b>	1
<b>Westport Community Center</b>	1
<b>Veterans Memorial Building</b>	1
<b>Potter Valley</b>	1
<b>Spyrock School</b>	1
<b>Gem and Mineral Society Building</b>	1
<b>Alex Thomas Plaza</b>	1

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**Q10 Do you have concerns regarding the availability of telephone and broadband service in your area?**

<b>Answer</b>	<b># of Respondents</b>
<b>Yes</b>	123
<b>No</b>	22
<b>Comments:</b>	
➤ <b>System failed when power went down</b>	31
➤ <b>Poor cell coverage</b>	23
➤ <b>Lack of Wi-Fi/internet</b>	14



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### APPENDIX B: EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL RESOURCES

#### ➤ Population Specific Safety Materials

Ready-to-use fire English-Spanish bilingual safety materials for the general public and special needs populations can be found on the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) website at:

[https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/education\\_programs.html](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/education_programs.html)

[https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/older\\_adults.html](https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/older_adults.html)

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/disabilities.html>

#### ➤ Public Service Announcements

To increase fire prevention and safety awareness, free broadcast quality audio public service announcements are available at:

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/media/audio.html>

These PSAs include the following topics:

- Young children
- Cooking
- Heating
- Fire escape planning
- Candle safety
- Holiday safety
- Winter safety

#### ➤ Social Media

Social media toolkits to increase fire prevention and safety awareness can be found at:

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/prevention/outreach/media/>

They include free stock photos, videos and b-rolls. They address:

- Cigarette safety
- Candle safety
- Fire alarm replacement
- Carbon monoxide alarms

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- Appliance safety
- Heating safety
- Electrical safety
- Portable generator safety
- Cooking safety

This site also has pictographs to help spread education messages to high risk populations including individuals with language or literacy barriers.

### ➤ CAL FIRE

#### ✓ Educational Materials

CAL FIRE has extensive public safety information, fact sheets and a multi-media library containing extensive videos, photos and Public Service Announcements.

Educational materials and the multi-media library can be found at:

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/programs/communications>

#### ✓ Ready, Set, Go!

To help educate California residents and property owners about wildfire and evacuation preparedness, CAL FIRE has created a communications program that breaks down the necessary actions to be ready for a wildfire including:

- Be Ready: Create and maintain defensible space and harden your home against flying embers.
- Get Set: Prepare your family and home ahead of time for the possibility of having to evacuate.
- Be Ready to GO!: Take the evacuation steps necessary to give your family and home the best chance of surviving a wildfire.

Campaign toolkits can be found at: <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/ready-set-go-campaign/>

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### ➤NFPA Educational Materials

The National Fire Protection Association also offers first responder agencies extensive free educational materials, seasonal information, videos, messaging and resources that have been created to inform at-risk audiences. Please visit: [www.nfpa.org/public-education](http://www.nfpa.org/public-education)

The NFPA also has extensive fire safety educational materials for special needs populations. These can be found at: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Specific-groups-at-risk/People-with-disabilities/Educational-materials>