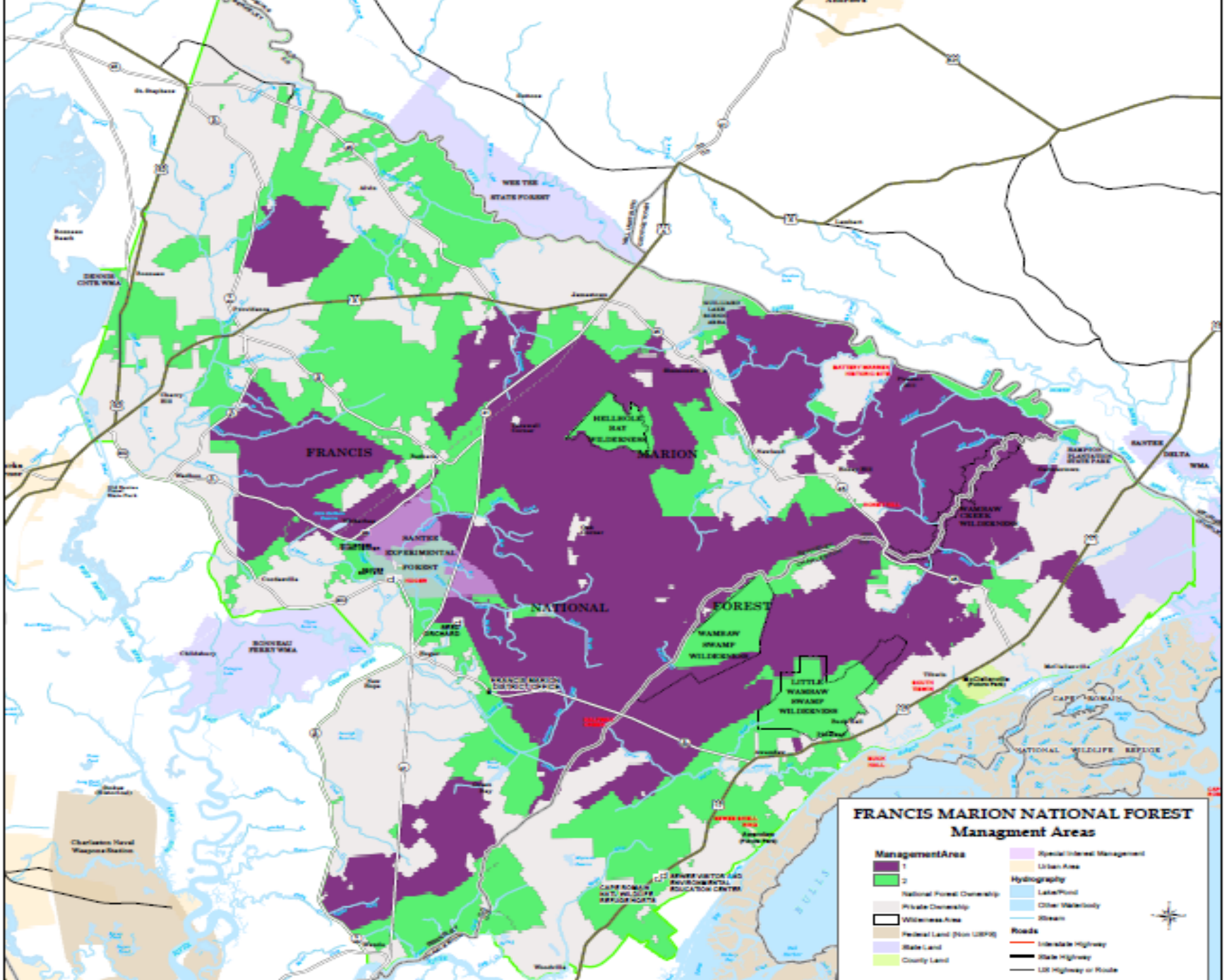
Francis Marion NF Plan Revision

Fire Management and Managing Risk

Presentation to the

Public

September 23, 2014

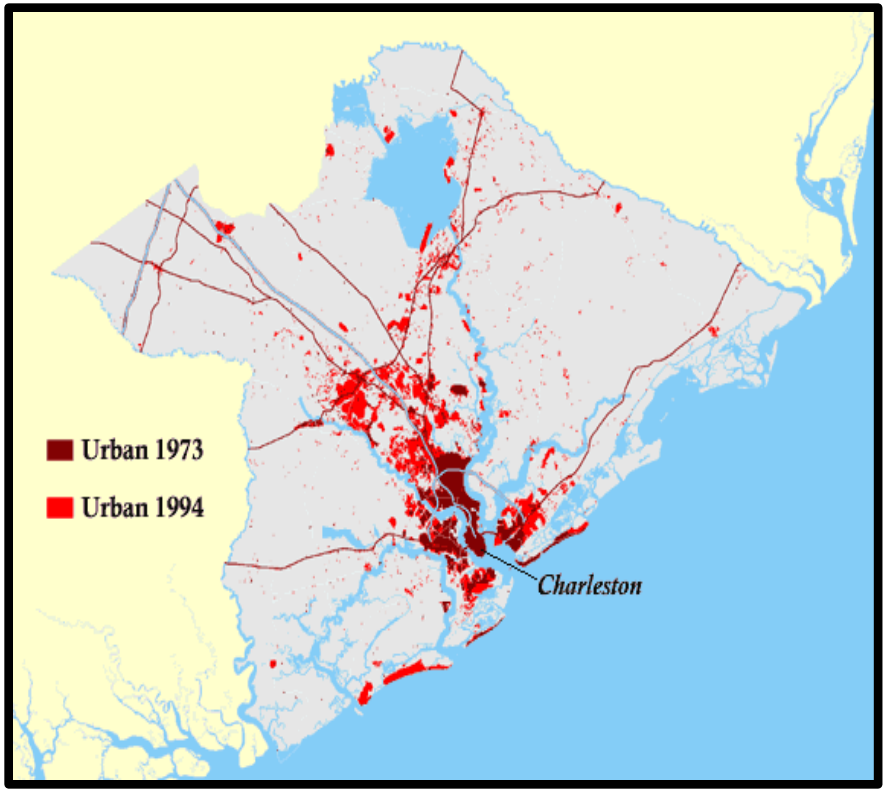

FRANCIS MARION NATIONAL FOREST
Managment Areas
ManagementArea
1
2
National Forest Ownership
Private Ownership
Wilderness Area
Federal Land (Non USFS)
State Land
County Land
Special Interest Management
Urban Area
Hydrography
Lake/Pond
Other Waterbody
Stream
Roads
Interstate Highway
State Highway
US Highway or Route
FRANCIS
MARION
NATIONAL
FOREST
HELLHOLE BAY WILDERNESS
WAMBAW SWAMP WILDERNESS
LITTLE WAMBAW SWAMP WILDERNESS
WAMBAW CREEK WILDERNESS
SANTEE EXPERIMENTAL FOREST
WEE TEE STATE FOREST
DENNIS CNTR WMA
BONNEAU FERRY WMA
SANTEE DELTA WMA
CAPE ROMAIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Charleston Naval Weapons Station
BULLS

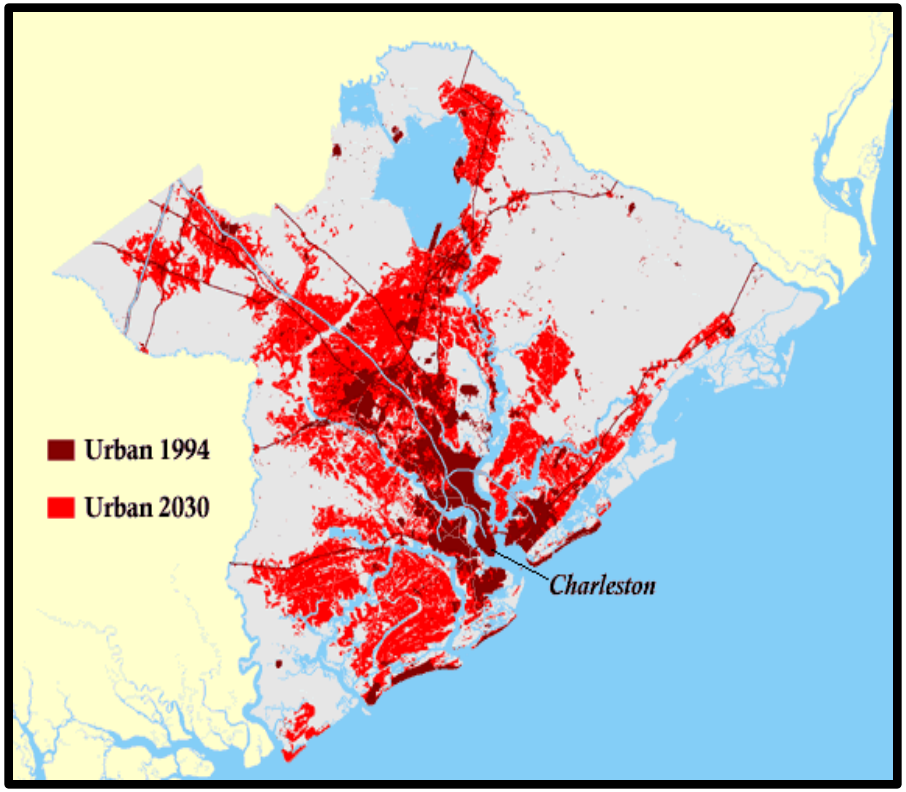
Issues:

People really want to live here.

The Metropolitan Charleston area experienced a 256% increase in urbanized area from 1973-1994.

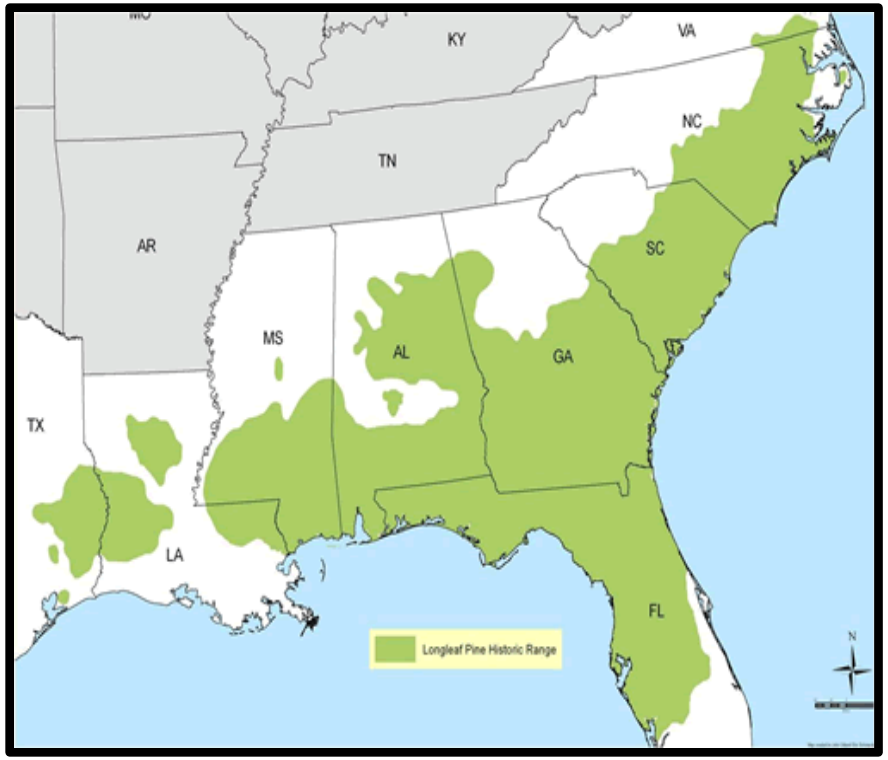
The urbanized area for Metropolitan Charleston area could increase another **247%**, to 551,592 acres by 2030, under current development trends.





Issues:

The Coastal Plains were meant to burn.



Historical Conditions and Optimal Fire Behavior.

Issues: Wildland Fuels have not been maintained to the extent they should.

Challenges: Managing Fire Suppression in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).

"Fire gives us the test before the lesson."

- Tony Wilder, Type I Incident Commander, Southern Area Red Team

Case Study: Highway 31 Fire

The Highway 31 started on April 22, 2009 as a small woods fire in Horry County, and in a few hours time, became the most destructive and costly wildfire in South Carolina History, burning more than 19,000 acres.

- 76 homes destroyed.
- 97 homes damaged.
- $50 million in total damages.
- 2,500 residents evacuated
- 270’ flame lengths recorded.
- Entrapped 2 firefighters requiring fire shelter deployment.
- 700 Emergency Responders from 20 agencies.

Case Study: Windy Fire

On March 23, 2011, the Windy Fire began on private lands near the town of McClellanville. Fueled by high winds and dry conditions, the fire quickly grew to almost 2,600 acres, jumping Hwy 17 and causing numerous evacuations.

- Three structures destroyed.
- Considerable economic loss to private timber withholdings.
- Large fire column transported fire embers over a half-mile.
- Multi-agency response with communication challenges.
- Hwy 17 is closed for numerous hours.

Case Study: Windsor Green Fire

On March 16, 2013, in Horry County, a small woods fire, adjacent to Windsor Green Condominium Complex and fueled by high winds, quickly consumed 26 buildings in a matter of minutes.

- 110 condominiums destroyed.
- 194 people lost their homes.
- 11.6 million in property damage.
- Two months after the incident, one Sheriff's Deputy succumbed to complication from injuries (smoke inhalation) sustained as a first responder to the incident.

Our **Goal**

"Creating fire-adapted communities in fire-adapted ecosystems."

Our Toolbox: Establish a County-wide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

What is a CWPP?

- A CWPP is a plan developed by a community in an area at-risk from wildland fire. The CWPP is a collaborative product involving interested parties, local government, local fire fighting agencies, the state agency which oversees forest management and, if present in the vicinity, federal land management agencies.
- The Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA), which was signed in to law in December 2003, first defined a CWPP and established incentives for communities to create a CWPP.

Our Toolbox: Establish a landscape scale Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP)

What are the benefits?

- Enhance public safety.
- Communities with CWPP's in place will be given priority for funding of hazardous fuels reduction projects carried out under the auspices of the HFRA.
- Improve economic resiliency through the identification and protection of critical infrastructure and businesses at risk.
- Restore and protect ecosystem health.
- Raise public awareness about wildfire risks.
- Educate landowners of their shared responsibility in wildfire protection.
- Build new partnerships between local, state and federal fire fighting agencies, community organizations and businesses.
- Realize opportunities for collaboration.
- Improve ISO ratings and other insurance incentives.

CWPP Minimum Requirements

(1) Collaboration:

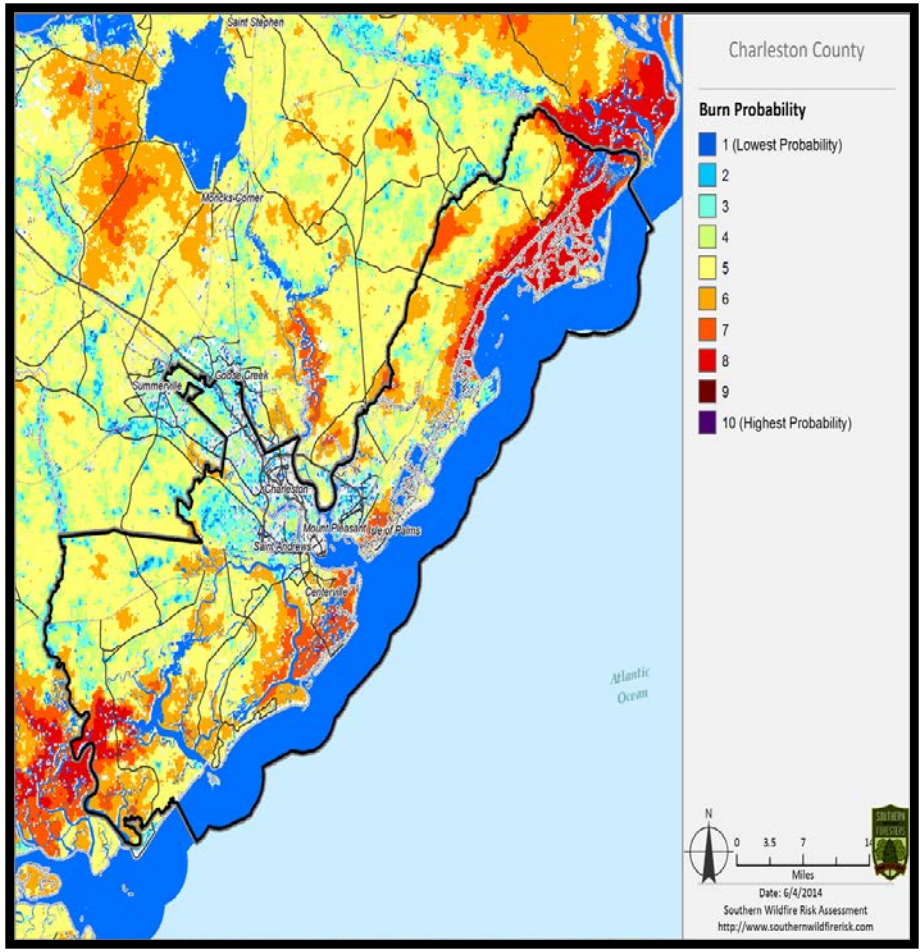
A CWPP must be collaboratively developed by local and state government representatives, in consultation with federal agencies and other interested parties.

(2) Prioritized Fuel Reduction:

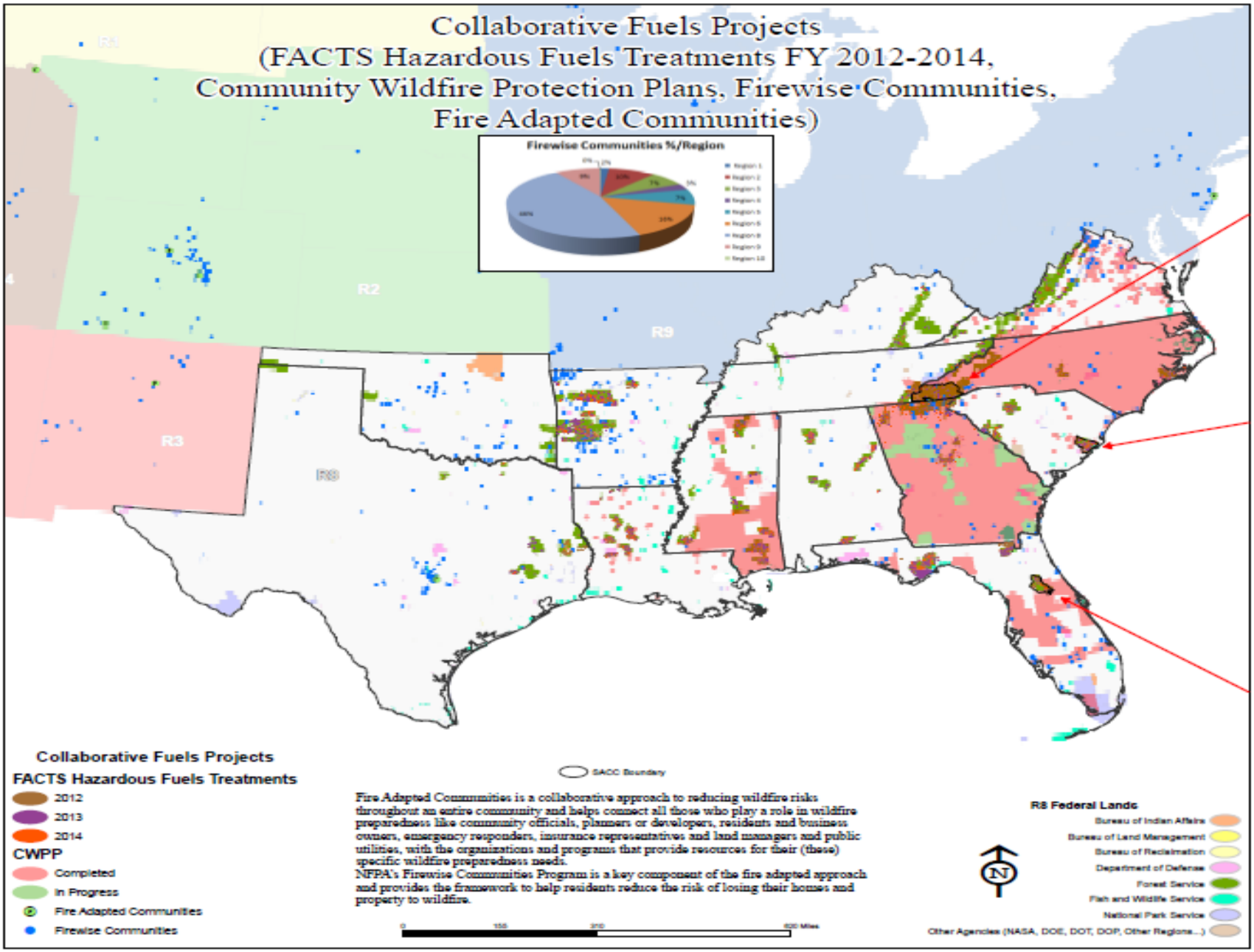
A CWPP must identify and prioritize areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments and recommend the types and methods of treatment that will protect one or more at-risk communities and essential infrastructure.

(3) Treatment of Structural Ignitability:

A CWPP must recommend measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures throughout the area addressed by the plan.



Collaborative Fuels Projects (FACTS Hazardous Fuels Treatments FY 2012-2014, Community Wildfire Protection Plans, Firewise Communities, Fire Adapted Communities)



Questions?