



# LOWMAN COMMUNITY WILDFIRE MITIGATION ACTION PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2024

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COMMUNITY MITIGATION ASSISTANCE TEAM REPORT



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*ALL PHOTOS CREDITED TO THE CMAT UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.*





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

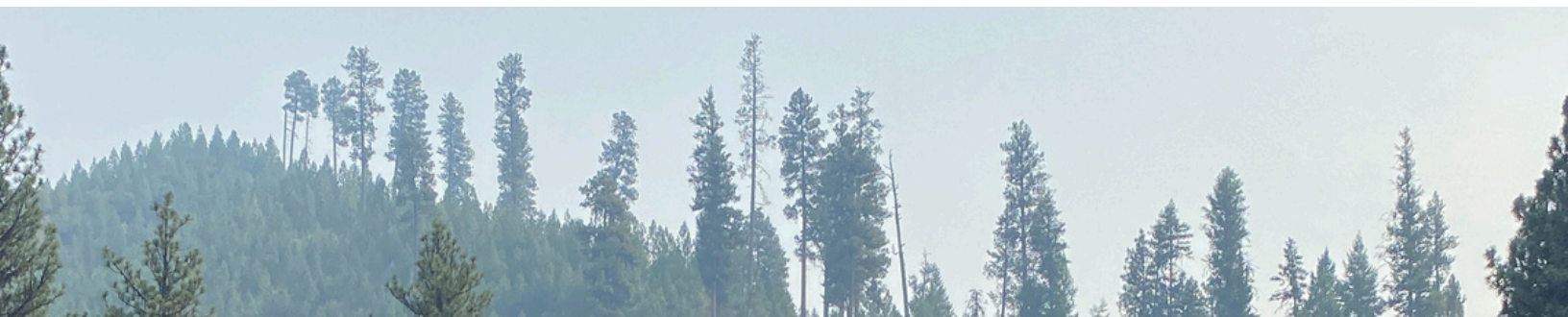
This report summarizes the CMAT's findings and provides wildfire mitigation recommendations for both short- and long-term actions.

For years, discussions have been held on how the CMAT could support active incidents. The team leader, alongside several Incident Commanders, worked to establish conditions for safely integrating mitigation resources into fire suppression efforts. The 2024 Wapiti Fire became the pilot for these concepts. At the request of the Rocky Mountain Area Complex Incident Management Team 1 and the Boise National Forest, the CMAT was deployed to empower residents to complete structure hardening and fire adaptation activities. Additional objectives included reviewing existing programs and plans, identifying ways to build community capacity, and supporting the development of a mitigation-focused partnership in Lowman, Idaho.

## Short-Term Activities

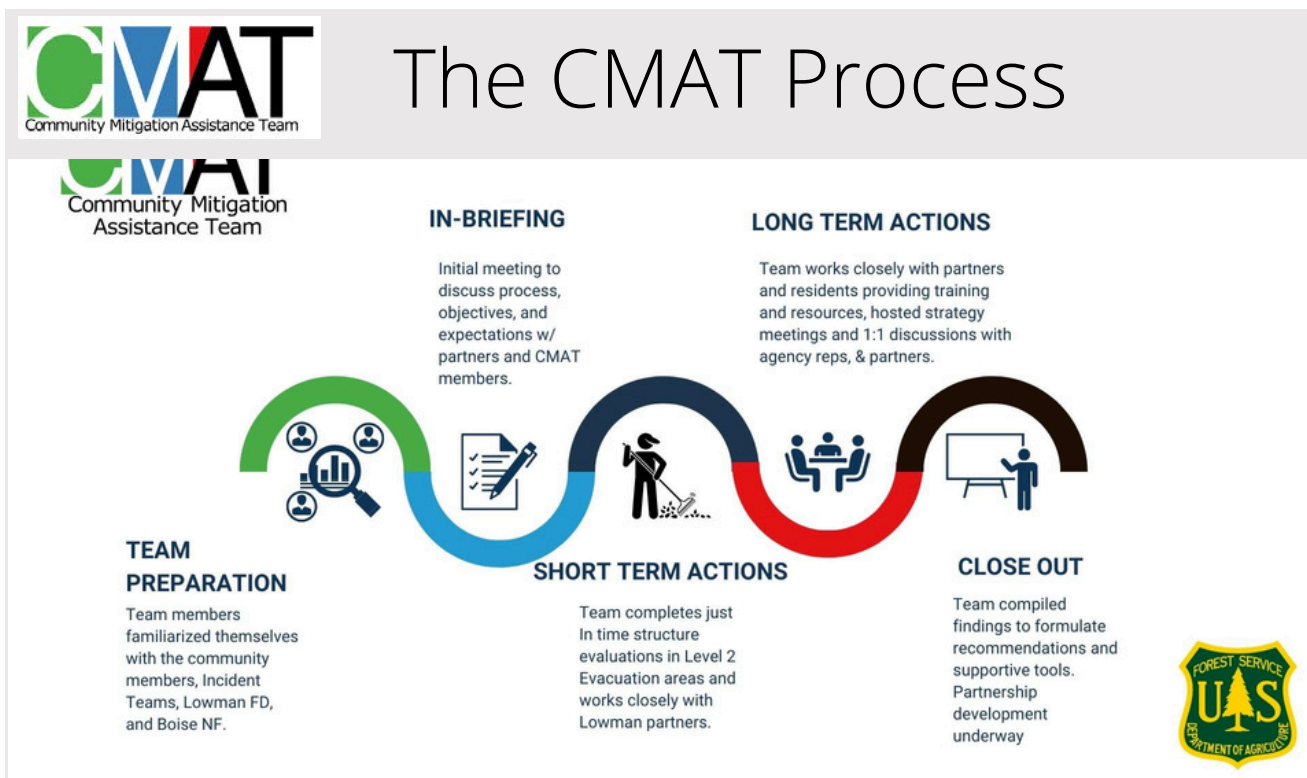
During the assignment, the CMAT provided immediate mitigation recommendations to residents to enhance home survivability during the Wapiti Fire, conducted community-level and individual home-level wildfire risk evaluations, supported Boise County Emergency Management and Lowman Volunteer Fire Department, and engaged residents with resources and tools. These short term activities were critical in the moment, providing just-in-time guidance to empower and activate residents immediately, while also supporting relationship building, resource sharing, accountability and trust for the future. The CMAT completed:

- 5 community-level evaluations
- 57 parcel-level evaluations (included 19 rapid evaluations, 38 home evaluations with landowner engagement)



## Long-Term Activities

In addition to the immediate work and in alignment with the activities completed with urgency, the CMAT operates under a simple premise: Communities must work together across all boundaries and barriers in order to become adapted to wildland fire. With strong community participation, passion, and the resources provided through the Lowman Community Toolbox, the CMAT is confident that Lowman can become a more fire-adapted community.



*The Community Mitigation Assistance Team, or CMAT, is a national interagency resource designed to help communities build sustainable local capacity for community wildfire mitigation within high-risk areas before, during, and after a wildfire.*



## Wildfire Mitigation Guiding Principles

Community Wildfire Mitigation Guiding Principles are the foundation for effective work with communities; they are the key to increasing local capacity. The guiding principles below will resonate throughout this report and are the foundation upon which an effective action-focused mitigation program can be built.



# INTRODUCTION

Lowman is located in southwest Idaho, along the winding Payette River and completely surrounded by Boise National Forest lands. The Boise National Forest's landscape of steep mountains, fast rivers and dense forests spans over 2.5 million acres. It is located northeast of Boise and features the South Fork Payette River Canyon, where many outdoor enthusiasts enjoy exploration of water and land features throughout the area each year.

The community of Lowman is developed along a 12-mile long, 1-mile wide corridor of Idaho State Highway 21, at 3,800 feet in elevation. Lowman is known for its vast recreational opportunities including numerous natural hot springs accessible from the community. The steep, rugged terrain above the river in Lowman contributes to the very high risk of wildfire impacts. Lowman has a higher risk than 95% of the US ([wildfirerisk.org](http://wildfirerisk.org)).



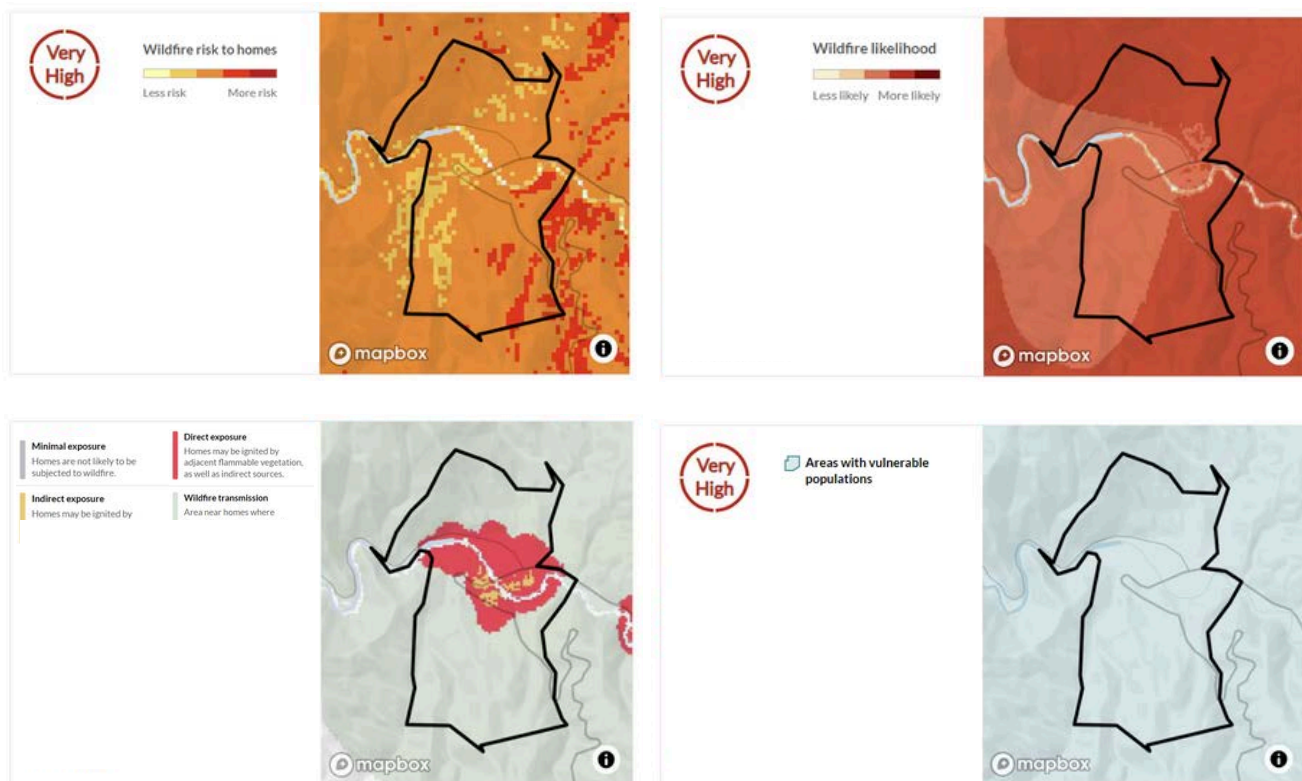
Lowman has a long history with wildfires. The earliest wildfire on record occurred in 1917. As you drive up Idaho State Highway 21, known as the Ponderosa Pine Scenic Highway, it is evident you are in an area where wildfires are prevalent. Fire scars with dead standing trees are visible from both sides of the road indicating that stand-replacing fires once swept through the landscape. In conversations with some of Lowman's approximate 200 primary residents, the wildfires of 1988 (Willis Gulch), 1989 (Lowman Complex), and 2016 (Pioneer) threatened various subdivisions of the community; these wildfires are vivid marks on the timeline of significance in the Lowman community. Some of the homes in

Lowman have been passed down through family members for generations. The residents of Lowman endure the seasonal impacts of living in a remote area. Lowman receives more than more than 150 inches of snowfall annually. Residents are resilient people accustomed to endure the seasons, including wildfire season. Some of the primary residents have assumed the responsibility to assist seasonal residents in their respective subdivisions with fuels removal surrounding structures. These residents have been working tirelessly to remove and haul away fine fuels and vegetative debris to the Lowman Transfer Station and temporary slash site established on Richards Creek Road, near the Lowman Nature Ponds.

**Lowman has a *very high* risk of wildfire—higher than 95% of communities in the US.**

According to [wildfirerisk.org](http://wildfirerisk.org)

[WildfireRisk.org](http://WildfireRisk.org) is an interactive, public-facing website designed to help individuals, communities, and organizations understand and mitigate wildfire risk. Wildfire risk is based on several factors. Understanding which factors affect your community can help you identify strategies to reduce your risk. Below are data for Lowman, ID:





# RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

## Boise County CWPP Revision - Top Priority

A CWPP serves not only as a practical guide outlining available resources and planned projects, but also as a forward-looking framework—a "north star" for future mitigation efforts. A CWPP identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction, recommending treatment methods on both federal and non-federal lands to protect at-risk communities and essential infrastructure, while also addressing structural ignitability.

While the current Boise County CWPP (2023) provides some direction, it lacks the specific, actionable recommendations needed for strategic and tactical implementation. The 2023 CWPP did not account for the Lowman Fire District during the planning phase. Additionally, the 2023 CWPP falls short in addressing private land projects and detailed actions in the Lowman area.

### Recommendation:

- Revise the 2023 Boise County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) to **incorporate mitigation projects and priorities for the Lowman Fire Protection District.**

## From the Toolbox

BOISE COUNTY CWPP	Link to Resource
Recommended additions to Boise County 2023 CWPP worksheet	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U3XmF7cV_I5zCDqCvelv6a3SKza-C2jx/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U3XmF7cV_I5zCDqCvelv6a3SKza-C2jx/edit</a>
Creating a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (USFA)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nY02PWkIHShTYvMuE1XqtNrTRPvINwgY/view?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nY02PWkIHShTYvMuE1XqtNrTRPvINwgY/view?usp=drive_link</a>
Leaders Guide for Developing a CWPP	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BFkC_88hmtHWTU4SLMyjPNHwWCEj12IP/view?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BFkC_88hmtHWTU4SLMyjPNHwWCEj12IP/view?usp=drive_link</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).

## Implementation

Implementation in the Lowman corridor is underway on federal lands, with substantial areas already planned for work and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decisions made. In 2024, the U.S. Forest Service conducted over 1,000 acres of prescribed burns adjacent to the ID-21 corridor. During the CMAT assignment, these proactive actions within the Miller Unit directly and positively influenced a 25-acre wildfire. Forest management activities are evident throughout the corridor.

Resident mitigation efforts are currently limited to individual actions. Overall, the CMAT finds that the community is receptive to increasing forest management activities on both private and public lands.

Based on the CMAT's analysis, the following are implementation priorities:

### **Wildfire Risk Evaluations** **Completing Mitigation Work** **Mapping and Data Management**

#### **Wildfire Risk Evaluations**

Boise County is the lead entity supporting wildfire mitigation on private lands across the County and in Lowman. Current wildfire risk evaluation and tracking systems are functioning; however, with increasing demands on limited staff resources, there is a need for a more robust and accountable process. Parcel and Community level wildfire risk evaluations provide detailed, property/community-specific insights that help homeowners and communities identify vulnerabilities and prioritize mitigation actions. By tailoring strategies these evaluations improve resource allocation, reduce wildfire spread, and increase overall community resilience. They also engage property owners directly, raising awareness and encouraging proactive risk reduction efforts.

#### **Recommendations:**

- Develop a comprehensive **wildfire risk evaluation process** with site visits, documentation, and follow-up at both parcel and community levels. This process will help prioritize work, identify actions for residents and partners, support project planning, and track outcomes.

- Continue wildfire risk home evaluations the CMAT started to raise awareness of actions residents can take to harden their homes and structures and maintain defensible space.
- To maximize the impact of the process and effectively distribute the evaluation workload, **implement a "Train the Trainer" program**. This approach will not only raise awareness and promote collaboration, but also empower residents to actively contribute as a trained workforce. By equipping a core group of trainers, you can reduce the burden on any single individual or team. These trainers can then disseminate knowledge and provide support to other residents, making the process more efficient.
  - Host or attend **structure hardening training sessions** to teach residents and stakeholders about techniques and materials that can reduce the vulnerability of homes and structures to wildfire.



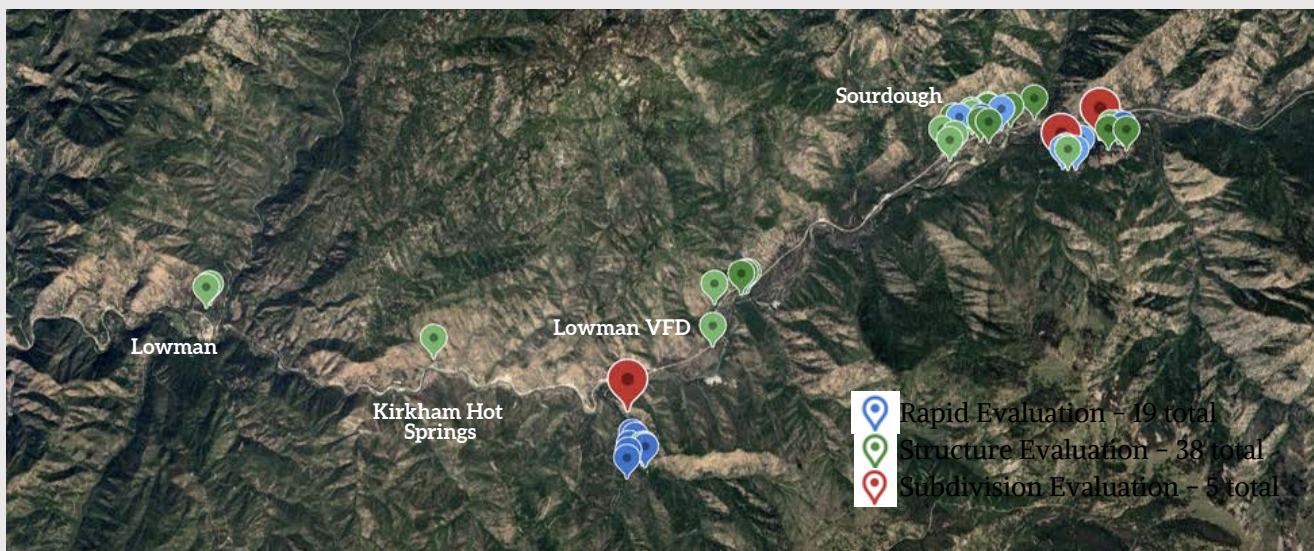
## From the Toolbox

Wildfire Risk Evaluations	Link to Resource
Subdivision-Level Evaluations and Forms	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17ZMH0HGR6ooNH_kmGUOlVtEW2IRL2ra8Q?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/17ZMH0HGR6ooNH_kmGUOlVtEW2IRL2ra8Q?usp=drive_link</a>
Parcel-Level Evaluation Forms (includes rapid)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VcxJ7LsVRnyg44bMzs03W8bxKRVZtoq!">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1VcxJ7LsVRnyg44bMzs03W8bxKRVZtoq!</a>
National Fire Protection Association's Assessing Structure Ignition Potential (ASIP) Training	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RldBVEjzI6XyWdbtZNIH-bfFZpyXBNPR/view?usp=share_link">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RldBVEjzI6XyWdbtZNIH-bfFZpyXBNPR/view?usp=share_link</a>
Wildland Fire Assessment Program (WFAP): Training on how to properly conduct assessments for homes located in the wildland-urban interface (WUI)	<a href="https://www.nvfc.org/programs/wildland-fire-assessment-program/">https://www.nvfc.org/programs/wildland-fire-assessment-program/</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



During the CMAT assignment, **62 wildfire risk evaluations were conducted**. A Wildfire Risk Evaluation is a site visit conducted to assess risk at the parcel and community levels. The parcel-level evaluation identifies wildfire hazards to the structure and its surrounding area and mitigation actions that can be taken to improve home hardening and vegetation-defensible space. The community evaluation provides a baseline understanding of the community's risk. Both types of site visits are critical processes that provide property owners with guidance and actions to increase the survivability of their homes and communities.



### Common mitigation actions recommended to residents:



Loose boards offer an opening to wind-blown embers. Remove debris that is collecting in gaps and crevices around the exterior of the home.



Seal off cracks and gaps on the exterior of the home to keep embers from landing on or in between surfaces and igniting.



Keep firewood at least 30 feet away from the home and keep the zone within 0 to 5 feet of the foundation free of anything that could ignite.

### Responses from the wildfire risk evaluations completed in Lowman:

*"Thank you for taking the time doing this evaluation and your advice."*  
Lowman Resident

*"Now I know what to do for my home."*  
Lowman Resident

*"Thank you so very much! I appreciate your encouragement and feedback"*  
Lowman business owner

## **Completing Mitigation Work**

Given the prevalence of open Ponderosa Pine stands, a focus for private properties is on removing understory and ladder fuels, along with ongoing pine needle removal around structures. While there is a limited contractor base in Boise County, the growth in projects is likely to attract new contractors. Resources like the green waste drop-off site at the waste transfer station add value by facilitating ease of slash disposal from resident mitigation efforts. The U.S. Forest Service is actively implementing prescribed fire projects within the area. Additionally, Boise County owns a skid steer with a masticator head that could be a valuable asset for increasing the number of treated acres. Structures within the area range from large year-round homes to camp trailers, mobile homes and tents, with varying levels of construction quality and fire resistance.

### **Recommendations:**

- Develop a **volunteer program for implementation support** aimed at providing additional assistance to those who need extra help with implementation efforts. Engage various community resources, such as faith-based organizations, Eagle Scouts, and Team Rubicon, among others, to build a strong support network.
  - Create a volunteer resource list that includes contact information and skills, and use it to maintain ongoing communication with individuals and communities.
  - **In 2025, organize one or two volunteer wildfire mitigation projects to assist high-risk locations.** Encourage participation by offering food and social time at the end of the day, fostering a sense of connection and shared responsibility. This approach not only supports vulnerable homeowners but also strengthens community ties through collective action.
- Organize **green waste collection events** across the Lowman area with volunteer or contractor support to assist residents who can't remove debris, such as pine needle piles from mitigation efforts. The high volume of pine needles and limited resident resources make a solution necessary.
  - Implement a "Dumpster Days" program, where communities can access cost-shared or free dumpsters/trailers to efficiently remove wildfire fuels.

- Create a comprehensive budget, funding, and staffing plan to **maximize the use of the county-owned masticator**. With significant threats posed by ladder fuels, understory regeneration, and the need for ongoing maintenance, the currently underutilized masticator offers a highly cost-effective and efficient solution.
- Developing a **community-based chipper program** accessible to all (several residents mentioned that they are interested in purchasing one for their community). CMAT fully supports individual efforts and encourages agencies with more resources to provide broader access. A mobile chipper service could offer an affordable, efficient way for residents to remove slash and reduce wildfire fuels. Curbside chipper programs vary, including options such as county or fire department-operated services or contractor-based initiatives.
- Investigate alternative methods for **disposing of slash and pine needles**. One potential solution discussed is the use of air curtain burners, which can efficiently incinerate large volumes of debris while minimizing air pollution; however, pine needles do prove challenging to burn (Lessons Learned on Air Curtain Burners).
  - Make sure to evaluate the effectiveness, environmental impact, and cost of air curtain burners.



## From the Toolbox

Completing Wildfire Mitigation	Link to Resource
NWCG Standards for Mitigation in the Wildland Urban Interface	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FutWg6DYchRiTDIZpL9xd0a8t1U47xuK/view?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1FutWg6DYchRiTDIZpL9xd0a8t1U47xuK/view?usp=drive_link</a>
NFPA's Assessing Structure Ignition Potential (ASIP) Training	<a href="https://www.frames.gov/event/609417">https://www.frames.gov/event/609417</a>
Starting a Community Based Chipper Program	<a href="https://fireadaptednetwork.org/starting-a-chipping-program-in-your-community/">https://fireadaptednetwork.org/starting-a-chipping-program-in-your-community/</a>
Fuels Mitigation Program Overview	<a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y2m5HNWhcpF6sHoiZ2V14NHCKa2o-hkh/edit">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y2m5HNWhcpF6sHoiZ2V14NHCKa2o-hkh/edit</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



**Before****After**

**EXAMPLE OF A WILDFIRE MITIGATION THINNING PROJECT COMPLETED ON PRIVATE PROPERTY NEAR RESIDENCE. JULY 2024 (J.JONES)**

## **Mapping and Data Management**

Maps, much like a campfire, serve as a focal point that brings people together, fostering collaboration and sharing of stories. In today's world, the demand for real-time data—both numerical and spatial—is higher than ever, setting a new standard for effective decision-making. To support efficient and impactful wildfire mitigation programs, it is essential to have robust systems for managing and analyzing this data.

By enhancing how data is collected, managed, and utilized, we can significantly improve the support for mitigation efforts. This involves implementing methodologies to capture accurate, real-time information, integrating it into user-friendly platforms, and ensuring it is accessible to all stakeholders involved. Improved data management not only helps in crafting more effective mitigation strategies but also in monitoring progress, adapting to changing conditions, and making informed decisions that ultimately enhance community resilience and safety.

### **Recommendations:**

- Short Term: Implement a **data management system** to consolidate evaluation information and monitor project progress. Use the CMAT-created tools and process as a starting place: Excel spreadsheet and Google Earth. Long Term: Utilize a data management system to record all completed projects in Boise County: switch to Survey123 and ArcGIS Online hosted by the County office.

- Establish a **structured mapping process** for every phase of the mitigation cycle, from project planning through to completion. Mapping helps visualize areas where mitigation efforts have been completed. This allows stakeholders to see the tangible results of their work and measure how much has been accomplished over time.
- **Collaborate with partners**, such as Idaho Power, to share risk maps and mitigation project data.
- **Track mitigation work** that landowners are completing on private land. These in kind hours can be used to leverage grant funds.



## From the Toolbox

Mapping and Data Management	Link to Resource
GIS for Wildland Fire Risk Mitigation (Esri)	<a href="https://www.esri.com/en-us/industries/wildland-fire/strategies/mitigation?srltid=AfmBOooJb_9yizFvES1WOc2Iq1Wut6tESSzGgKQkxBZkYPk_y2gGed62">https://www.esri.com/en-us/industries/wildland-fire/strategies/mitigation?srltid=AfmBOooJb_9yizFvES1WOc2Iq1Wut6tESSzGgKQkxBZkYPk_y2gGed62</a>
Landowner In-Kind Tracking Form Template	<a href="https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Landowner-Tracking-Form.docx">https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Landowner-Tracking-Form.docx</a>
Idaho Power Wildfire Risk Zones and 2024 Mitigation Action Plan	<a href="https://www.idahopower.com/outages-safety/wildfire-safety/protecting-grid/">https://www.idahopower.com/outages-safety/wildfire-safety/protecting-grid/</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



## Building Capacity

Capacity, like the pumps distributing water to sprinklers placed around the community to combat the Wapiti fire, is the driving force that delivers resources where and when they are needed. The CMAT defines capacity as the essential “infrastructure” that shapes organizations into sustainable, efficient, and effective change agents. Capacity-building helps organizations and their leaders develop the skills and competencies needed to deliver services—in this case, wildfire mitigation.

Lowman is rich in capacity: key individuals possess valuable skills in mitigation planning and implementation, and there are several formal community associations, including water, fire, and road boards. Forest Service employees who live in the community, along with the local fire department, embody a strong tradition of service and commitment. However, despite these strengths, Lowman still lacks some of the essential resources, tools, and personnel needed to fully execute the important work of mitigation at the needed scale.

Based on the CMAT’s analysis, the following are implementation priorities:

**Funding Resources**  
**Neighborhood Ambassadors**  
**Engaging Everyone**

### **Funding Resources**

There is a clear need to strengthen wildfire mitigation efforts and improve community engagement in Lowman around wildfire preparedness. Wildfires pose a serious threat to the region, making proactive measures essential to protect both lives and property. Currently, the county’s limited resources hinder the ability to fully implement comprehensive strategies in Lowman and across Boise County.

One critical factor in building this capacity is funding. Funding is an essential component in Lowman’s journey toward resilience, playing a crucial role in enabling effective strategies and solutions. While it may not always be the ideal or only solution, securing adequate resources is key to supporting and advancing efforts for





a more resilient community. Increased funding will enable the expansion of mitigation activities, supports long-term planning, and provides the resources required to protect the community.

### Recommendations:

- **Seek Additional Funding**

- **Review Existing Resources:** Use the Lowman Funding Overview spreadsheet to assess current funding and identify gaps. Explore new grants and federal funding sources to enhance wildfire mitigation and preparedness efforts.
- **Apply for Key Grants:** Collaborate with the U.S. Forest Service Community Navigators Initiative & CMAT to apply for the Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG). CWDG funding can be used to increase private property mitigation and implement the 2023 Boise County Community Wildfire Protection Plan.
- **Evaluate Costs and Treatments:** Analyze current cost per acre, treatment types, and contracting mechanisms to broaden the range of acceptable, cost-efficient treatments. For example:
  - Expand the local contractor base by offering a range of projects, from handwork to mechanized treatments,
  - Provide guidance to new contractors on the requirements to become qualified in the County.
  - Notify contractors from a wider region when requests for bids are released.
  - Bundle projects to attract out-of-area contractors and support larger mechanized treatments.



LOOKING TOWARDS THE LOWMAN INN FROM HWY 21

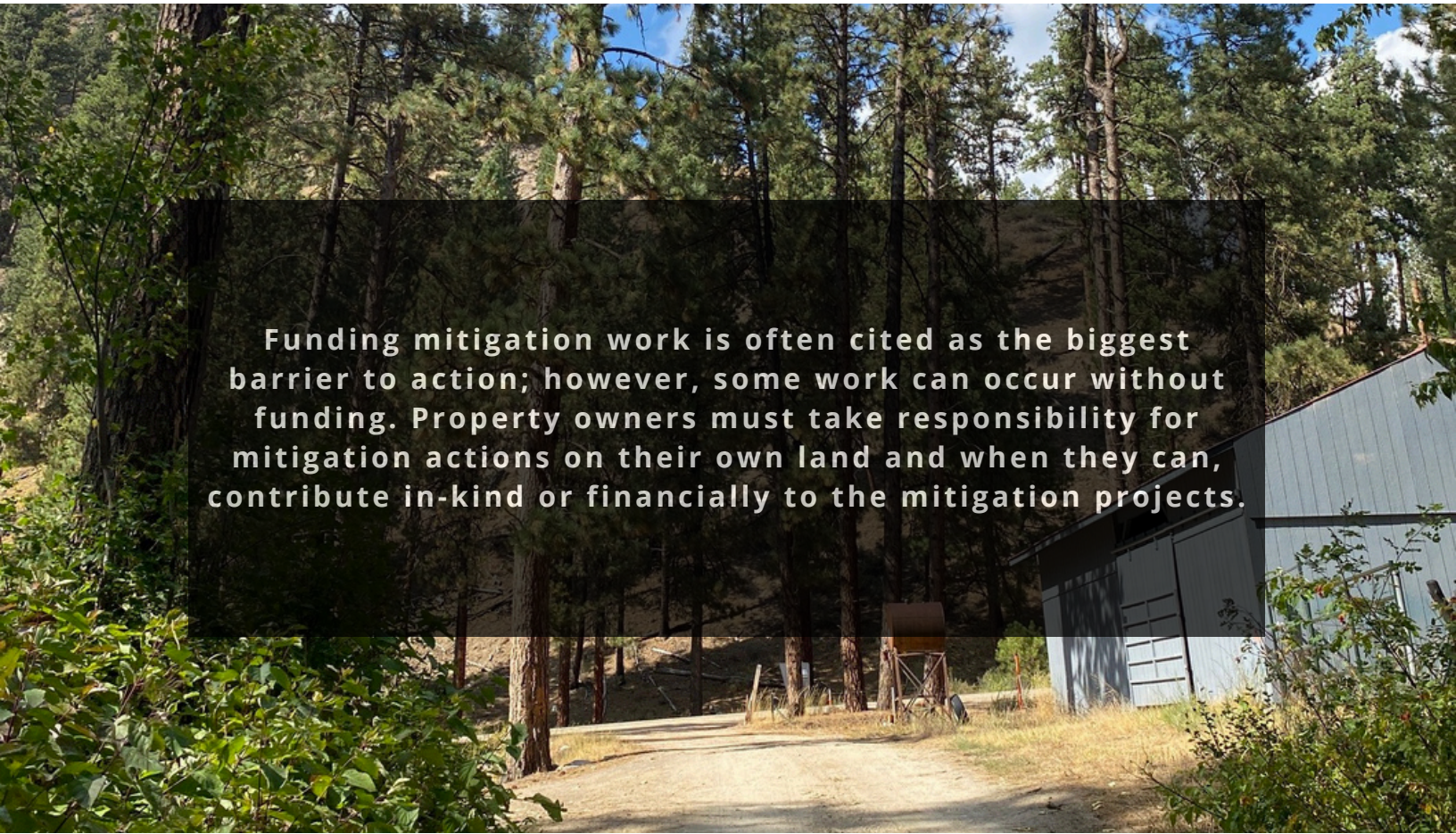




## From the Toolbox

Funding Resources	Link to Resource
Lowman Funding Overview	<a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1P7Z-Qol_DrtTbN-XsOnN4kwvllNblvES/edit?usp=drive_link&amp;ouid=115181383120901546281&amp;rt=pof=true&amp;sd=true">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1P7Z-Qol_DrtTbN-XsOnN4kwvllNblvES/edit?usp=drive_link&amp;ouid=115181383120901546281&amp;rt=pof=true&amp;sd=true</a>
Community Navigator Initiative: Technical assistance for accessing federal funds	<a href="https://co-co.org/community-navigator-initiative/">https://co-co.org/community-navigator-initiative/</a>
Community Wildfire Defense Grant (CWDG)	<a href="https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/grants/cwdg">https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/fire/grants/cwdg</a>
Federal Grant Readiness Toolkit	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HiAp7jNnEP0qyyaAax4V-fRhDaB8tMY/view?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HiAp7jNnEP0qyyaAax4V-fRhDaB8tMY/view?usp=drive_link</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



**Funding mitigation work is often cited as the biggest barrier to action; however, some work can occur without funding. Property owners must take responsibility for mitigation actions on their own land and when they can, contribute in-kind or financially to the mitigation projects.**



## **Neighborhood Ambassadors**

Boise County has taken the lead in private property mitigation within the county and has recently begun expansion of efforts into the Lowman area. However, to accelerate the pace and scale of resident mitigation efforts, more personnel will be needed to engage, educate, and sign residents up for work.



### **Recommendations:**

- Develop a **citizen ambassador training program** and provide related resources to equip residents with the knowledge, tools, and contacts needed to lead mitigation efforts within their communities.
  - Partner with Idaho Firewise to develop the Lowman Neighborhood Ambassador Program.
- Host an **annual** (at a minimum) **training event for residents** to share resources and lessons learned, train in best practices, and to network and collaborate.
- **Consider other capacity needs**, such as tracking accomplishments, grant writing, grant management, developing content, and managing web resources.
- Utilize the CMAT toolbox and the Lowman Fire Department's Wildfire Mitigation webpage to establish a comprehensive **wildfire mitigation resource library** and share it within the community.








## From the Toolbox

Neighborhood Ambassadors	Link to Resource
Idaho Firewise: Community Ambassador Partnership	<a href="https://idahofirewise.org/community-ambassador-program/">https://idahofirewise.org/community-ambassador-program/</a>
Fire Adapted Communities Neighborhood Ambassador Approach: Increasing Preparedness through Volunteers	<a href="https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b28059d266c074ffe39b9b9/t/5bd7648315fcc0d2d293febcb/1540842637107/AmbassadorGuide_v2018-09-24.pdf">https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b28059d266c074ffe39b9b9/t/5bd7648315fcc0d2d293febcb/1540842637107/AmbassadorGuide_v2018-09-24.pdf</a>
Engaging Volunteers, Empowering the Community: The FAC Neighborhood Ambassador Approach	<a href="https://fireadaptednetwork.org/fac-neighborhood-ambassador-approach/">https://fireadaptednetwork.org/fac-neighborhood-ambassador-approach/</a>
Team Rubicon Volunteer program	<a href="https://teamrubiconusa.org/news-and-stories/for-wildfire-mitigation-send-in-the-volunteers/">https://teamrubiconusa.org/news-and-stories/for-wildfire-mitigation-send-in-the-volunteers/</a>
Volunteer Project Planning and implementation guide.	<a href="https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/VOL-SOP-Final_Final.pdf">https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/VOL-SOP-Final_Final.pdf</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



## Are you passionate about protecting your neighborhood from wildfire?

Neighborhood Ambassador programs, whether formal or informal, are emerging across the country. They're a fantastic way to inspire and engage residents by acting as **neighborhood connectors** and points of contact for local mitigation and firefighting agencies.

Ambassadors play a critical role helping connect residents to valuable wildfire mitigation resources and providing guidance on how they can reduce wildfire risk in their own communities.

[Learn more about becoming a Neighborhood Ambassador!](#)



## **Engaging Everyone**

A large portion of Lowman's population is seasonal or absentee, and many parcels remain undeveloped. This makes it challenging to engage all property owners in completing necessary mitigation work. Additionally, Lowman is classified as a vulnerable community. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 32.5% of residents in Lowman are over 65, 17% have a disability, and 18.6% of structures are mobile homes.

**“Social and economic factors can make it harder for some residents to prepare for, respond to, and recover from wildfires. Vulnerable populations may face limited access to resources, cultural or institutional barriers, restricted mobility, or medical conditions worsened by stress or smoke.”**

Wildfirerisk.org

### **Recommendations:**

- **Organize volunteer events** to increase capacity to assist residents-in-need with mitigation activities. Some examples include:
  - Host chainsaw qualification courses with wildland firefighters in training.
  - Conduct pine needle raking and simple home improvement tasks, such as maintaining decks and replacing rotten boards, to help create more fire-resistant structures.
- **Understand Barriers:** Take time to identify and address the limitations and barriers residents face regarding mitigation activities. Simply raising awareness is not enough.
  - Organize small focus groups or town hall meetings where residents can discuss challenges openly. This can uncover specific local issues (e.g., lack of access to information, financial constraints, physical limitations).
- Share the **Lowman Landowner letter** through annual tax bill mailings, utility bill mailings, on websites and forums to reach seasonal and absentee landowners.



## From the Toolbox

Engaging Everyone	Link to Resource
Lowman Landowner letter (trifold mailer)	<a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1irlroBgH2U2s8VZIBEmJ5wARKK4ABmCo/view?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1irlroBgH2U2s8VZIBEmJ5wARKK4ABmCo/view?usp=drive_link</a>
Equitable Risk Reduction	<a href="https://wildfirerisk.org/reduce-risk/equitable-risk-reduction/">https://wildfirerisk.org/reduce-risk/equitable-risk-reduction/</a>
Community Engagement Toolkit for Before, During, and After a Fire	<a href="https://www.fireadaptedwashington.org/toolkit/">https://www.fireadaptedwashington.org/toolkit/</a>
The Unequal Impacts of Wildfire (Headwater Economics)	<a href="https://headwaterseconomics.org/natural-hazards/unequal-impacts-of-wildfire/">https://headwaterseconomics.org/natural-hazards/unequal-impacts-of-wildfire/</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



THE LOWMAN LANDOWNER TRIFOLD MAILER





## Community Partnership

The people of Lowman have a long history of coming together in the face of wildfires, and the 2024 Wapiti Fire is no exception. Residents, responders, agencies, and businesses united, highlighting the community's collaborative spirit and determination to act. Just over the hill to the west, the [Southwest Idaho All-Lands Partnership](#), designated as a National Wildfire Crisis Strategy Landscape, has convened to tackle the wildfire crisis. In Stanley, on the east side of the Wapiti Fire, the [Sawtooth Valley Wildland Fire Collaborative](#)—formed in 2012 after the Halstead Fire—continues to engage residents to reduce wildfire risks in the Sawtooth Valley to protect Blaine and Custer Counties. While Lowman has yet to formalize such a partnership, it now has an incredible opportunity to step up, face the fire, and forge its own path.

Based on the CMAT's analysis, the following are community partnership priorities:

### **Lowman Community Wildfire Partnership** **Community Information and Resources**

#### **Lowman Community Wildfire Partnership**

Despite some mitigation projects and numerous burn scars across both private and public lands, wildfires will continue to pose a significant threat to homes, businesses, and properties in the Lowman area. While some wildfire mitigation work has been undertaken, inconsistent coordination among various efforts has hindered their overall effectiveness. Effective coordination is essential to ensure that mitigation efforts are comprehensive, strategically aligned, and capable of addressing the persistent threat of wildfires.



**Recommendations:**

- Develop a **group of local partners** to coordinate mitigation work, adding to efficiencies of that work and assisting residents and landowners in the onerous task of living and adapting with wildfire.
  - Develop a **partnership member's list**: Create a partner contact list and identify what each entity or individual can help with, area of expertise, and skills.
  - **Identify the goals and objectives of the partnership**:
    - Remember that goals are broad, general and often abstract. A goal is an overarching principle that guides decision-making. Objectives are narrow, precise, and concrete. Objectives are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to meet the goal within a set timeframe.
    - Identify objectives and who will get them done - Set deadlines and hold people accountable.
  - **Develop your mission and vision**: What do you want your community's future to be? A common mission and vision will help provide a target for future goals and initiatives of the partnership.
  - **Host partnership meetings frequently**: Host meetings at regular times and at a location that will allow the greatest participation possible. The group should discuss plans and progress as well as provide a learning opportunity for future training and education opportunities. (i.e. cost-share program, fire ecology, changes in agency authorities).
  - **Review progress often and address challenges as a team**: Success and failures must be addressed in a timely fashion. Ask for help when needed and share resources to overcome barriers.
  - **Maintain the partnership**: Set aside time at each meeting to review participation, goals and objectives, and make changes as needed.
  - **Develop and speak with a collective voice** to foster collaboration and synchronize efforts.



**RESIDENTS HAULING OFF  
SLASH AND DEBRIS**



**NEIGHBORS HELPING  
NEIGHBORS REDUCE RISK**



## From the Toolbox

Lowman Community Wildfire Partnership	Link to Resource
Developing a Partnership: The CMAT Huerfano County Report provides resources on how to get a partnership started	<a href="https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/mitigating_mountains_landscape_final91718.pdf">https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/mitigating_mountains_landscape_final91718.pdf</a>
Developing Community Connections with Asset Mapping	<a href="https://fireadaptednetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/ABCD-0-Overview-1.pdf">https://fireadaptednetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/ABCD-0-Overview-1.pdf</a>
Community Toolbox - Step by step guides to partnership creation and maintenance.	<a href="https://ctb.ku.edu/en/creating-and-maintaining-coalitions-and-partnerships">https://ctb.ku.edu/en/creating-and-maintaining-coalitions-and-partnerships</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).

## The Mitigation Continuum

Mitigation is not a sign post, rather it is a route. It is a never-ending, iterative, and adaptive process. It involves assessing risk, prioritizing actions, reducing that risk through home hardening, defensible space, and fuel treatments, while continually tracking progress, celebrating successes, and repeating—driving a continuous cycle of resilience and improvement.



## **Community Information and Resources**

Having reliable and up-to-date online platforms is essential, ensuring that residents have a clear, accessible source of information. While websites alone will not always drive immediate action, they play a foundational role in building awareness, offering guidance, and supporting community engagement in wildfire mitigation efforts.

Online resources are a key channel for residents to access information and updates, but there is significant potential to improve the consistency and comprehensiveness of this information. For example, the Boise County Fire Management website could be an invaluable tool for residents, providing crucial details about wildfire risks, safety protocols, and emergency updates. However, the website's lack of regular updates can undermine public safety and hinder effective communication.

Similarly, the Lowman VFD has recently launched a wildfire mitigation page on their website, which will serve as a local resource and central hub for residents in the area. This page is a critical step in providing timely, accurate information and connecting residents with necessary contacts and resources.



### **Recommendations:**

- Utilize the **Lowman VFD Wildfire Mitigation webpage** as a central hub:
  - **Designate clear points of contact:** Ensure the webpage clearly lists who residents can reach out to for assistance with wildfire mitigation.
  - **Keep the site updated:** Regularly refresh the page with relevant, timely information on resources, opportunities, events, and funding.
  - **Promote the webpage:** Encourage traffic by including links and QR codes in distributed materials, and make announcements through local media and platforms.

- **Share partnership information:** Use the site to post partnership meeting minutes, agendas, and updates.
- **Highlight new opportunities:** Regularly update the site with new mitigation initiatives, events, and available funding.
- Designate an individual to **keep the Boise County Fire Management website updated**. If the information is not correct and or timely, it is not helpful.
- **Regularly share information:** Collaborate with local information resources and public information officers to provide wildfire mitigation tools and resources regularly. Aim to reach residents monthly through:
  - [Lowman VFD Wildfire Mitigation webpage](#)
  - [Lowman Connector](#)
  - Local newspapers (e.g., [The Idaho World](#)) and gathering spots (e.g., Sourdough Lodge)
  - Slash drop-off sites (hang fliers or have employees share information)



## From the Toolbox

Community Information and Resources	Link to Resource
Overcoming Common Barriers to Action	<a href="https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BarriersFinal9_5_17.pdf">https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/BarriersFinal9_5_17.pdf</a>
Article on "Effectively Using Social Media" (FAC Net blog)	<a href="https://www.fireadaptedwashington.org/toolkit/effectively-using-social-media/">https://www.fireadaptedwashington.org/toolkit/effectively-using-social-media/</a>
Smoke Ready Community Resources	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lu20XGXbZMolXlm2bKEobjeZ_NppyY?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lu20XGXbZMolXlm2bKEobjeZ_NppyY?usp=drive_link</a>
Evacuation Resources	<a href="https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SNa416suwR_ChL3o_xfpSnLK8uSgl049?usp=drive_link">https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SNa416suwR_ChL3o_xfpSnLK8uSgl049?usp=drive_link</a>
"What motivates homeowners to mitigate wildfire risk?" Sarah M. McCaffrey publication	<a href="https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/nrs_2011_mccaffrey_001.pdf">https://co-co.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/nrs_2011_mccaffrey_001.pdf</a>

More resources in the [Lowman Mitigation Toolbox](#).



# THANK YOU!

Many thanks to the following individuals for their participation and input during Lowman CMAT assignment:

**Paul Rekow, Lowman Volunteer Fire Department Chief**  
**Jordan Jones, Boise County Wildfire Mitigation Forester**  
**Lowman landowners and businesses**

Ivy Dickinson, Colin Good, Great Basin Team 7 CIMT, Ray Hershburger, Tyre Holfeltz, Randy Lamb, Ray Lawley, Melisa Lindors, Brant Peterson, Rocky Mountain Team 1 CIMT, Scott Turner

## LOWMAN MITIGATION TOOLBOX

### List of resources within the toolbox:

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NgEx3caDm0Qo7NMf6syaEiG7tZ5ks1aWorBsBUNR\\_wY/edit?usp=drive\\_link](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1NgEx3caDm0Qo7NMf6syaEiG7tZ5ks1aWorBsBUNR_wY/edit?usp=drive_link)



### Toolbox Folder Link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/196DwdZ-olavcHt5ndPaz3s1-Yax9CB1?usp=sharing>



## THE TEAM

The U.S. Forest Service Community Mitigation Assistance Team (CMAT) is composed of public and private wildland-urban interface (WUI) mitigation professionals from across the country. The Team provides technical and strategic mitigation support to build and strengthen sustainable community wildfire mitigation programs. The CMAT focuses on a holistic wildfire management approach where the community members and their actions are the most important asset in the wildfire management cycle.



Jonathan Bruno, Liz Davy, Steve Markason, Jen Gustafson (Lead), Michael Bloodsworth, Hannah Thompson-Welch



U. S. D. A. National Forest Service CMAT  
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**"Continued reliance on fire exclusion, suppression, and avoidance of beneficial burning while underinvesting in communities will perpetuate the sequence of events leading to wildfire disasters."**

Headwaters Economics, "Redefining the Urban Wildfire Problem in the West," Spring 2024

Source link: [https://headwaterseconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024HE-Redefining\\_Urban\\_Western\\_Fires\\_FinalMay2024.pdf](https://headwaterseconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024HE-Redefining_Urban_Western_Fires_FinalMay2024.pdf)

## APPENDIX A: ACTION TABLE

The Lowman Community Wildfire Mitigation Action Table below can help the partnership put words into action by summarizing the main recommendations, making it easy for partners to understand the next steps without wading through the entire report again. The action table can be used to:

- Identify who is responsible for each task
- Organize tasks by priority, timeline, or urgency
- Serve as a reference guide for executing mitigation projects

Below is a preview of the table. Access and download the entire table here:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13xKV5UNZLrtc235CSLvAZ2tY1QamUPRT71Zvek3hpuU/edit?gid=0#gid=0>

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	<b>Lowman Community Wildfire Mitigation Action Table</b>					
2	Action items pulled from 2024 CMA7 Lowman Community Wildfire Mitigation Action Plan					
3	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Mitigation Action</b>	<b>Lead(s)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>
4	<b>Wildfire Risk Evaluations</b>					
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a comprehensive wildfire risk evaluation process with site visits, documentation, and follow-up at both parcel and community levels.		Short Term		
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	Host or attend structure hardening training sessions		Short Term		
7	<input type="checkbox"/>					
8	<input type="checkbox"/>					
9	<b>Completing Mitigation Work</b>					
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a volunteer program for implementation support aimed at providing additional assistance to those who need extra help with implementation efforts.		Short Term		
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organize one or two volunteer-led wildfire mitigation projects each year starting in 2025 to assist high-risk residents.		Ongoing		
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organize green waste collection events across the Lowman area with volunteer or contractor support to assist residents who can't remove debris, such as pine needle piles from mitigation efforts.		Ongoing		
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a comprehensive budget, funding, and staffing plan to maximize the use of the county-owned masticator.		Short Term		
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop a community-based chipper program accessible to all landowners		Long Term		
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	Investigate alternative methods for disposing of slash and pine needles.		Long Term		
16	<input type="checkbox"/>					
17	<input type="checkbox"/>					
18	<b>Mapping and Data Management</b>					
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement a data management system to consolidate evaluation information and monitor project progress.		Short Term		