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# Appendix A

## Glossary of Terms

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**BehavePlus:** Fire behavior prediction and fuel modeling computer program designed to model fire behavior characteristics based on fuel, weather, and topographic inputs. Model outputs include flame length values, fire spotting potential, and rate of fire spread.

**Biomass:** Any plant material that can be used as an alternative energy source. Some plant materials used for biomass are wood wastes from forestry practices or brush from vegetation management projects.

**Broadcast Burn:** A prescribed burn method where fire is ignited to a defined project area. Vegetation in this method of burning is not piled but broadcast throughout the project area. Vegetation burned can either be cut or standing.

**Brush:** A collective term that refers to stands of vegetation dominated by shrubby, woody plants or low-growing trees; usually of a vegetation type undesirable for livestock or timber management.

**Brush Fire:** A fire burning in vegetation that is predominantly shrubs, brush, and scrub growth.

**Burning Conditions:** The state of the combined factors of the environment that affect fire behavior in a specified fuel type.

**Canopy:** The forest cover of branches and foliage formed by tree crowns. The stratum containing the crowns of the tallest vegetation present (living or dead), usually above 20 feet.

**Chipping:** Using a mechanical chipper to chip cut vegetation into small chips.

**Closure:** Legal restriction, but not necessarily elimination, of specified activities such as smoking, camping, or entry that might cause fires in a given area.

**Combustible:** Any material that, in the form in which it is used and under the conditions anticipated, will ignite and burn.

**Conflagration:** A raging, destructive fire. Often used to describe a fire burning under extreme fire weather. The term is also used when a wildland fire burns into a WUI, destroying structures.

**Crown Fire:** A fire that advances from top-to-top of trees or shrubs more or less independent of a surface fire.

**Cured:** The stage when herbaceous fuel moisture falls to 30% or less.

**Defensible Space:** An area either natural or man-made where material capable of allowing a fire to spread unchecked has been treated, cleared, or modified to slow the rate and intensity of advancing wildfire. This will create an area for housing increased emergency fire equipment, for evacuating or sheltering civilians in place, and a point for fire suppression to occur.

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**Duff:** The layer of decomposing organic materials lying below the litter layer of freshly fallen twigs, needles and leaves and immediately above the mineral soil.

**Exotic Pest Plant:** A non-indigenous plant species, or one introduced to this state that either purposefully or accidentally escapes into the wild where it reproduces on its own either sexually or asexually.

**Exposure:** (1) Property that may be endangered by a fire burning in another structure or by a wildfire; (2) direction in which a slope faces, usually with respect to cardinal directions; (3) the general surroundings of a site with special reference to its openness to winds.

**Extreme Fire Behavior:** A level of fire behavior characteristics that ordinarily precludes methods of direct control. One or more of the following is usually involved: high rates of spread, prolific crowning and/or spotting, presence of fire whirls, a strong convection column. Predictability is difficult because such fires often exercise some degree of influence on their environments and behave erratically, sometimes dangerously.

**Fine Fuels:** Fast-drying dead fuels that are less than 0.25-inch in diameter and are generally characterized by a comparatively high surface area to volume ratio. These fuels (grass, leaves, needles, etc.) ignite readily and are consumed rapidly by fire when dry.

**Fire Behavior:** The manner in which a fire reacts to the influences of fuel, weather, and topography.

**Fire Department:** Any regularly organized fire department, fire protection district or fire company regularly charged with the responsibility of providing fire protection to the jurisdiction.

**Fire Front:** That part of a fire within which continuous flaming combustion is taking place. Unless otherwise specified, it is assumed to be the leading edge of the fire perimeter.

**Fire Hazard:** A fuel complex, defined by volume, type condition, arrangement, and location that determines the degree of ease of ignition and of resistance to control.

**Fire Hydrant:** A valved connection on a piped water supply system having one or more outlets that is used to supply hose and fire department pumpers with water.

**Fire Ladders:** Areas where vegetation allows fire to quickly transmit from grass to brush and then to the canopy of trees, producing a high intensity fire with less potential for fire control.

**Fire Prevention:** Activities, including education, engineering, enforcement, and administration that are directed at reducing the number of wildfires, the costs of suppression, and fire-caused damage to resources and property.

**Fire Protection:** The actions taken to limit the adverse environmental, social, political, and economic effects of fire. Protection is relative, not absolute.

**Fire Regime:** Periodicity and pattern of naturally occurring fires in a particular area or vegetative type, described in terms of frequency, biological severity, and area of extent.

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**Fire Retardant:** Any substance, except plain water, that by chemical or physical action reduces flammability of fuels or slows their rate of combustion.

**Fire Season:** (1) Period(s) of the year during which wildland fires are likely to occur, spread, and affect resource values sufficient to warrant organized fire management activities; (2) a legally enacted time during which burning activities are regulated by state or local authority.

**Fire Storm:** Violent convection caused by a large continuous area of intense fire. Often characterized by destructively violent surface indrafts, near and beyond the perimeter, and sometimes by tornado-like whirls.

**Fire Triangle:** Instructional aid in which the sides of a triangle are used to represent the three factors (oxygen, heat, fuel) necessary for combustion and flame production; removal of any of the three factors causes flame production to cease.

**Fire Weather:** Weather conditions which influence fire starts, fire behavior, or fire suppression.

**Fire Whirl:** Spinning vortex column of ascending hot air and gases rising from a fire and carrying aloft smoke, debris, and flame. Fire whirls range in size from less than 1 foot to over 500 feet in diameter. Large fire whirls have the intensity of a small tornado.

**Firebrand:** Any source of heat, natural or human made, capable of igniting wildland fuels. Flaming or glowing fuel particles that can be carried naturally by wind, convection currents, or gravity into unburned fuels. Examples include leaves, pine cones, glowing charcoal, and sparks.

**Firebreak:** A natural or constructed barrier used to stop or check fires that may occur or to provide a control line from which to work.

**Firefighter:** A person who is trained and proficient in the components of structural or wildland fire.

**Fireline:** That portion of the fire upon which resources are deployed and actively engaged in suppression action. In a general sense, the working area around a fire.

**Flame:** A mass of gas undergoing rapid combustion, generally accompanied by evolution of sensible heat and incandescence.

**Flammability:** The relative ease with which fuels ignite and burn regardless of the quantity of the fuels.

**Fuel Break:** An area, strategically located for fighting anticipated fires, where the previously-occurring vegetation has been permanently modified or replaced so that fires burning into it can be more easily controlled. Fuel breaks divide fire-prone areas into smaller areas for easier fire control and to provide access for firefighting.

**Fuel Loading:** The volume of fuel in a given area generally expressed in tons per acre.

**Fuel Model:** Simulated fuel complex for which all fuel descriptors required for the solution of a mathematical rate of spread model have been specified.

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**Fuel Modification:** Any manipulation or removal of fuels to reduce the likelihood of ignition or the resistance to fire control.

**Fuel Modification Area:** A strip of land, typically 100 feet wide or more, between an improved property and wildlands, where combustible vegetation has been removed, thinned, or modified and may be partially or totally replaced with approved drought-tolerant, fire-resistant, and/or irrigated plants to provide an acceptable level of risk from vegetation fires. Fuel modification reduces radiant and convective heat, thereby reducing the amount of heat exposure on the roadway or structure and providing fire suppression forces a safer area in which to take action.

**Fuels:** All combustible material within the WUI or intermix, including vegetation and structures.

**Hazard:** The degree of flammability of the fuels once a fire starts. This includes the fuel (type, arrangement, volume, and condition), topography, and weather.

**High Value Resource:** High Value Resources are natural or man-made resources, including plant and animal species, cultural resources, and residences that form the basis for fire management planning on the Property.

**Ignition Time:** Time between application of an ignition source and self-sustained combustion of fuel.

**Invasive Plant Species:** A plant species that is not native to the region and has demonstrated the ability to aggressively outcompete native plant species that would normally colonize a given area.

**Ladder Fuels:** Fuels that provide vertical continuity allowing fire to carry from surface fuels into the crowns of trees or shrubs with relative ease.

**Limbing:** To remove the lower branches from trees, brush or shrubs in an area to reduce fire ladders. The root structure of the plants is not disturbed.

**McLeod:** A firefighting tool used for scraping soil and small roots, and grasses to construct fire line. The tool head is a large hoe approximately 12 inches wide, with one side a solid scraping blade for scraping soil and the other side with metal fingers for scraping vegetation but leaving soil.

**Mosaic:** To reduce the total volume of vegetation within an area by removing vegetation in a cluster or mosaic pattern.

**Overstory:** That portion of the trees in a forest that forms the upper or uppermost layer.

**Peak Fire Season:** That period of the year during which fires are expected to ignite most readily, to burn with greater than average intensity, and to create damages at an unacceptable level.

**Prescribed Burn:** A wildland fire tool that uses the knowledgeable application of fire to a specific unit of land to meet predetermined fire and resource management objectives. Specific prescriptions for burning vegetation are developed for each area based on weather, topography, and fuel type.

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**Prescribed Burning:** Controlled application of fire to wildland fuels in either their natural or modified state, under specified environmental conditions, which allows the fire to be confined to a predetermined area, and to produce the fire behavior and fire characteristics required to attain planned fire treatment and resource management objectives.

**Prescribed Fire:** A fire burning within prescription. This fire may result from either planned or unplanned ignitions.

**Protected Species:** State- and federally-listed Endangered or Threatened species of flora or fauna, and non-listed species otherwise protected by state and/or federal statutes.

**Pruning:** To selectively cut dead or live branches from trees, brush, or shrubs to reduce the total volume of flammable vegetation from a plant.

**Pulaski:** A firefighting tool used for digging out roots and soil to construct fire line. The head has one side with an axe blade and the other side with a hoe blade.

**Rate of Spread (ROS):** The speed at which a fire extends its horizontal dimensions, expressed in terms of distance per unit area of time. Generally thought of in terms of a fire's forward movement or head fire rate of spread.

**Remote Automatic Weather Station (RAWS):** A weather station at which the services of an observer are not required. A RAWS unit measures selected weather elements automatically and is equipped with telemetry apparatus for transmitting the electronically recorded data via radio, satellite or by a landline communication system at predetermined times on a user-requested basis.

**Red Flag Warning Conditions:** A Red Flag Warning is a forecast warning issued by the United States National Weather Service to inform area firefighting and land management agencies that conditions are ideal for wildland fire ignition and propagation. After drought conditions, and when humidity is very low, and especially when high or erratic winds that may include lightning are a factor, the Red Flag Warning becomes a critical statement for firefighting agencies, which often alter their staffing and equipment resources dramatically to accommodate the forecast risk.

**Responsibility Area:** That area for which a particular fire protection organization has the primary responsibility for attacking an uncontrolled fire and for directing the suppression action. Such responsibility may develop through law, contract, or personal interest of the fire protection agent. Several agencies or entities may have some basic responsibilities without being known as the fire organization having direct protection responsibility.

**Riparian:** An area of land adjacent to a stream, river, lake or wetland that contains vegetation that, due to the presence of water, is distinctly different from the vegetation of adjacent upland areas.

**Sensitive Species:** A plant or animal species with a special status listing from federal, state, or local regulatory agencies.

**Slope:** The variation of terrain from the horizontal; the number of feet rise or fall per 100 feet measured horizontally, expressed as a percentage.

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**Smoke:** (1) The visible products of combustion rising above a fire; (2) term used when reporting a fire or probable fire in its initial stages.

**Spotting:** The ignition of unburned fuels ahead of the fire front as a result of ignition by firebrands. Spotting enhances the spread of wildfires.

**Structure:** A constructed object, usually a free-standing building above ground.

**Structure Fire:** Fire originating in and burning any part of all of any building, shelter, or other structure.

**Suppression:** The most aggressive fire protection strategy, it leads to the total extinguishment of a fire.

**Surface Fuel:** Fuels lying on or near the surface of the ground, consisting of leaf and needle litter, dead branch material, downed logs, bark, tree cones, and low stature living plants.

**Thinning:** To reduce the total volume of trees, brush or shrubs within an area by completely cutting out dead and live plants from the area or to reduce the size or volume of an individual plant by cutting out dead and live branches.

**Tree Crown:** The primary and secondary branches growing out from the main stem, together with twigs and foliage.

**Uncontrolled Fire:** Any fire that threatens to destroy life, property, or natural resources and that (a) is not burning within the confines of firebreaks or (b) is burning with such intensity that it could not be readily extinguished with ordinary, commonly available tools.

**Understory:** Low-growing vegetation (herbaceous, brush or reproduction) growing under a stand of trees. Also, that portion of trees in a forest stand below the overstory.

**Urban Interface:** see Wildland Urban Interface.

**Vegetation Management:** The practice of reducing and/or rearranging both the green and dead biomass (vegetation) to reduce fire hazard, to reduce the potential damage associated with wildfire, and to improve environmental habitat. Vegetation management is synonymous with the term “vegetation or fuel reduction”. Many different vegetation management methods may be used to reduce and/or rearrange both green and dead biomass.

**Vegetation Management Unit:** Delineated property unit based on parcel, topography, vegetation or other features used for vegetation management planning.

**Weed:** A plant species that interferes with a desired management objective. This term does not denote the native or non-native status of a plant species. Both native and non-native plants have the ability to interfere, depending on the objective.

**Wildfire:** An unplanned and uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels, at times involving structures.

**Wildland:** An area in which development is essentially nonexistent, except for roads, railroads, power lines, and similar transportation facilities. Structures, if any, are widely scattered.

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**Wildland Fire:** Any fire occurring on the wildlands, regardless of ignition source, damages or benefits.

**Wildland Urban Interface (WUI):** The area where structures and other human developments meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland.

Source: NWCG 2024

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