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NEVADA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

**COMMUNITY  
WILDFIRE  
PROTECTION  
PLAN SURVEY  
RESULTS**

JULY 2024



# WILDFIRE IN NEVADA COUNTY

*Collaborative community-based planning around wildfire protection will allow us to reduce wildfire risk and protect what the Nevada County community values.*

## Results at a Glance

In 2023 the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update OES created and launched a public survey which presented an opportunity to understand the wildfire challenges and the place-based expertise of community members. In total the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.



NEVADA COUNTY HAS A VERY HIGH FIRE RISK



68% OF PEOPLE PRIORITIZED PROTECTING COMMUNITY LIFELINES



54% OF PEOPLE SAW PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK AS HIGH OR VERY HIGH



FUEL ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES WAS THE MAIN CHALLENGE



EVACUATION IMPROVEMENT WAS THE HIGHEST COMMUNITY PRIORITY



57% OF PEOPLE HAVE NEVER EVACUATED BEFORE



48% OF PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE



TRAPPED ON THE ROAD WAS THE LARGEST EVACUATION CONCERN

*“I believe between enforcing existing fire safety laws, continuing education of the populace on fire safety/actions they can take to minimize risk, and government funding (County, State & Federal) to reduce fire risk (i.e. tree/brush removal, hardening of infrastructure, etc..), we will have a much better chance of minimizing the impact of wildfire within Nevada County” - Anonymous Response*

*“Hopefully, the community's approach to proactive fuels reductions and home hardening will lessen the impact of catastrophic wildfires” - Anonymous Response*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 01** Introduction
- 03** CWPP Forecast Zones
- 04** Nevada County Community
- 05** Community Wildfire Protection Plan Survey
- 08** High Value Resources and Assets at Risk
- 09** Nevada County Wildfire Risk
- 10** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 11** Personal Wildfire Risk Perception
- 12** Defensible Space
- 13** Main Challenges to Reducing Wildfire Risk
- 14** Evacuation Willingness
- 15** Evacuation Concerns
- 16** Conclusion

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- Appendix A** Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone Survey Results
- Appendix B** Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone Survey Results
- Appendix C** Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone Survey Results
- Appendix D** Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone Survey Results

# INTRODUCTION

In 2023 the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). CWPPs were created by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) and are important planning processes that help at-risk communities prepare for and mitigate the risk of wildfire. Public participation is both a requirement and a critical element of the CWPP process. As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey.

CWPPs are planning processes that aim to help communities understand their risk from wildfires and take on risk-reduction actions. CWPPs have evolved to become strategic wildfire planning documents. They are not regulatory documents but they do have to meet 3 minimum requirements:

1. Regional Collaboration
2. Identify and Prioritize Areas for Risk Reduction
3. Identify Methods for Reducing Structural Ignitability

An important part of the CWPP is the development of the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA). The WRA determines wildfire risk by looking at the intersection of wildfire hazard with the High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRAs) at risk to determine their susceptibility to wildfire. The WRA is informed by community values as a crucial step in determining the prioritization of the HVRAs. This allows the results of the WRA to not only be informed by the conditions on the ground but also by what a community determines to be important to protect from wildfire. **The goal of the Nevada County CWPP update was to prioritize the places and resources that are important to the residents of Nevada County and to protect what is valued most by the community.**

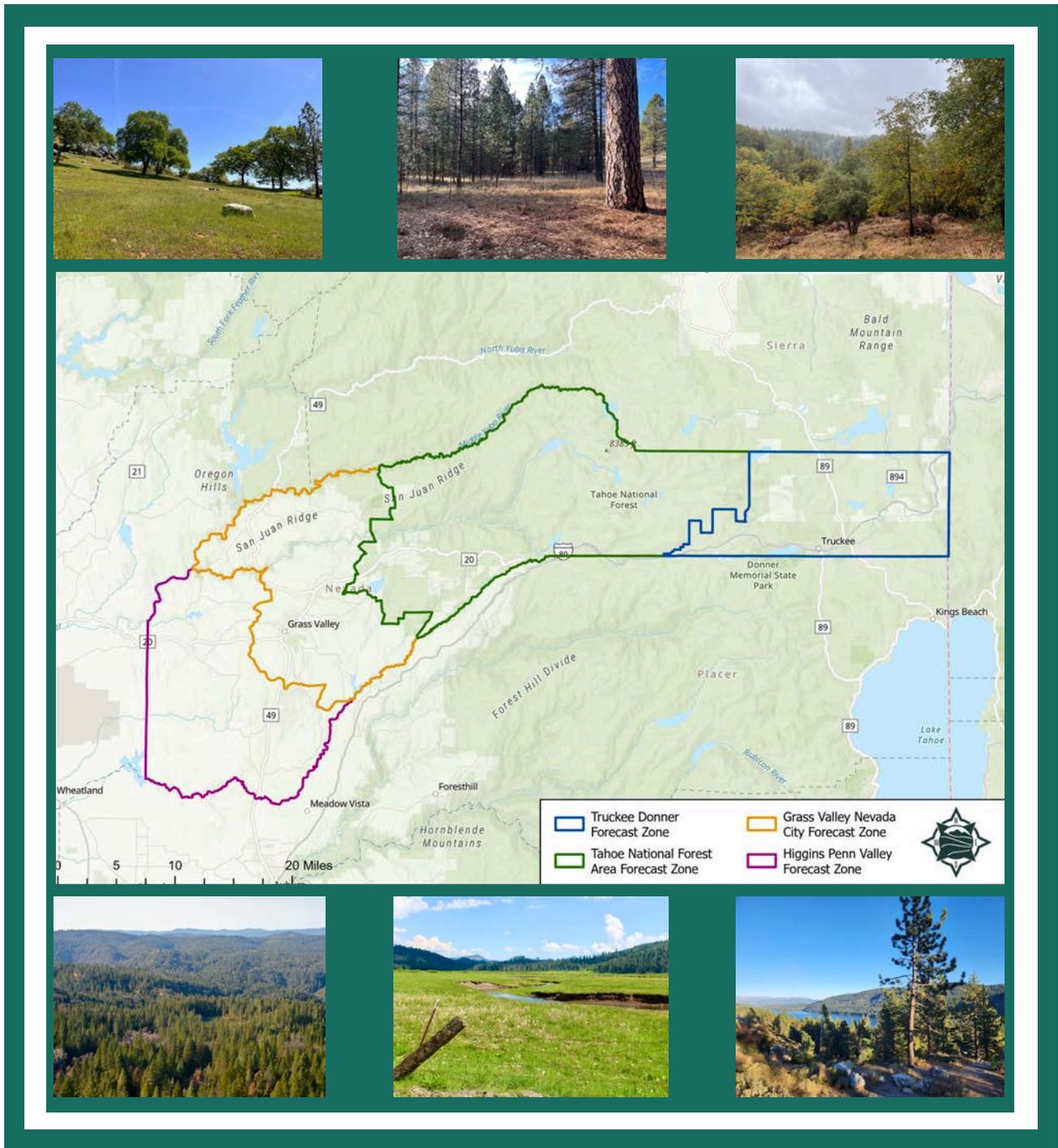
The CWPP survey had two valuable roles in the planning process.: (1) it captured information needed for the WRA, and (2) it captured information about



the community's perception of wildfire risk, community values, and evacuation willingness. The survey was distributed through traditional means such as press releases and social media. It was also distributed through an "email tree" which leaned on partners, members of the OES led Quarterly Wildfire Stakeholder group, and the OES Virtual Office Hours platform. Hundreds of emails were leveraged to distribute the survey on OES's behalf. The survey was also administered in person across the County. OES distributed the survey through various meetings (in-person and online), Defensible Space Inspectors distributed it in the field, and it was facilitated at 70 community/stakeholder events. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.

*"It's really important that we all understand that our community is beautiful because of its natural resources...We need to value our wildlife and natural resources as we consider our own value." - Anonymous Response*





# CWPP FORECAST ZONES

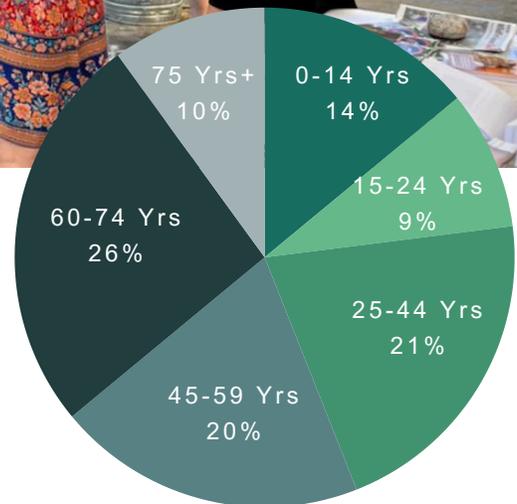
The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is an essential document for wildfire preparedness and risk reduction in Nevada County. In order to capture the differences in wildfire risk across the County landscape, the County was divided into four Forecast Zones (FZs). The FZs were delineated based on similarities in fire environment and in community identity.



# NEVADA COUNTY COMMUNITY

Nevada County is a rural community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Within the County are three incorporated cities, (the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, and the Town of Truckee), and numerous unincorporated communities. Communities in Nevada County are very diverse in terms of lifestyle, ranging from rural lifestyle and working landscape communities to traditional suburban homes and high amenity high-resource subdivisions. Nevada County's population is estimated to be 97,466 people in 2020, per the U.S. Census, with a population density of 102 people per square mile (County of Nevada, 2021). Most residents (67%) live in unincorporated areas of the County. Most of these residents live in the western half of the County.

Nevada County has a fairly aged population as 36% of residents are older than 60. According to the State Department of Finance, 29% of residents are under the age of 30. The Nevada County community is considered to be a well-educated



Data Source: Nevada County 2021 Demographic and Statistical Profile

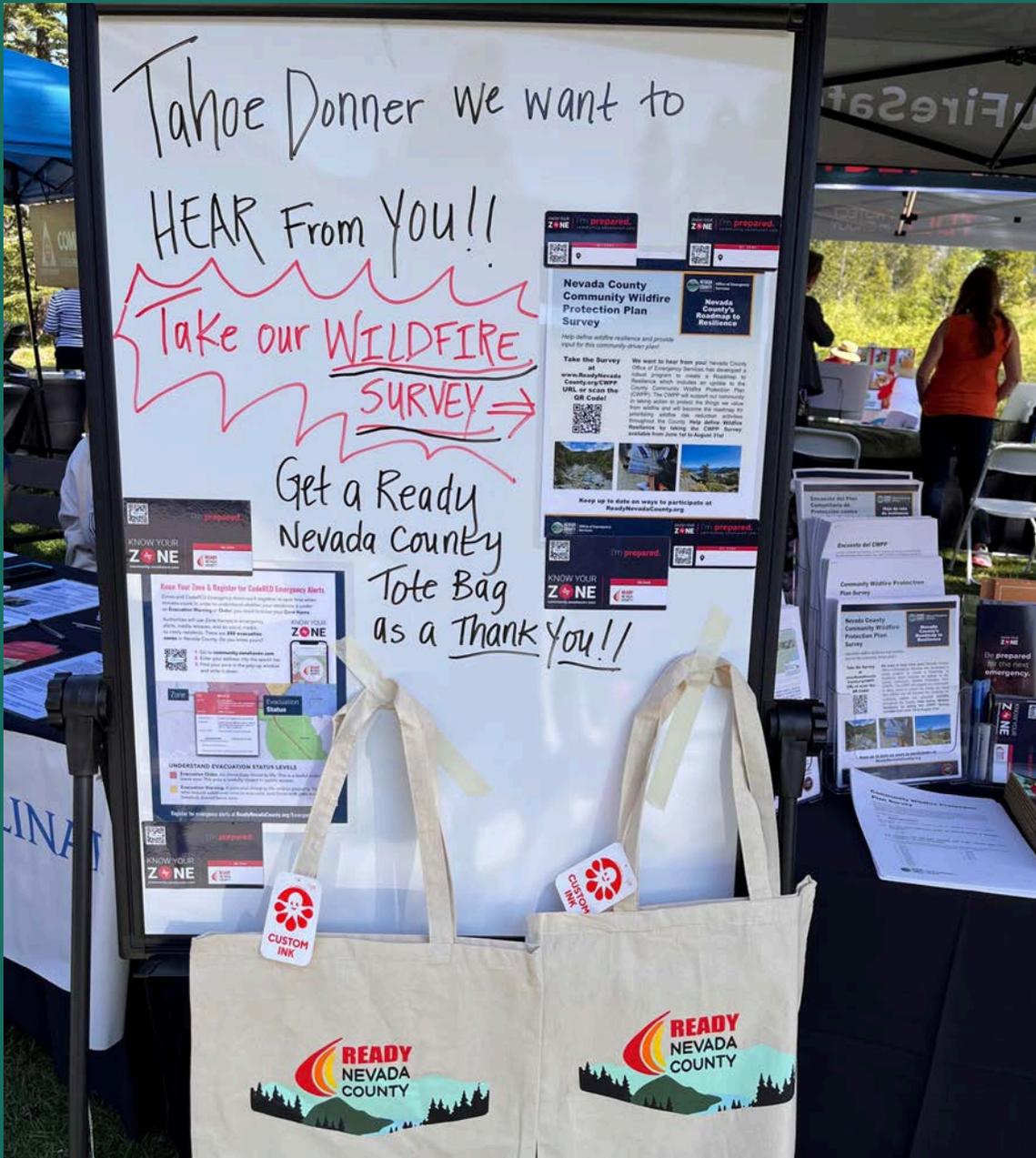
population. Seventy-five percent of residents have attended some college and over 20% have a bachelor's degree. Of the Nevada County population, just over 8% of residents are considered to be impoverished. Nevada County has the 3rd lowest percentage of people in poverty when compared to neighboring counties. Eighty-four percent (84%) of Nevada County residents live in a single-family home. The majority of the population (52%) live in owner-occupied units.

Overall, the community is largely comprised of older residents who are generally well-educated, relatively affluent and own their own homes.

# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) survey was an online survey hosted on Microsoft Forms. It was open from June 1, 2023, until August 31, 2023. The survey was also available in print format. Both the online version and the print version were available in English and Spanish. The survey was open to residents, property owners, and workers of Nevada County.

The survey asked 15 questions in total. Of the 15 questions, four were demographic questions, three were about County Wildfire Risk, three assessed personal wildfire risk perception, five assessed evacuation willingness, and one was an open-ended feedback section. The survey was distributed through a variety of means including press releases, social media, emails, newsletters, ad buys, radio, and flyers, and available at over 70 meetings/community events during the survey period. In total, the survey captured 2,267 responses.



*“Wildfire safety is a statewide problem - thus responsibilities need to be clearly established for all levels” - Anonymous Response.*



# We want to hear from you!

## Take the Community Wildfire Protection Plan

**SURVEY**



**2,267**

In total, the survey received 2,267 responses over the course of three months. Fifty percent (50%) of responses were recorded in the first 30 days of the survey being open.

**2,220**

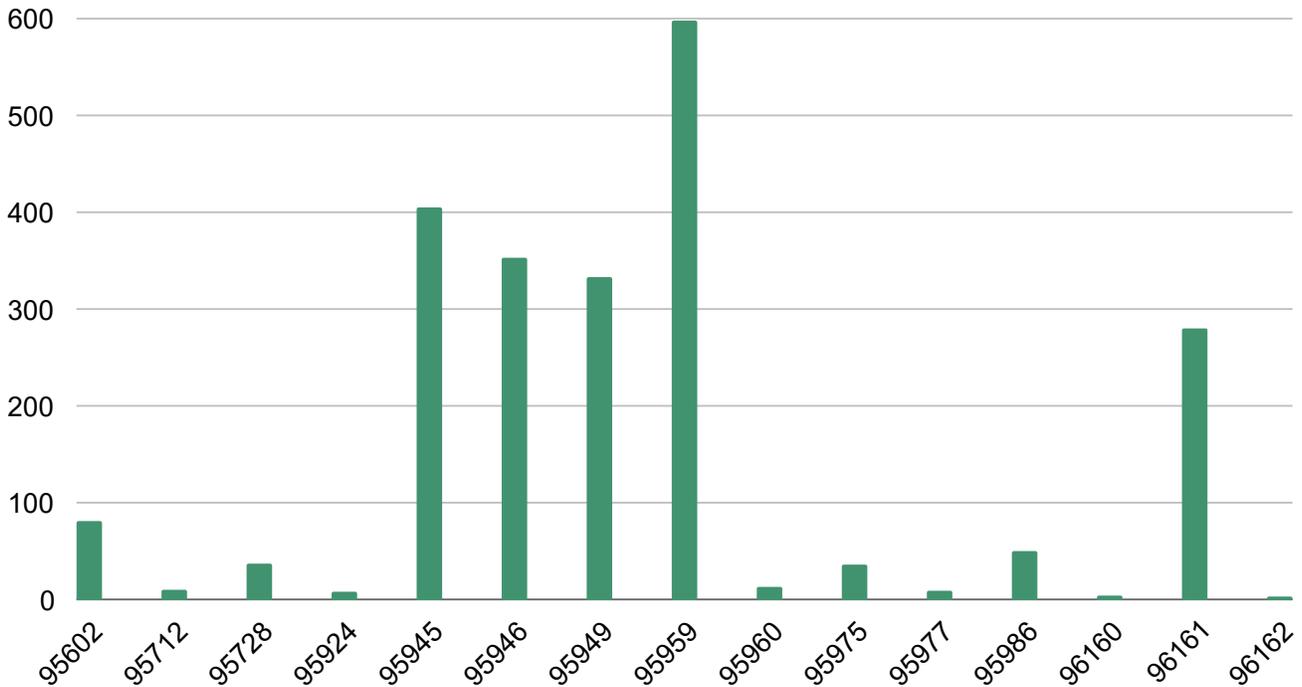
Of the 2,267 survey responses, 2,220 participants indicated that they either lived, worked, or owned property in Nevada County. Only 47 respondents did not live, work, or own property within the County.

**81%**

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the participants identified as primary homeowners, 8% identified as secondary homeowners, 7% said they were renters, 1% said they were undeveloped property owners, 1% were workforce, and <1% were business owners.

**48%**

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents were over the age of 65, the largest response group. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents were between 45 and 65. The lowest response group was people under the age of 35 with 102 responses.



Number of Responses per Nevada County Zip Code

Within Nevada County, there are 15 separate zip codes, with the majority correlating to western Nevada County. The majority (598) of respondents were from the 95959 zip code which includes the City of Nevada City and unincorporated areas of the County such as North San Juan, Banner Mountain, You Bet, and Highway 20. The second highest response rate was from zip code 95945 with 405 responses. This zip code includes the City of Grass Valley and communities living off Highway 174 such as Lower Colfax, Greenhorn, and Chicago Park. There were 287 responses from east Nevada County zip codes 96160, 96161, and 96162, including the Town of Truckee and unincorporated areas.

*“This is a HUGE and IMPORTANT subject, with great breadth, from prevention and preparedness to actual evacuation.” - Anonymous Response*

# HIGH VALUE RESOURCES AND ASSETS AT RISK

Survey respondents were asked to rank and prioritize High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRA) at risk to protect from wildfire with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least. The highest-ranked HVRA represented the most important HVRA to protect from the impact of wildfire.

01

## Community Lifelines

Communities, Critical Water, Power, Transportation, Communication Infrastructure, and Vulnerable Populations

02

## Community Health

Wildfire Smoke Potential, Soil Vulnerability, Hazardous Waste Sites, Hospital and Shelter Facilities, and Solid Waste Sites

03

## Natural Resources

Outdoor Recreation Resources, Watersheds, Significant Species, Oak Woodlands, and Climate Resilient Areas

04

## Economic Resources

Recreation, Historic and Cultural Districts, and Government Buildings

The HVRAs were ranked with Community Lifelines being the most important, followed by Community Health, then Natural Resources, and finally Economic Resources. Community Lifelines was chosen as the most important HVRA to protect from wildfire by 68% of respondents. Community Health was the second most important HVRA prioritized by 47% of respondents. Natural Resources was the third most important HVRA for 38% of respondents and Economic Resources was the fourth choice for 52% of respondents. Community Lifelines, Community Health, and Natural Resources were incorporated into the Wildfire Risk Assessment.



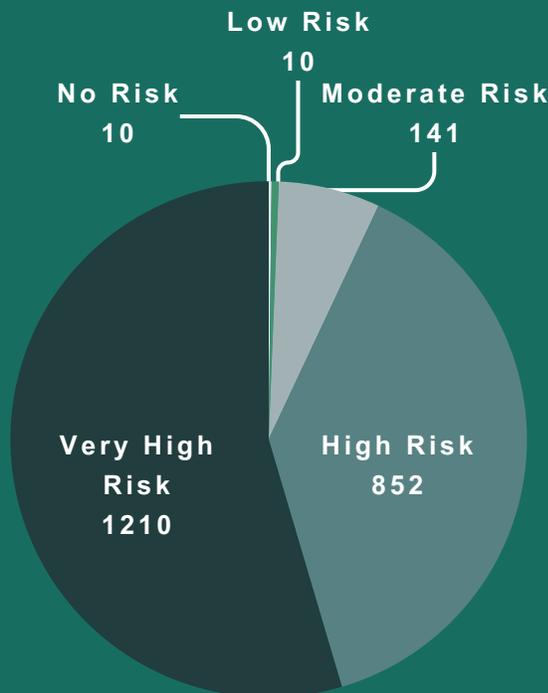
# NEVADA COUNTY WILDFIRE RISK

# 53%

The majority (53%) of survey respondents view the wildfire risk in Nevada County as Very High.

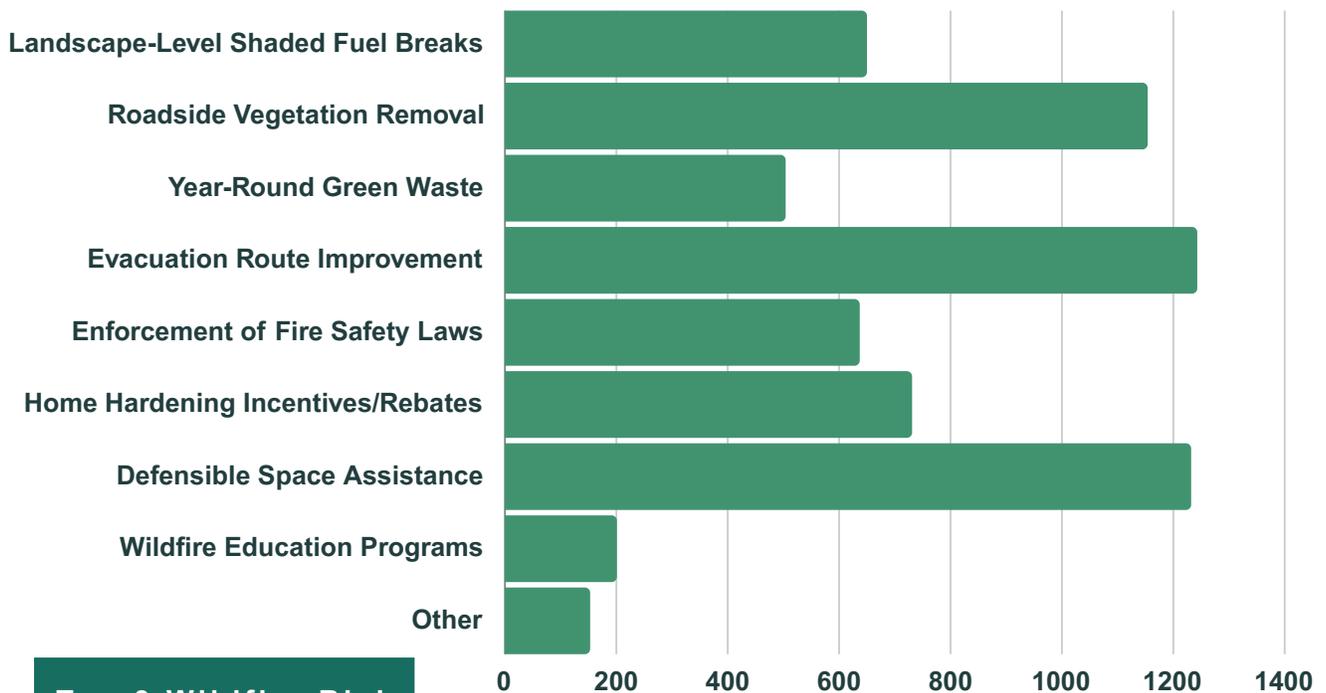
# 38%

The second highest response chosen was High Risk from wildfire.



*“A lot more could be done with home hardening. While the basic mitigation (vent screens, caulking gaps) is not costly, many things are, such as replacing siding and windows. Financial assistance (cost share) could motivate more homeowners to improve structure survivability.” - Anonymous Response*

# NEVADA COUNTY RISK REDUCTION PRIORITIES



## Top 3 Wildfire Risk Reduction Priorities for Nevada County

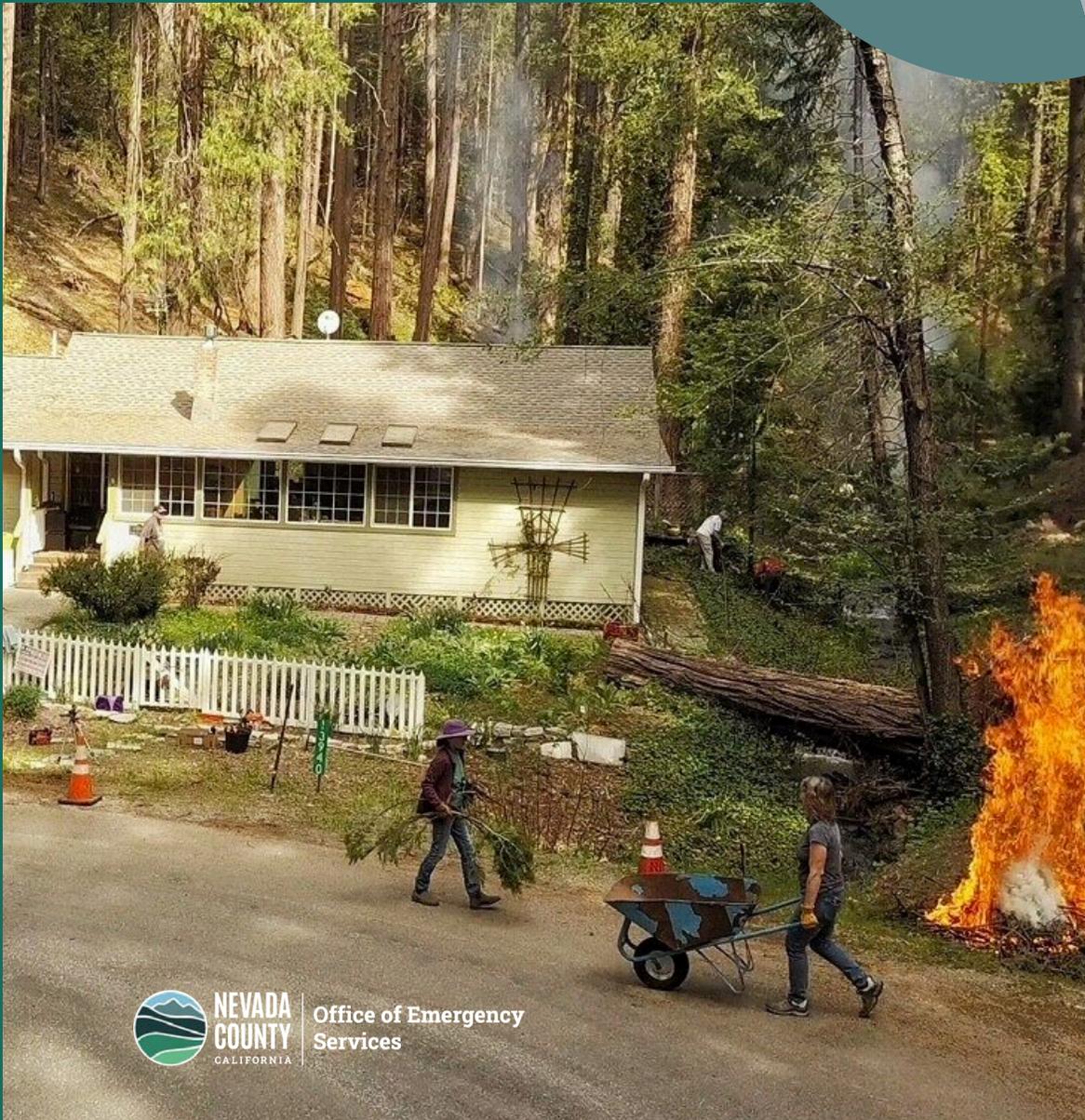
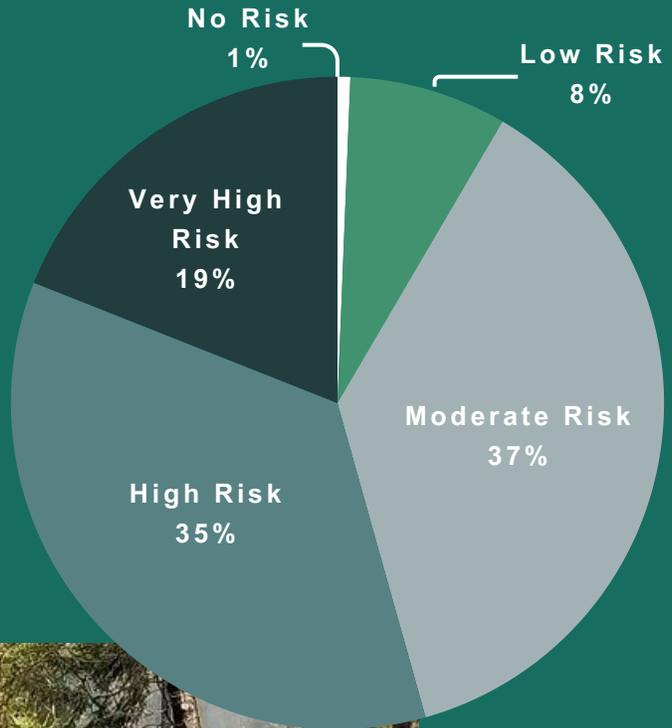
1. *Evacuation Route Improvement*
2. *Defensible Space Assistance*
3. *Roadside Vegetation Removal*

The CWPP survey asked respondents to identify the top three wildfire risk reduction strategies for Nevada County. Evacuation Route Improvement and Defensible Space Assistance were the top two risk reduction strategies for Nevada County identified by 55% of participants. Fifty-one percent (51%) of survey respondents chose Roadside Vegetation Removal as a top priority for County wildfire risk reduction. This was consistent with expectations based on pre-survey outreach.

# PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK PERCEPTION

Personal perception of wildfire risk is how one views their own risk from wildfire or wildfire impacts.

While the majority of respondents felt that the County wildfire risk was either High or Very High, the majority of respondents felt that their own wildfire risk was lower. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents indicated that they believed their wildfire risk was Moderate and 35% percent felt that their personal wildfire risk was High.

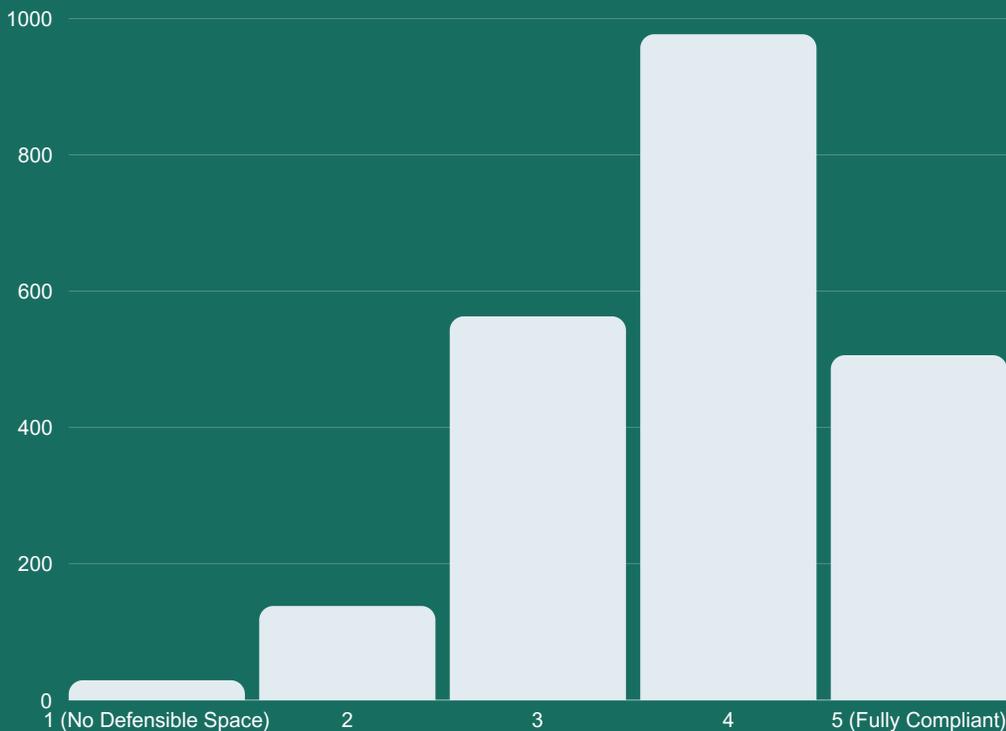


# DEFENSIBLE SPACE



The CWPP survey asked respondents to evaluate the defensible space around their home, place of residence, workplace, or business. Respondents ranked their defensible space on a scale of one to five, with one representing no defensible space and five representing fully compliant defensible space.

In total, 977 or 43% of respondents indicated that the defensible space around their home, residence, workplace, or business was almost fully compliant and ranked it as a 4. Only 506 (22%) respondents believed that they had fully compliant defensible space. One percent (1%) of respondents indicated that they have no defensible space. The overall average defensible space rating was 3.8.



**3.8**

*On average, survey respondents scored their defensible space as a 3.8*

# MAIN CHALLENGES TO REDUCING WILDFIRE RISK



## 01. Fuel on Neighboring Properties

Fuel on Neighboring Properties was viewed as the greatest challenge for survey respondents in reducing their wildfire risk. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents, (1278 respondents) chose this as their biggest challenge.



## 02. Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space

Thirty-five percent (35%) selected the Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space as a challenge to reducing their wildfire risk, making it the second biggest challenge identified by the survey



## 03. Cost of Home Hardening

Similarly, the Cost of Home Hardening was viewed as a major barrier to reducing one's wildfire risk and was selected as a challenge by 33% of survey respondents.

*“There seems to be no way to force neighboring property owners to mitigate wildfire risk.” - Anonymous Response*

*“I wish there was more financial assistance to help people create defensible space around their home and in neighborhoods” - Anonymous Response*

*“There needs to be more rebate/ financial incentives on home hardening for things like fire resistant siding, roofing, etc.” - Anonymous Response*

# EVACUATION WILLINGNESS



# 57%

Overall, the Nevada County Community has very little experience with evacuations as 57% of respondents indicated that they had never evacuated from a wildfire in Nevada County.

# 49%

When asked about their likely evacuation behavior in a wildfire, the majority (49%) of respondents said that in an evacuation they would leave as early as possible.

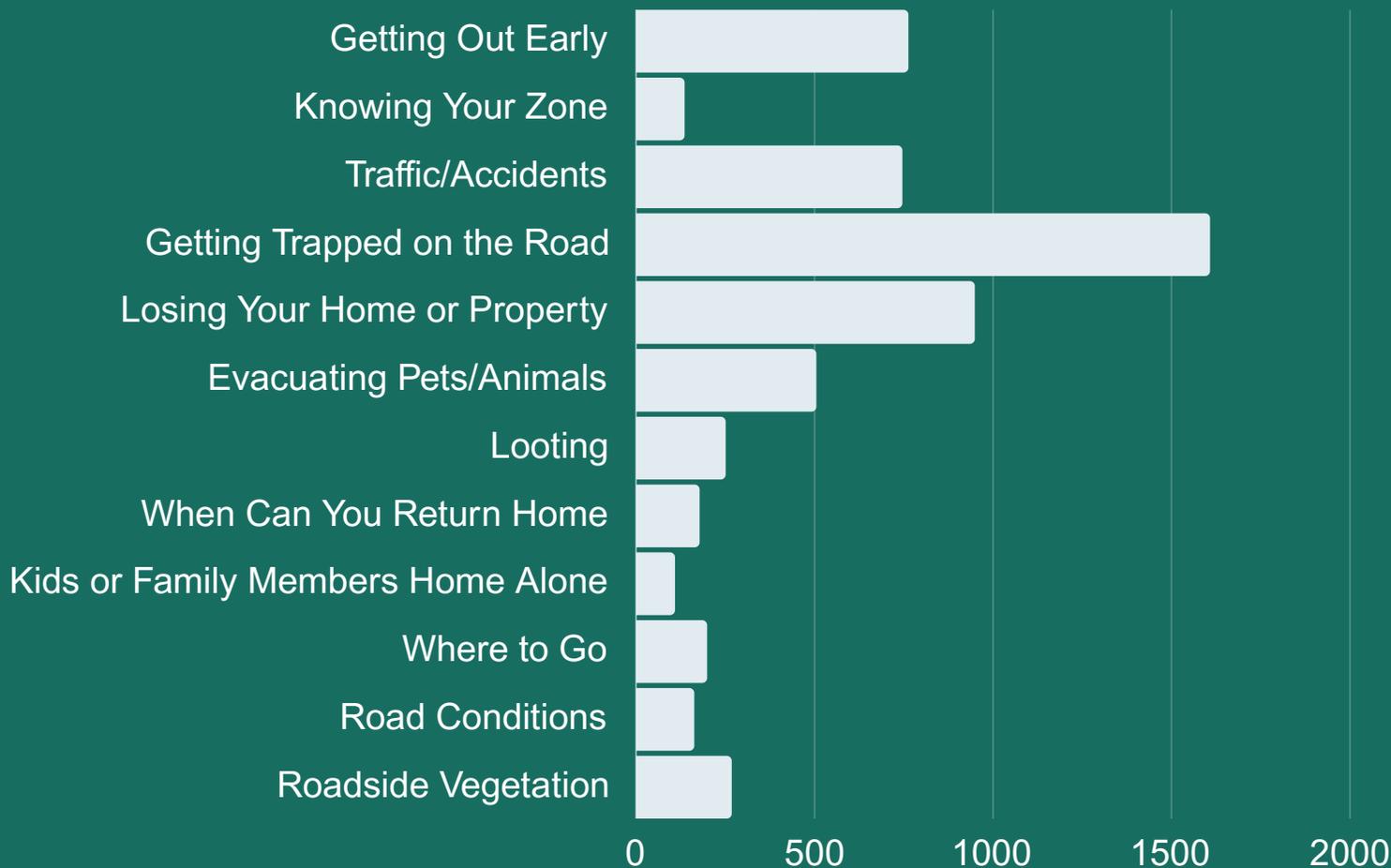
# 26%

While the majority of respondents indicated that they would leave as early as possible in an evacuation, 26% of survey respondents indicated that they would only leave if an evacuation order was issued.

# 1%

One percent (1%) of respondents said that in a wildfire they would choose not to evacuate. When asked a follow up question, about what could change their evacuation behavior, the majority of respondents indicated that nothing would change their decision to not evacuate.

# EVACUATION CONCERNS



The CWPP Survey collected information about respondents' primary evacuation concerns. Survey respondents could choose from nineteen evacuation concerns. Each respondent was requested to choose three main concerns they had about evacuation. The bar chart above displays the evacuation concerns that had over 100 responses. Evacuation concerns not included in the bar chart are "Lack of Reliable Transportation", "Understanding Evacuation Alerts", "Visitors/Tourist", "Towing a Trailer/Fifth Wheel/RV", "Knowing What to Bring", and "Other" as they had less than 100 responses.

Over 70% of survey respondents indicated that their main evacuation concern was "Getting Trapped on the Road". This was followed by "Losing Home or Property" and "Traffic Accidents".



# CONCLUSION

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Survey gave the Nevada County community an opportunity to share their perspective on the wildfire problem and identify priorities for becoming more wildfire resilient.

The results from the CWPP survey were incorporated into the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA) and were used to help identify the Project Priority Areas. The Project Priority Areas are geographically delineated areas on the landscape that are prioritized for risk reduction activity based on the wildfire hazard and the protection of High-Value Resources and Assets at risk that were identified by the community in the survey. The results from the survey were also used to help create the CWPP Risk Reduction Workshops and the Community Action Plans.



*“In the eight years since I have lived in Grass Valley, I’ve seen an incredible increase in awareness and evacuation programs, and now participate in a Firewise Community. Education is so important!” - Anonymous Response*



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NEVADA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

# APPENDIX A

HIGGINS/PENN VALLEY FORECAST ZONE COMMUNITY  
WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY RESULTS



# WILDFIRE IN HIGGINS/PENN VALLEY

*Collaborative community-based planning around wildfire protection will allow us to reduce wildfire risk and protect what the Nevada County community values.*

## Results at a Glance

In 2023 Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). In 2023, as part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update OES created and launched a public survey which presented an opportunity to understand the wildfire challenges and the place-based expertise of our community members. In total the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) with 812 responses from the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone, between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.



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52% OF PEOPLE HAVE NEVER EVACUATED BEFORE



50% OF PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE



TRAPPED ON THE ROAD WAS THE LARGEST EVACUATION CONCERN

*“Need more incentives to encourage property owners to reduce fire spread potential on their properties. Perhaps County or grant resources if some (small) number of neighbors agree to allow clearing or other mitigation measures on their combined properties” - Anonymous Response*

*“Defensible space in this community is very hard to achieve as space between homes is as close as 10’. While I am attempting to comply, others do not” - Anonymous Response*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 01** Introduction
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- 11** High-Value Resources and Assets at Risk
- 10** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 12** Nevada County Wildfire Risk Perception
- 13** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
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- 16** Main Challenges to Reducing Wildfire Risk
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**18** Evacuation Concerns

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# INTRODUCTION

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CWPPs are planning processes that aim to help communities understand their risk from wildfires and take on risk-reduction actions. CWPPs have evolved to become strategic wildfire planning documents. They are not regulatory documents but they do have to meet 3 minimum requirements:

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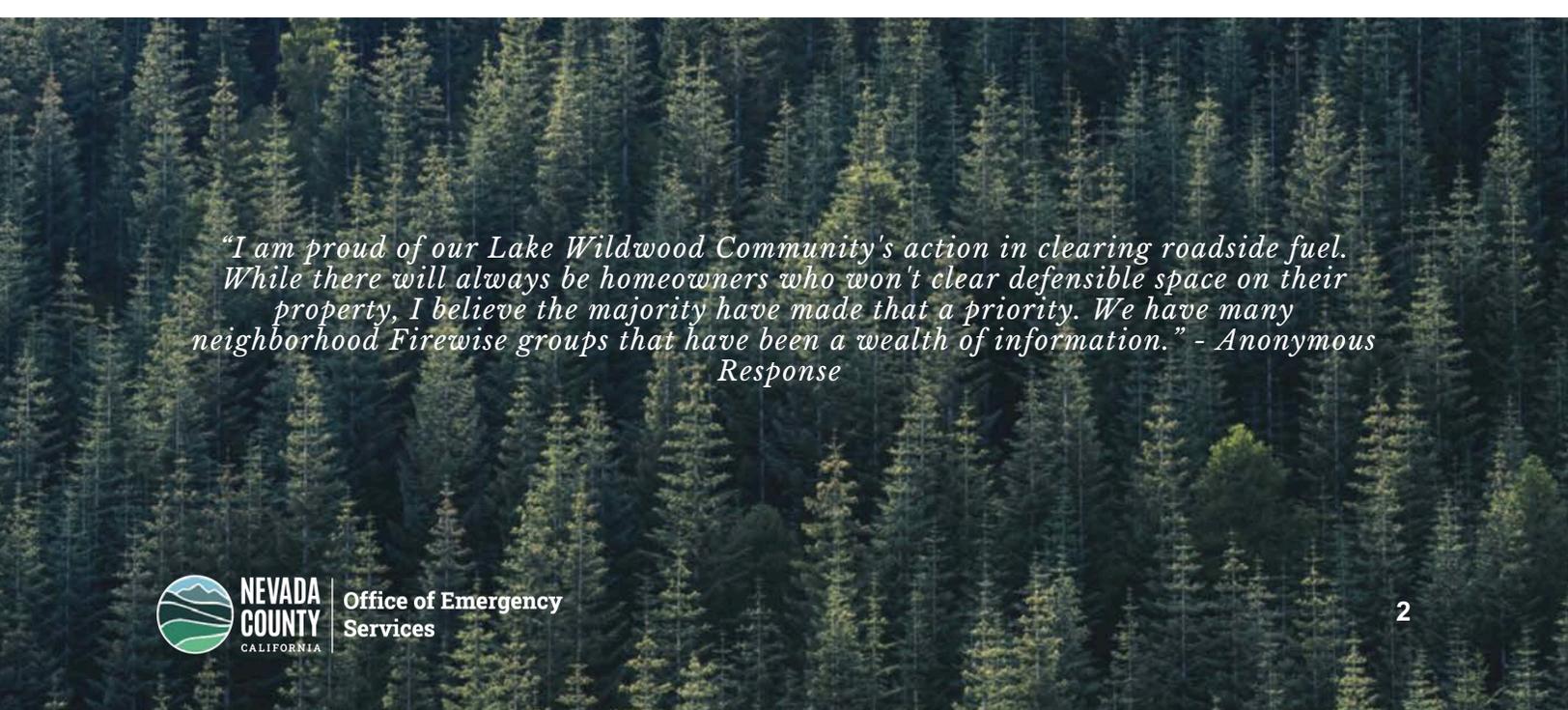
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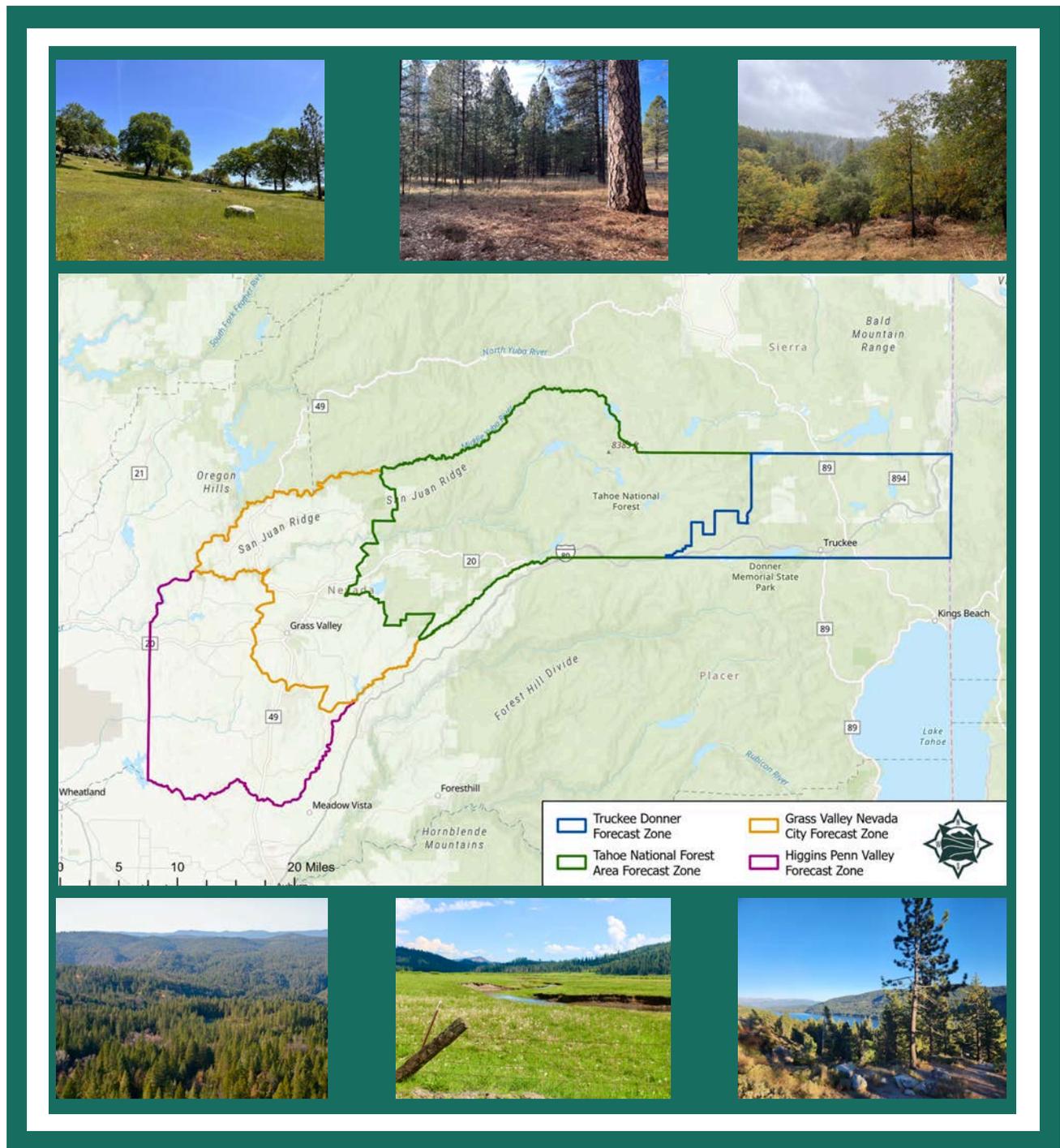


the community's perception of wildfire risk, community values, and evacuation willingness. The survey was distributed through traditional means such as press releases and social media. It was also distributed through an "email tree" which leaned on partners, members of the OES led Quarterly Wildfire Stakeholder group, and the OES Virtual Office Hours platform. Hundreds of emails were leveraged to distribute the survey on OES's behalf. The survey was also administered in-person across the County. OES distributed the survey through various meetings (in-person and online), Defensible Space Inspectors distributed it in the field, and it was facilitated at 70 community/stakeholder events. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.

***This Appendix covers the results specific to the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone. These results do not supplant or supersede the County-wide results but rather shed light on an area-specific analysis.***



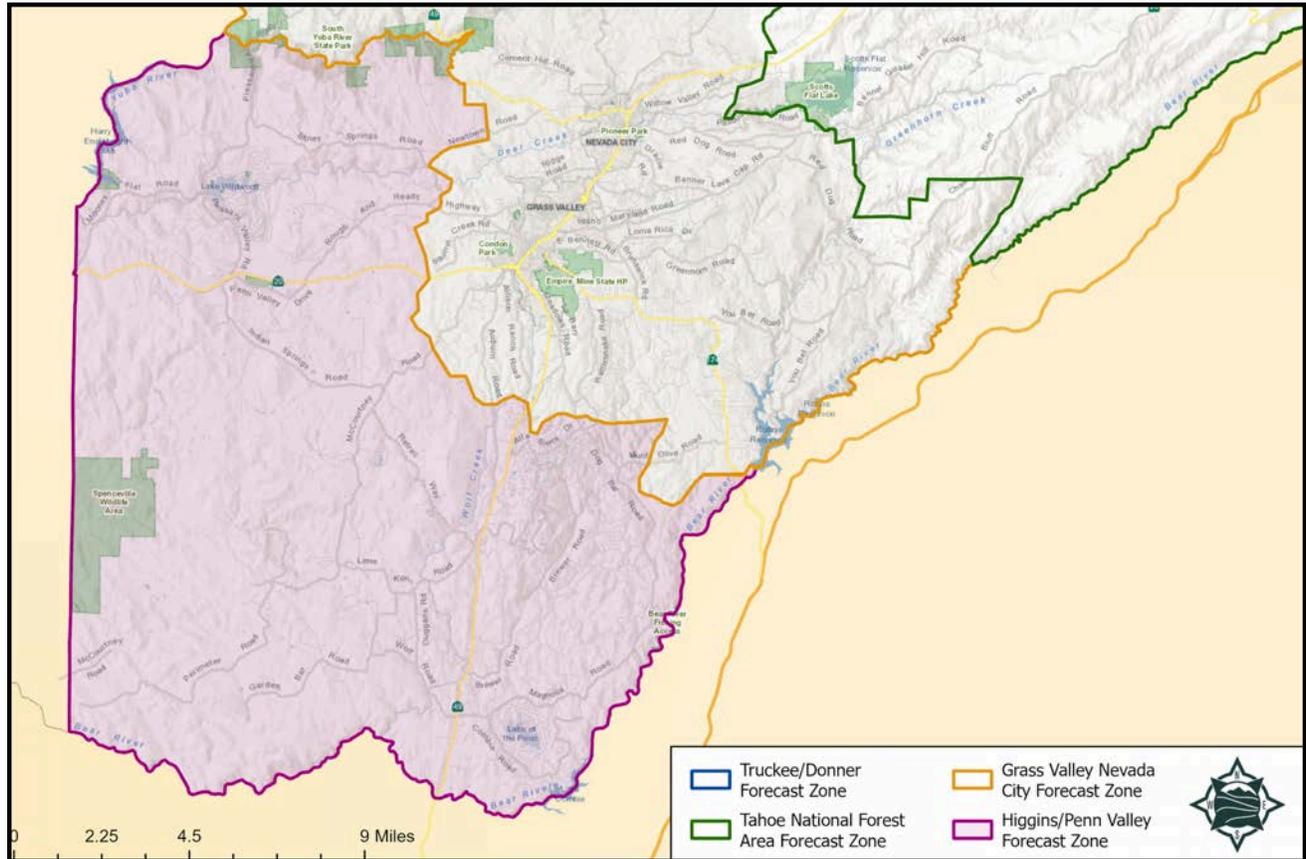
*"I am proud of our Lake Wildwood Community's action in clearing roadside fuel. While there will always be homeowners who won't clear defensible space on their property, I believe the majority have made that a priority. We have many neighborhood Firewise groups that have been a wealth of information." - Anonymous Response*



# CWPP FORECAST ZONES

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is an essential document for wildfire preparedness and risk reduction in Nevada County. In order to capture the differences in wildfire risk across the County landscape, the County was divided into four Forecast Zones (FZs). The FZs were delineated based on similarities in the fire environment and in community identity.

# HIGGINS/PENN VALLEY



Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone (FZ) is located at the southwest end of Nevada County. The FZ is 143,715 acres. The FZ’s right side is roughly delineated along the 2,000-foot elevation line and Nevada County line adjacent to Placer County. The bottom and left sides of the FZ follow the Nevada County line adjacent to Placer County and Yuba County.

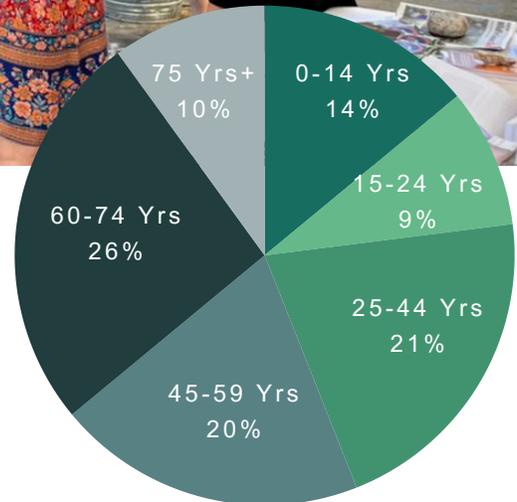
*“I find it challenging to balance maintaining/preserving the natural beauty and animal habitats on my property while hardening the property against fire. I moved here for the trees yet I have been felling innumerable trees for what I hope is the betterment of the forest and my home...” - Anonymous Response*



# NEVADA COUNTY COMMUNITY

Nevada County is a rural community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Within the County are three incorporated cities, (the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, and the Town of Truckee), and numerous unincorporated communities. Communities in Nevada County are very diverse in terms of lifestyle, ranging from rural lifestyle and working landscape communities to traditional suburban homes and high amenity high-resource subdivisions. Nevada County's population is estimated to be 97,466 people in 2020, per the U.S. Census, with a population density of 102 people per square mile (County of Nevada, 2021). The majority of residents (67%) live in unincorporated areas of the County. Most of these residents live in the western half of the County.

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Overall, the community is largely comprised of older residents who are generally well-educated, relatively affluent and own their own homes.

## Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone

Higgins/Penn Valley is located in southwest Nevada County. This area is often referred to locally as “South County.” Within the FZ there are several significant geographic features. This includes the southern side of the South Yuba River Canyon from Bridgeport to the Highway 49 crossing and the western half of the Deer Creek canyon from Newtown Road to the Yuba County line. In the west of the FZ is a portion of the Spenceville Wildlife Area. Wolf Mountain is located in the northeast of the FZ.

Higgins/Penn Valley also includes important infrastructure. Highway 20 and Highway 49 run through the FZ, both of which are major transportation corridors for the County. Within the FZ are critical water resources such as wastewater and water treatment facilities located in Lake Wildwood. The County’s main solid waste facility is located in this FZ.

The Higgins/PennValley FZ does not include incorporated cities. All of the communities within the FZ are located in unincorporated Nevada County. The community makeup and archetypes vary across the FZ. Archetypes within Higgins/Penn Valley FZ include working landscape, rural lifestyle, subdivision, and high-amenity-high-resource communities. As a result, housing density varies as well, ranging from gated high-density subdivisions to ranchettes on multiple acres. Some of the major communities in the FZ are Lake of the Pines, Alta Sierra, Higgins Corner, Rough and Ready, Penn Valley, and Lake Wildwood. Many of the communities in the FZ are National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Recognized Firewise Communities.



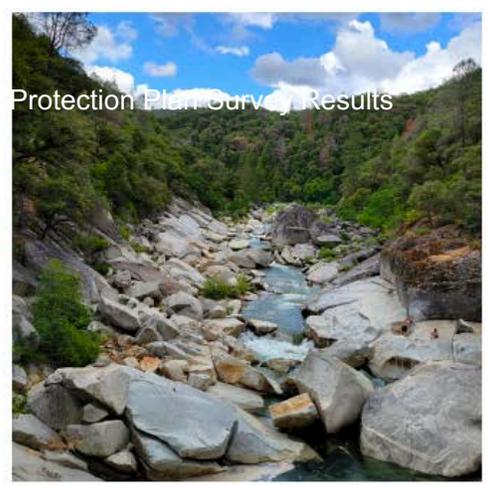
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*“Hopefully we will never have to evacuate, most of my neighbors are all aware of the hazards and try to keep property clean at all times...you just never know about tomorrow?” - Anonymous Response.*



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## Take the Community Wildfire Protection Plan

**SURVEY**



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Of the 2,267 survey responses, 2,220 participants indicated that they either lived, worked, or owned property in Nevada County. Only 47 respondents did not live, work, or own property within the County.

# 81%

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the participants identified as primary homeowners, 8% identified as secondary homeowners, 7% said they were renters, 1% said they were undeveloped property owners, 1% were workforce, <1% were business owners.

# 48%

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents were over the age of 65, the largest response group. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents were between 45 and 65. The lowest response group was people under the age of 35 with 102 responses.



## Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone

**812**

Eight-hundred and twelve (812) survey responses were from the Higgins/Penn Valley FZ.

**37%**

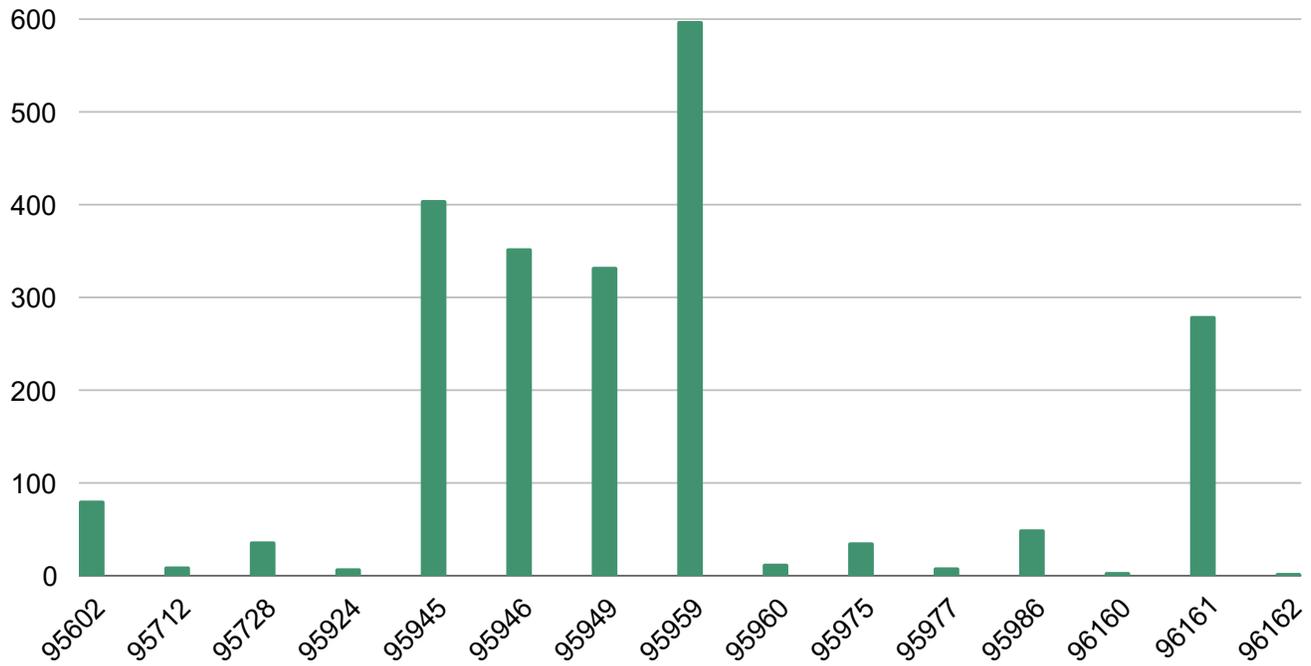
Thirty-seven percent (37%) of the total survey responses were from the Higgins/Penn Valley FZ.

**55%**

More than half of the respondents (55%) in Higgins/Penn Valley FZ were over the age of 65. Twenty-three percent (23%) were between the ages of 56 and 65, 11% were between 46 and 55, 7% were between 36 and 45, 3% were between 26 and 35, and less than 1% were under the age of 25.

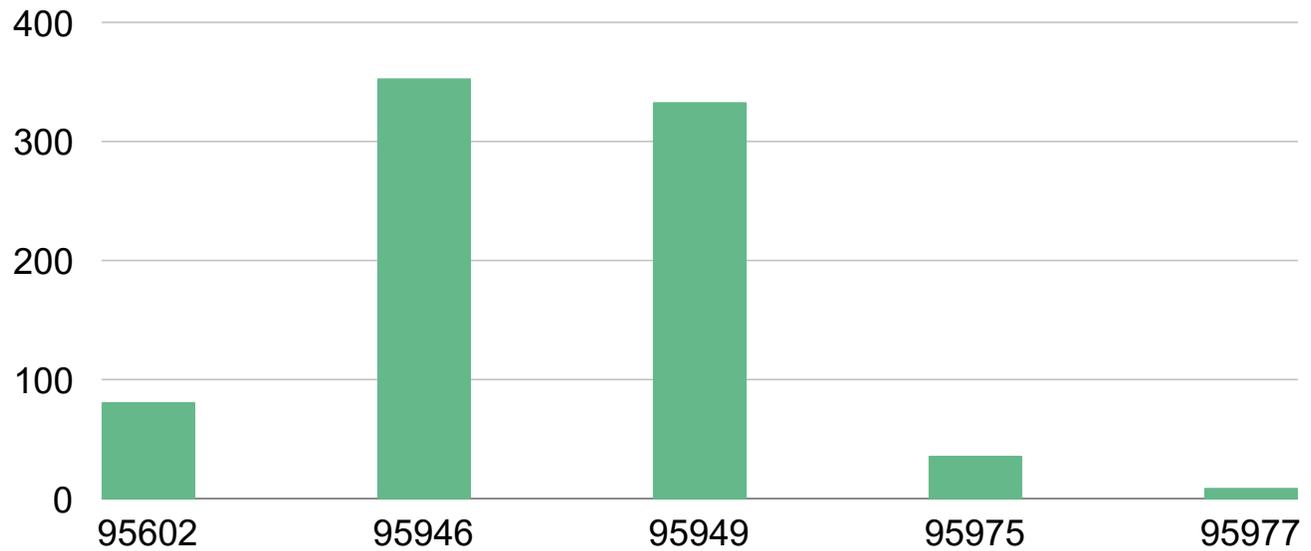
**89%**

Of the 812 CWPP survey responses, 89% (730) respondents indicated that they were primary homeowners. Four percent (4%) of respondents were secondary homeowners or renters. Less than 1% of respondents were either business owners, undeveloped property owners, or workforce.



Number of Responses per Nevada County Zip Codes

Within Nevada County, there are 15 separate zip codes, with the majority correlating to western Nevada County. The majority (598) of respondents were from the 95959 zip code which includes the City of Nevada City and unincorporated areas of the County such as North San Juan, Banner Mountain, You Bet, and Highway 20. The second highest response rate was from zip code 95945 with 405 responses. This zip code includes the City of Grass Valley and communities living off Highway 174 such as Lower Colfax, Greenhorn, and Chicago Park. There were 287 responses from east Nevada County zip codes 96160, 96161, and 96162 which includes the Town of Truckee and unincorporated areas.



Number of Responses per Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone Zip Codes

There are five zip codes within the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone (FZ). The majority of respondents were from zip codes 95946 (353 responses) or 95949 (333 responses). These zip codes include Lake Wildwood, Penn Valley, and Alta Sierra. Zip codes 95602, 95975, and 95977 all had less than 100 participants, with 95977 having the least. These zip codes cover Lake of the Pines, Rough and Ready, and the Nevada County half of the Smartsville area.

# HIGH VALUE RESOURCES AND ASSETS AT RISK

Survey respondents were asked to rank and prioritize High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRA) at risk to protect from wildfire with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least. The highest-ranked HVRA represented the most important HVRA to protect from the impact of wildfire.

01

## Community Lifelines

Communities, Critical Water, Power, Transportation, Communication Infrastructure, and Vulnerable Populations

02

## Community Health

Wildfire Smoke Potential, Soil Vulnerability, Hazardous Waste Sites, Hospital and Shelter Facilities, and Solid Waste Sites

03

## Natural Resources

Outdoor Recreation Resources, Watersheds, Significant Species, Oak Woodlands, and Climate Resilient Areas

04

## Economic Resources

Recreation, Historic and Cultural Districts, and Government Buildings

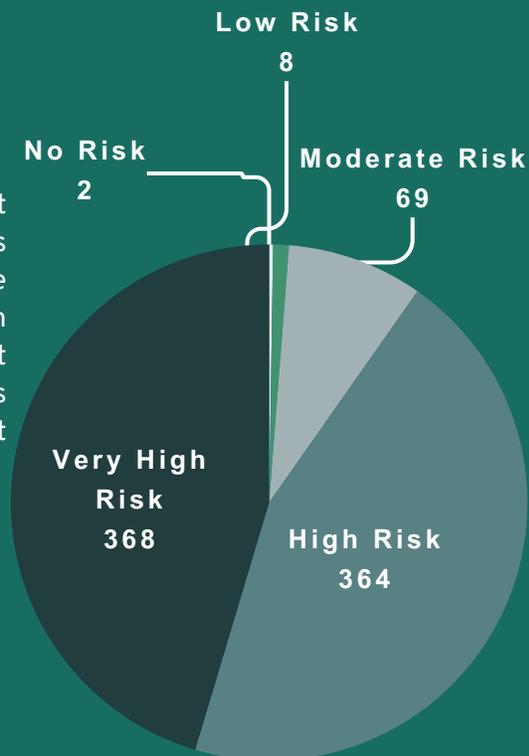
The HVRAs were ranked as Community Lifelines being the most important, followed by Community Health, then Natural Resources, and finally Economic Resources. Community Lifelines was chosen as the most important HVRA to protect from wildfire by 69% of respondents. Community Health was the second most important HVRA for 51% of respondents. Natural Resources was the third most important HVRA for 41% of respondents and Economic Resources was the fourth choice for 53% of respondents. This was in alignment with the prioritization at the County-level.



# NEVADA COUNTY WILDFIRE RISK

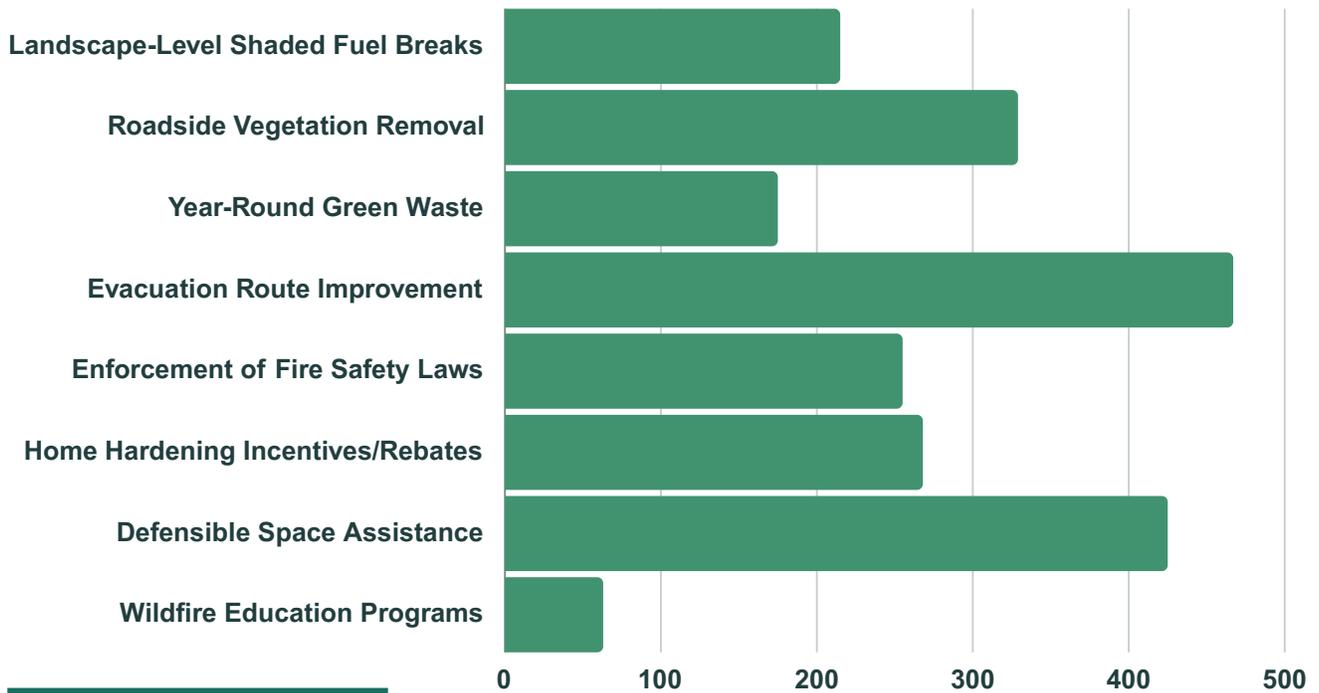
# 45%

In the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone, 45% of survey respondents felt that the Nevada County wildfire risk was either High or Very High. In total, 368 of survey respondents felt that the County's wildfire risk was Very High and 364 respondents felt the County's wildfire risk was High.



*“I wish there was more financial assistance to help people create defensible safe around their home and in neighborhoods.” - Anonymous Response*

# NEVADA COUNTY RISK REDUCTION PRIORITIES



## Top 3 Wildfire Risk Reduction Priorities for Nevada County

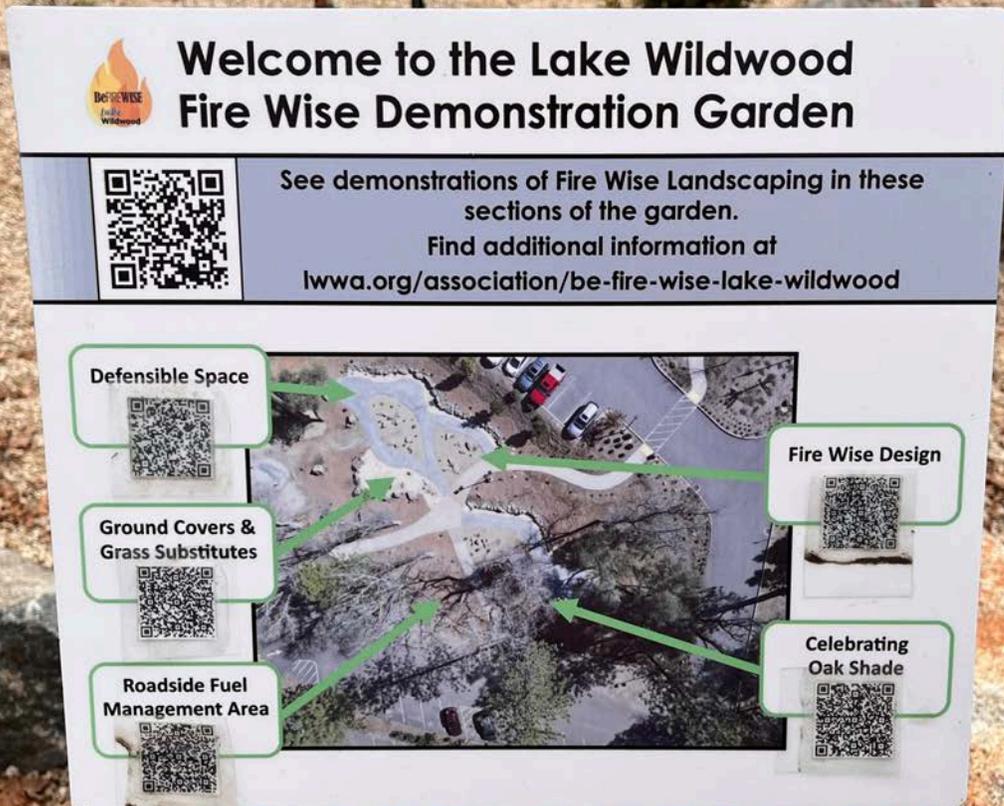
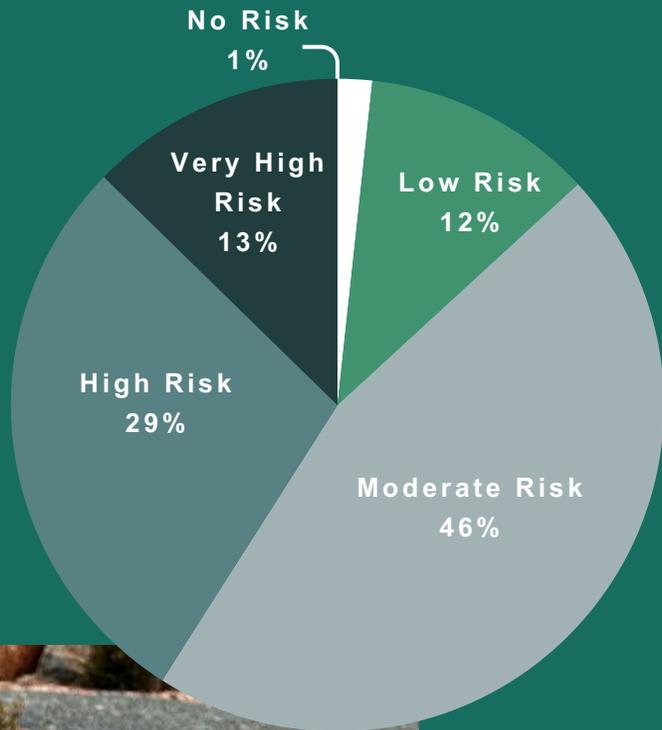
1. *Evacuation Route Improvement*
2. *Defensible Space Assistance*
3. *Roadside Vegetation Removal*

The CWPP survey asked participants to identify the top three wildfire risk reduction strategies for Nevada County. At the County-level, (1) Evacuation Route Improvement, (2) Defensible Space Assistance, and (3) Roadside Vegetation Removal were identified as the top priorities. This was echoed in the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of survey respondents in the Higgins/Penn Valley FZ identified Evacuation Route Improvement as their top priority for Nevada County. Defensible Space Assistance was the second highest priority (52% of respondents) and Roadside Vegetation Removal was the third highest priority for 41% of survey respondents in Higgins/Penn Valley FZ.

# PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK PERCEPTION

Personal perception of wildfire risk is how one views one's own risk from wildfire or wildfire impacts.

The majority (46%) of survey respondents felt that their personal wildfire risk was Moderate. Comparatively, survey respondents viewed the County-level wildfire risk as Very High or High. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents viewed their personal wildfire risk as High, 13% viewed it as Very High, 12% viewed it as Low, and 1% viewed their personal wildfire risk as No Risk.

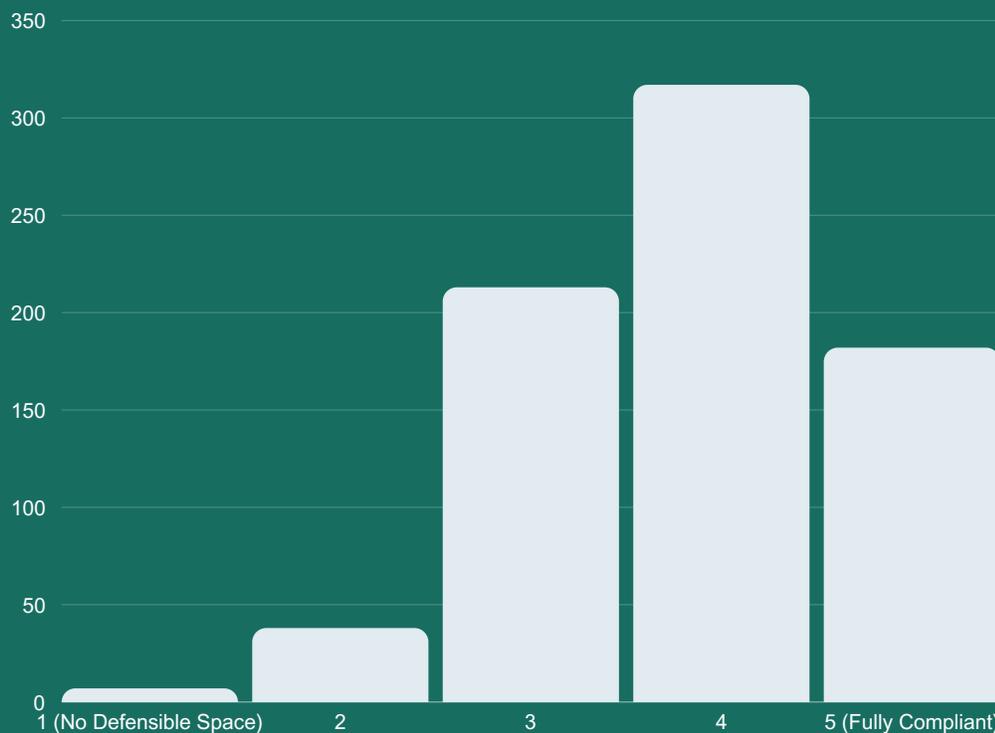


# DEFENSIBLE SPACE



The CWPP survey asked respondents to evaluate the defensible space around their home, place of residence, workplace, or business. Respondents ranked their defensible space on a scale of one to five, with one representing no defensible space and five representing fully compliant defensible space.

In Higgins/Penn Valley FZ the majority of respondents felt that their defensible space around their home, residence, workplace, or business was almost fully compliant and ranked it as a four. Only 22% of participants indicated that they have fully compliant defensible space. One percent (1%) of respondents indicated that they have no defensible space.



**4.4**

*On average, survey participants scored their defensible space as a 4.4*

# MAIN CHALLENGES TO REDUCING WILDFIRE RISK



## 01. Fuel on Neighboring Properties

Fuel on Neighboring Properties was viewed as the greatest challenge for survey respondents in the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone for reducing their wildfire risk. Over half the survey respondents (55%) identified this as their main challenge.



## 02. Cost of Home Hardening

The Cost of Home Hardening was viewed as a major barrier to reducing one's wildfire risk and was selected as a challenge by 35% of survey respondents in the Forecast Zone, which was greater than the County-Wide results.



## 03. Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space

Thirty-three percent (33%) selected the Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space as a challenge to reducing their wildfire risk making it the third biggest challenge identified by the survey respondents.

*“Assistance with reducing fuel loads on private roads is needed, neighbors won’t address it” - Anonymous Response*

*“Biggest concerns are properties owned by non-compliant neighbors - both residents, renters, investors, and nonresidents who do not bring their properties up to Nevada County standards.” - Anonymous Response*

*“Cost is always the number one barrier to effective protection, preparedness, and willingness.” - Anonymous Response*

# EVACUATION WILLINGNESS



# 52%

Like the County-wide results the majority of respondents in Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone, 52%, indicated that they had never evacuated from a wildfire in Nevada County before.

# 50%

However, when asked about their likely evacuation behavior in a wildfire, half (50%) of respondents said that in an evacuation situation, they would leave as early as possible while 24% said they would only leave if an official order was issued.

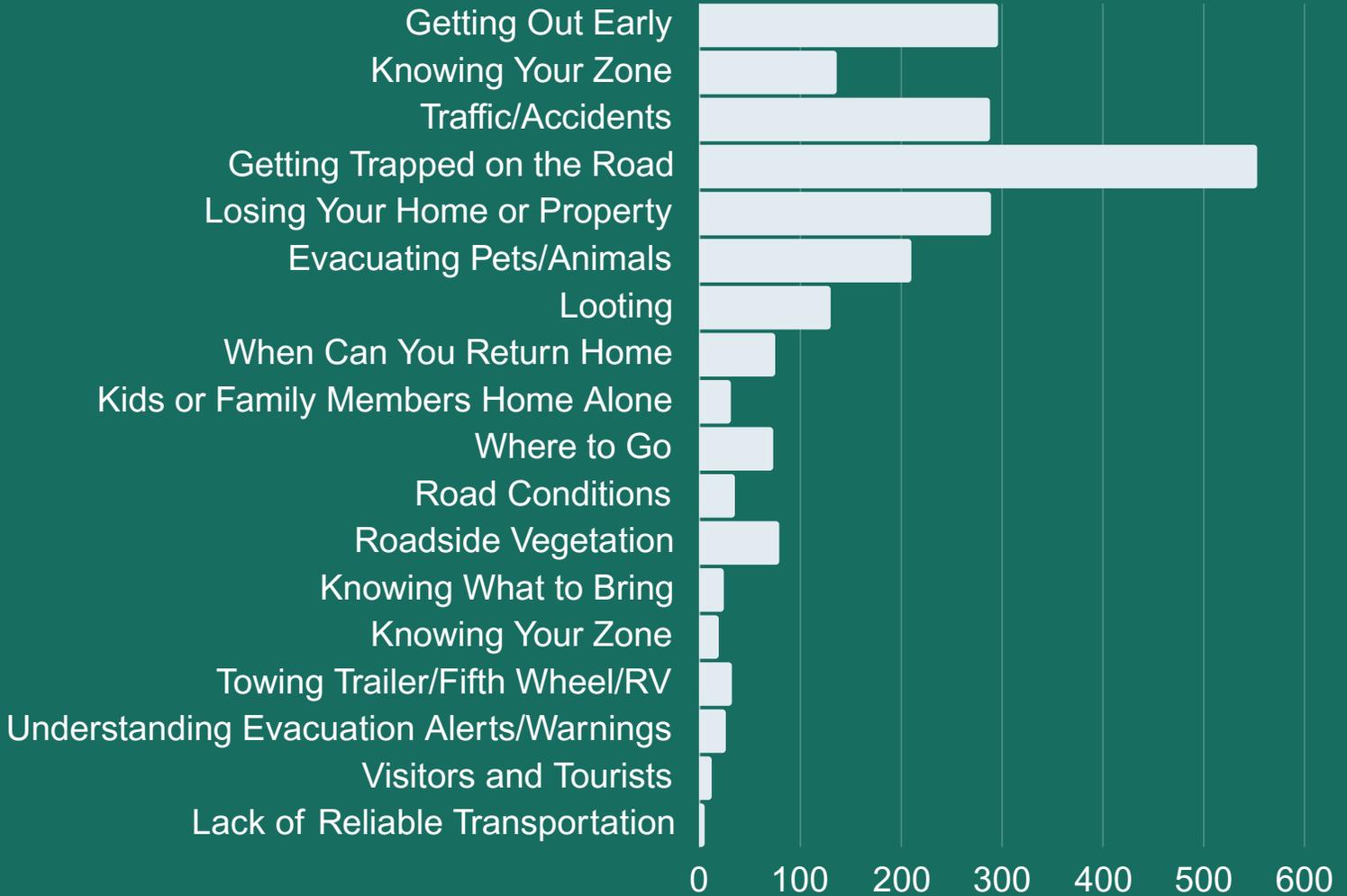
# 4%

Four percent (4%) of respondents said that in a wildfire they would choose not to evacuate. When asked a follow up question, about what could change their evacuation behavior, the majority of respondents indicated that nothing would change their decision to not evacuate.

*...The River Fire allowed Alta Sierra residents to leave homes early (via Alta Sierra Road or Brewer Road) only to be stopped for 2 hours on 49 due to car accidents... All evacuation routes need mandatory roadside defensible space brush and tree removal with public safety traffic control..." - Anonymous Response*



# EVACUATION CONCERNS



The CWPP Survey also collected information about respondents' main evacuation concerns. Respondents could choose from nineteen evacuation concerns. Each respondent was requested to choose three main concerns they had about evacuation. The chart above displays the primary evacuation concerns identified in the Higgins/Penn Valley Forecast Zone.

Over 70% of survey participants indicated that their main evacuation concern was Getting Trapped on the Road, which was consistent with the County-wide survey results. Getting out Early was the second highest concern and was closely followed by Losing Your Home/Property and Traffic Accidents. The least concerning were Lack of Reliable Transportation, Visitors/Tourists, and Knowing Your Zone respectively.



# CONCLUSION

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Survey gave the Nevada County community an opportunity to share their perspective on the wildfire problem and identify priorities for becoming more wildfire resilient.

The results from the CWPP survey were incorporated into the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA) and were used to help identify the Project Priority Areas. The Project Priority Areas are geographically delineated areas on the landscape that are prioritized for risk reduction activities based on the wildfire hazard and the protection of High-Value Resources and Assets at risk that were identified by the community in the survey. The results from the survey were also used to help create the CWPP Risk Reduction Workshops and the Community Action Plans.



*“Overall, I think Nevada County does a great job at making everybody aware of what’s going on and what your options are and where to go. I just wish that everybody would pay attention and do their part as citizens...” - Anonymous Response*



NEVADA  
COUNTY  
CALIFORNIA

Office of Emergency  
Services

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NEVADA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

# APPENDIX B

GRASS VALLEY/NEVADA CITY FORECAST ZONE  
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY  
RESULTS



# WILDFIRE IN GRASS VALLEY/NEVADA CITY

*Collaborative community-based planning around wildfire protection will allow us to reduce wildfire risk and protect what the Nevada County community values.*

## Results at a Glance

In 2023, the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey which presented an opportunity to understand the wildfire challenges and the place-based expertise of community members. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses, 2% of the County population, with 1034 responses from the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone, between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023



NEVADA COUNTY HAS A VERY HIGH FIRE RISK



67% OF PEOPLE PRIORITIZED PROTECTING COMMUNITY LIFELINES



63% OF PEOPLE SAW PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK AS HIGH OR VERY HIGH



FUEL ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES WAS THE MAIN CHALLENGE



EVACUATION IMPROVEMENT WAS THE HIGHEST COMMUNITY PRIORITY



50% OF PEOPLE HAVE NEVER EVACUATED BEFORE



46% OF PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE



TRAPPED ON THE ROAD WAS THE LARGEST EVACUATION CONCERN

*"We need a "whole community" approach to reducing our fire risk...Nobody wants to buy a home in areas with high fire risks. We need innovation and creativity to develop physical on-the-ground solutions....We all need to change our ways. Business as usual does not work anymore" - - Anonymous Response*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 01** Introduction
- 03** CWPP Forecast Zones
- 04** Grass Valley/Nevada City
- 05** Nevada County Community
- 07** Community Wildfire Protection Plan Survey
- 11** High-Value Resources and Assets at Risk
- 10** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 12** Nevada County Wildfire Risk Perception
- 13** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 14** Personal Wildfire Risk Perception
- 15** Defensible Space
- 16** Main Challenges to Reducing Wildfire Risk
- 17** Evacuation Willingness

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**18** Evacuation Concerns

**19** Conclusion

# INTRODUCTION

In 2023 the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). CWPPs were created by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) and are important planning processes that help at-risk communities prepare for and mitigate the risk of wildfire. Public participation is both a requirement and a critical element of the CWPP process. As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey.

CWPPs are planning processes that aim to help communities understand their risk from wildfires and take on risk-reduction actions. CWPPs have evolved to become strategic wildfire planning documents. They are not regulatory documents but they do have to meet 3 minimum requirements:

- Regional Collaboration
- Identify and Prioritize Areas for Risk Reduction
- Identify Methods for Reducing Structural Ignitability

An important part of the CWPP is the development of the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA). The WRA determines wildfire risk by looking at the intersection of wildfire hazard with the High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRAs) at risk to determine their susceptibility to wildfire. The WRA is informed by community values as a crucial step in determining the prioritization of the HVRAs. This allows the results of the WRA to not only be informed by the conditions on the ground but also by what a community determines to be important to protect from wildfire. The goal of the Nevada County CWPP update was to prioritize the places and resources that are important to the residents of Nevada County and to protect what is valued most by the community.

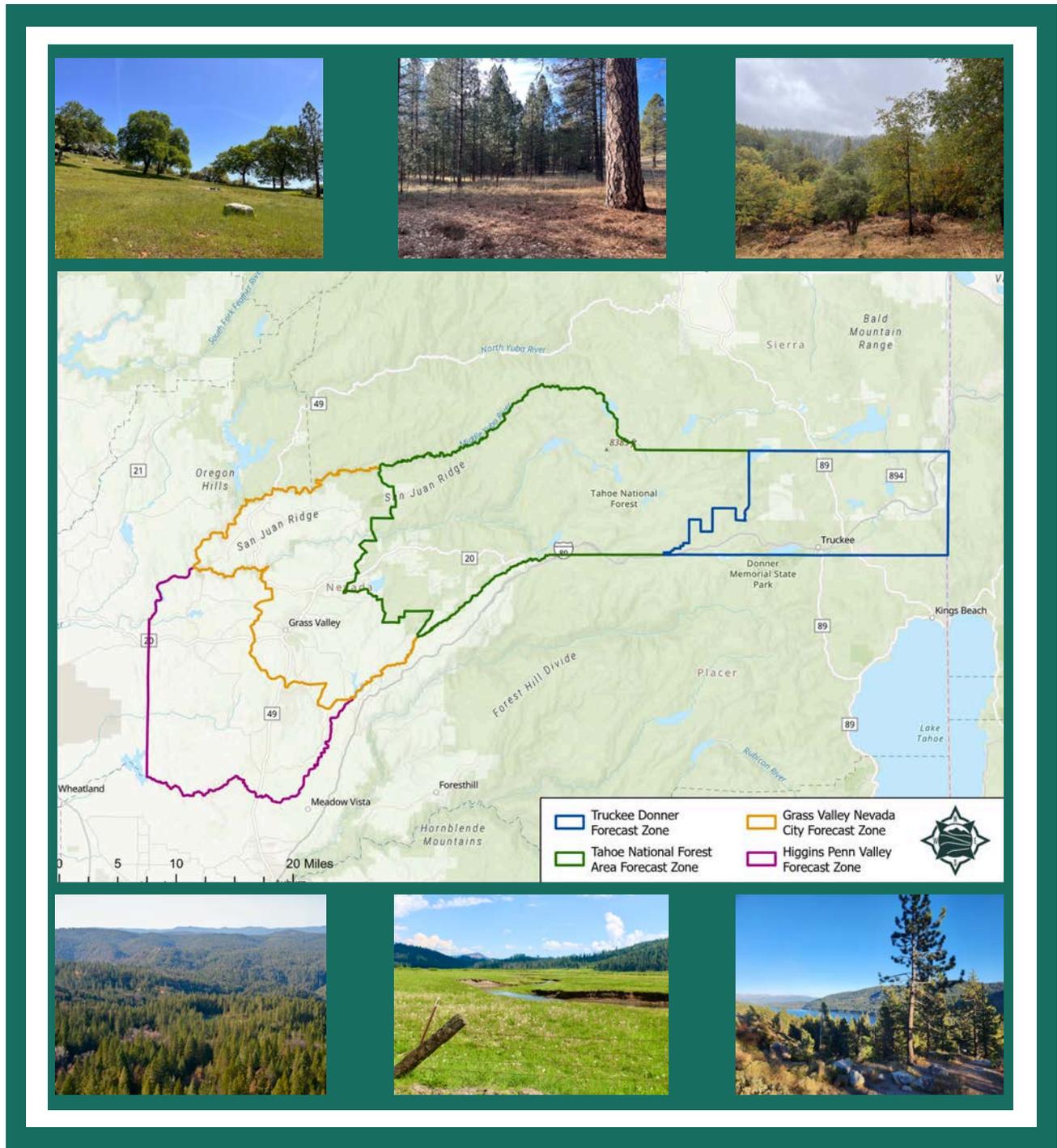
The CWPP survey had two valuable roles in the planning process: (1) it captured information needed for the WRA, and (2) it captured information about the community's perception of wildfire risk, community values, and evacuation willingness.



The survey was distributed through traditional means such as press releases and social media. It was also distributed through an “ email tree” which leaned on partners, members of the OES led Quarterly Wildfire Stakeholder group, and the OES Virtual Office Hours platform. Hundreds of emails were leveraged to distribute the survey on OES’s behalf. The survey was also administered in-person across the County. OES distributed the survey through various meetings (in-person and online), Defensible Space Inspectors distributed it in the field, and it was facilitated at 70 community/stakeholder events. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.

***This Appendix covers the results specific to the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone. These results do not supplant or supersede the County-wide results but rather shed light on an area-specific analysis.***

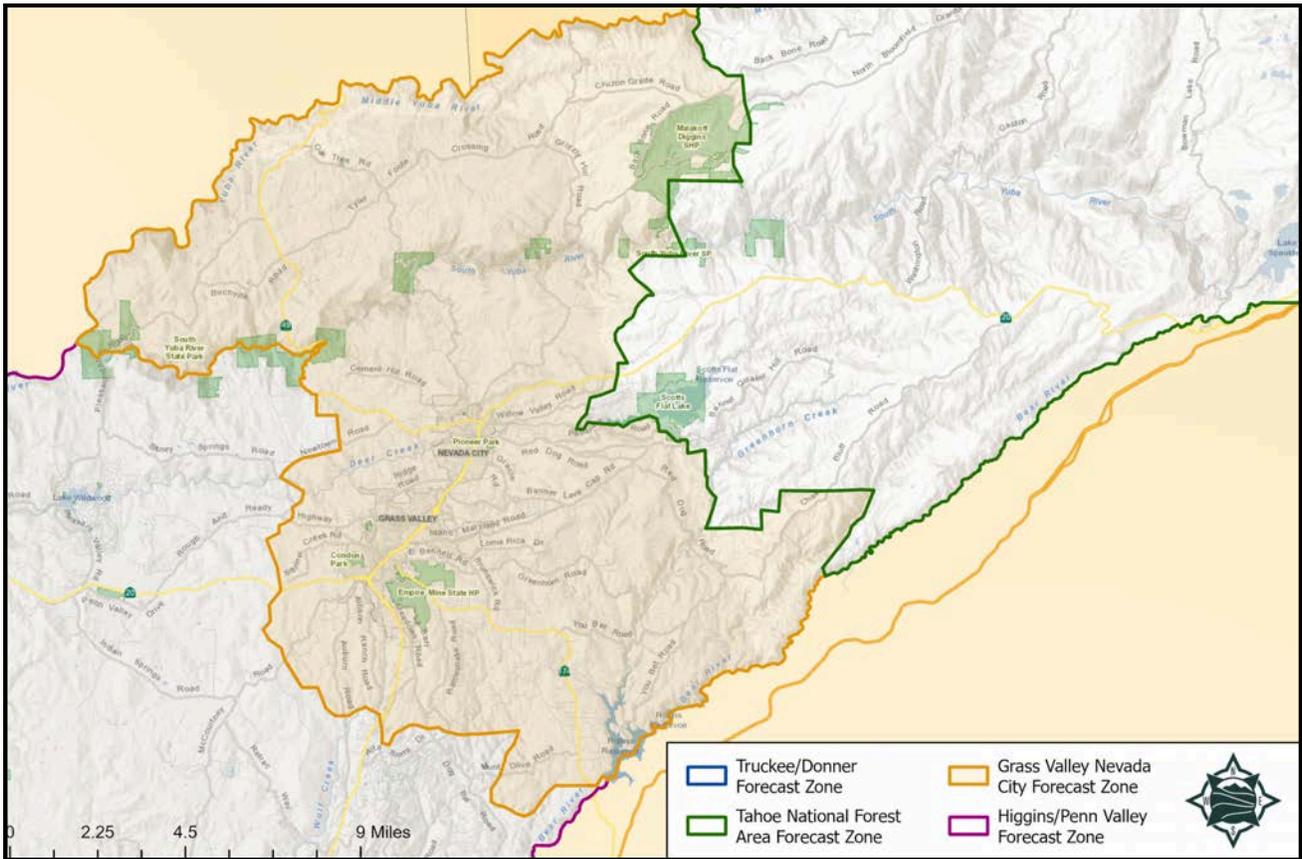
*“I answered these questions for myself - I live near town on a property with a lot of defensible space. What concerns me most is the bigger picture. Even if my house was standing, if my property/town burned the way I have seen in Paradise or other towns, I would not want to stay. I would not want to live in an ash covered, burnt out town while it regrew/rebuilt. I would likely move out of the area” - Anonymous Response*



# CWPP FORECAST ZONES

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is an essential document for wildfire preparedness and risk reduction in Nevada County. In order to capture the differences in wildfire risk across the County landscape, the County was divided into four Forecast Zones (FZs). The FZs were delineated based on similarities in the fire environment and in community identity.

# GRASS VALLEY/NEVADA CITY



Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone (FZ) is centrally located in western Nevada County. The FZ is 136,166 acres. The FZ’s right side is roughly delineated along the 2,000-foot elevation line. The northern and southern boundaries follow the Nevada County line where they border Yuba County and Placer County respectively. The eastern boundary approximately follows the Tahoe National Forest except in areas where the Tahoe National Forest boundary bisects existing communities.

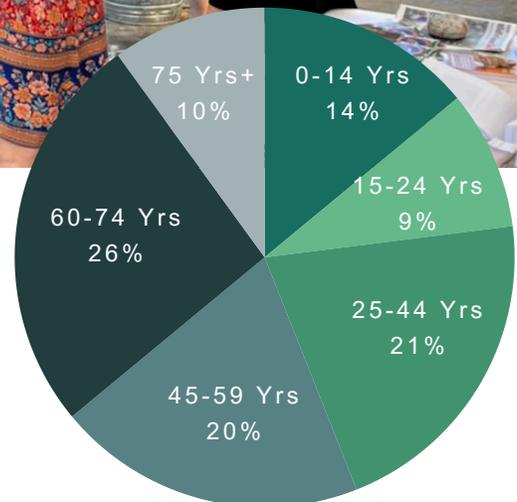
*“I think more attention needs to be paid to “landscape-scale” forest health. Fuel breaks are good for agency access, but don’t reduce fire severity and transmission at the landscape scale. We should be re-introducing structural complexity into forests” - Anonymous Response*



# NEVADA COUNTY COMMUNITY

Nevada County is a rural community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Within the County are three incorporated cities, (the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, and the Town of Truckee), and numerous unincorporated communities. Communities in Nevada County are very diverse in terms of lifestyle, ranging from rural lifestyle and working landscape communities to traditional suburban homes and high amenity high-resource subdivisions. Nevada County's population is estimated to be 97,466 people in 2020, per the U.S. Census, with a population density of 102 people per square mile (County of Nevada, 2021). The majority of residents (67%) live in unincorporated areas of the County. Most of these residents live in the western half of the County.

Nevada County has a fairly aged population as 36% of residents are older than 60. According to the State Department of Finance, 29% of residents are under the age of 30. The Nevada County community is considered to be a well-educated



*Data Source: Nevada County 2021 Demographic and Statistical Profile*

population. Seventy-five percent of residents have attended some college and over 20% have a bachelor's degree. Of the Nevada County population, just over 8% of residents are considered to be impoverished. Nevada County has the 3rd lowest percentage of people in poverty when compared to neighboring counties. Eighty-four percent (84%) of Nevada County residents live in a single-family home. The majority of the population (52%) live in owner-occupied units.

Overall, the community is largely comprised of older residents who are generally well-educated, relatively affluent and own their own homes.

## Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone

Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone (FZ) is centrally located in western Nevada County. Within the FZ there are several significant topographic features. This includes the South Yuba River, the Deer Creek River, Greenhorn Creek, Bear River, and Wolf Creek. These river drainages are well-known for their steep topography, dense vegetation, and high ignition risk due to human activities.

The Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ is the most developed FZ and as a result, it is where the majority of the County's critical infrastructure is concentrated. Within the FZ are critical assets such as the Grass Valley Air Attack Base, the County administrative building, communication towers, critical water infrastructure, and more. Essential community services such as post offices, grocery stores, and gas stations are also concentrated within the FZ. Two of the three incorporated cities are within the Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ. These are the City of Grass Valley and the City of Nevada City. The FZ is also where the majority of the residential housing is located and businesses are located.

Though the FZ includes the "urban" center of Nevada County the community makeup and archetypes vary across the FZ. The archetypes within Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ include working landscape, rural lifestyle, subdivision, urban development, and high-amenity high-resource communities. Housing density varies as well, ranging from historic homes in the cities to off-grid homes on multiple acres. Some of the major communities in the FZ are the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, North San Juan, Newtown, Banner Mountain, You Bet, Greenhorn, and Lower Colfax. Many of the communities in the FZ are also National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Recognized Firewise Communities.



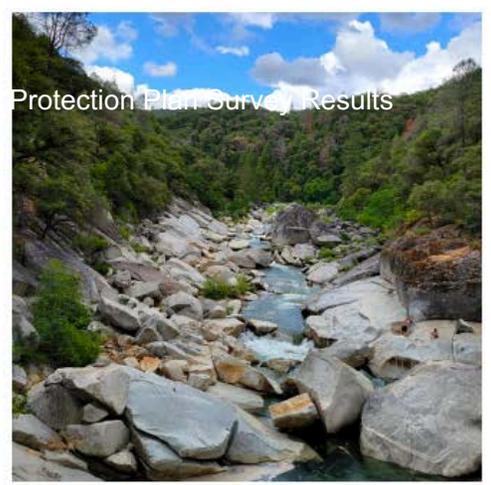
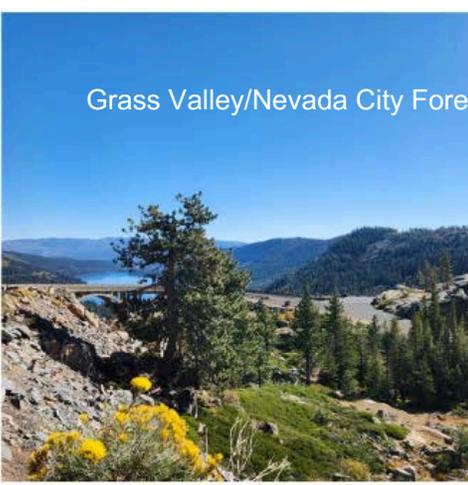
# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) survey was an online survey hosted on Microsoft Forms. It was open from June 1, 2023 until August 31, 2023. The survey was also available in print format. Both the online version and the print version were available in English and in Spanish. The survey was open to residents, property owners, and workers of Nevada County.

The survey asked 15 questions in total. Of the 15 questions, four were demographic questions, three were about County Wildfire Risk, three assessed personal wildfire risk perception, five assessed evacuation willingness, and one was an open-ended feedback section. The survey was distributed through a variety of means including press releases, social media, emails, newsletters, ad buys, radio, and flyers, and available at over 70 meetings/community events during the survey period. In total, the survey captured 2,267 responses.



*“Thanks for the opportunity to get feedback from the community on our largest priorities when it comes to wildfires. Being aware of knowing how to defend our homes and what to do if we need to be evacuated in case of a wildfire” - Anonymous Response.*



# We want to hear from you!

## Take the Community Wildfire Protection Plan

**SURVEY**



**2,267**

In total, the survey received 2,267 responses over the course of three months. Fifty percent (50%) of responses were recorded in the first 30 days of the survey being open.

**2,220**

Of the 2,267 survey responses, 2,220 participants indicated that they either lived, worked, or owned property in Nevada County. Only 47 respondents did not live, work, or own property within the County.

**81%**

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the participants identified as primary homeowners, 8% identified as secondary homeowners, 7% said they were renters, 1% said they were undeveloped property owners, 1% were workforce, <1% were business owners.

**48%**

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents were over the age of 65, the largest response group. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents were between 45 and 65. The lowest response group was people under the age of 35 with 102 responses.



## Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone

# 1032

One-thousand and thirty-two survey responses were from the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone.

# 46%

Forty-six percent (46%) of the total survey responses were from the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone.

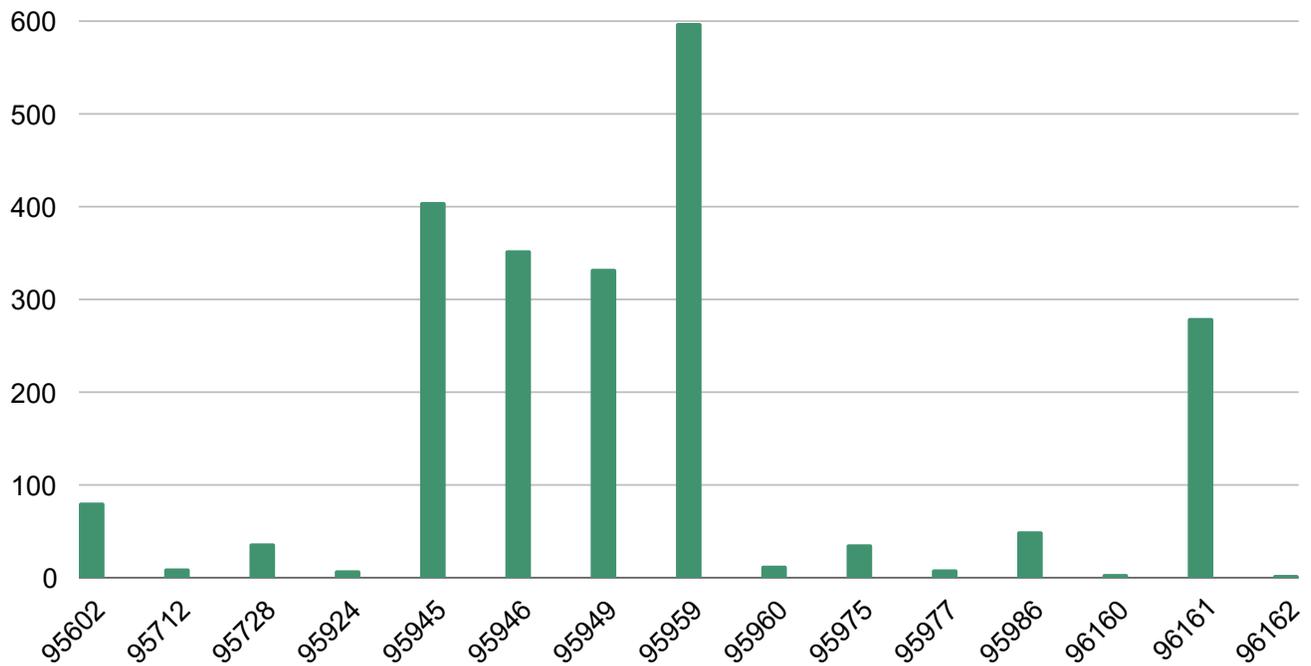
# 43%

The majority of survey respondents (43%) in the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone were over the age of 65. Twenty-three percent (23%) were between the ages 56 and 65, 13% were between 46 and 55, 12% were between 36 and 45, 4% were between 26 and 35, and less than 1% were under the age of 25.

# 84%

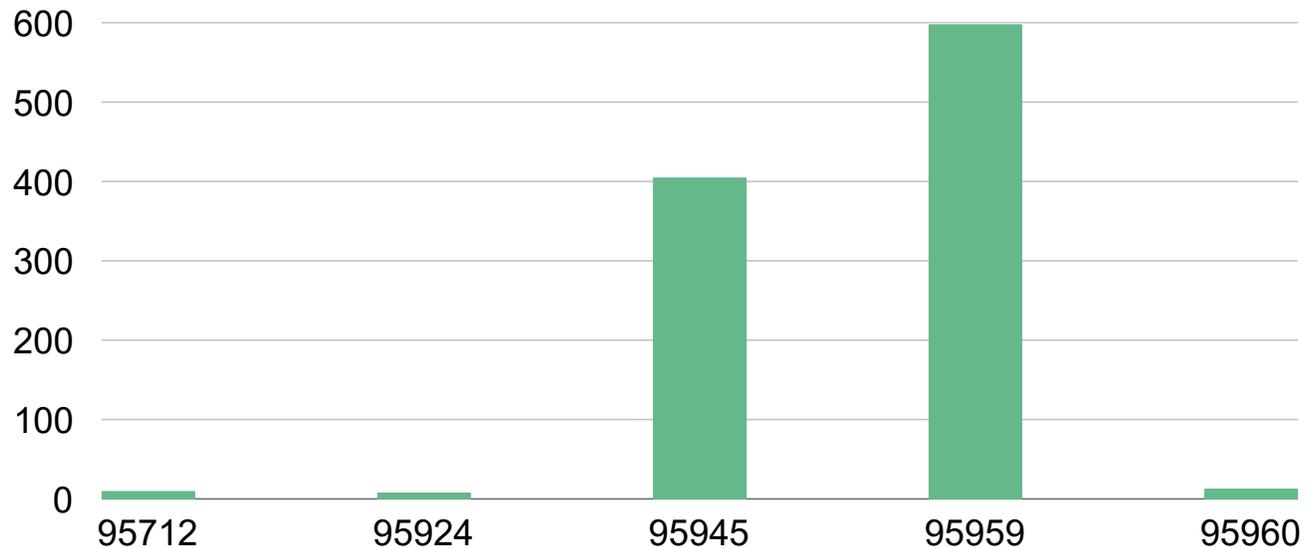
Of the 1032 survey responses, 84% (868) of respondents indicated that they were primary homeowners. Nine percent (9%) were renters and 4% were secondary homeowners. Less than 1% of respondents were either business owners, undeveloped property owners, or workforce.





Number of Responses per Nevada County Zip Codes

Within Nevada County, there are 15 separate zip codes, with the majority correlating to western Nevada County. The majority (598) of respondents were from the 95959 zip code which includes the City of Nevada City and unincorporated areas of the County such as North San Juan, Banner Mountain, You Bet, and Highway 20. The second highest response rate was from zip code 95945 with 405 responses. This zip code includes the City of Grass Valley and communities living off Highway 174 such as Lower Colfax, Greenhorn, and Chicago Park. There were 287 responses from east Nevada County zip codes 96160, 96161, and 96162 which includes the Town of Truckee and unincorporated areas.



Number of Responses per Grass Valley/Nevada City Zip Codes

There are five zip codes within the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone (FZ). The majority of respondents were from zip codes 95959 (598 responses) or 95945 (405 responses). These zip codes include City of Nevada City, City of Grass Valley, the San Juan Ridge, Banner Mountain and Brunswick. Zip codes 95712, 95924, and 95960 all had less than 100 participants, with 95924 having the least. These zip codes cover Rollins Reservoir, Cedar Ridge, and North San Juan.

# HIGH VALUE RESOURCES AND ASSETS AT RISK

Survey respondents were asked to rank and prioritize High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRA) at risk to protect from wildfire with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least. The highest-ranked HVRA represented the most important HVRA to protect from the impact of wildfire.

**01**

## Community Lifelines

Communities, Critical Water, Power, Transportation, Communication Infrastructure, and Vulnerable Populations

**02**

## Community Health

Wildfire Smoke Potential, Soil Vulnerability, Hazardous Waste Sites, Hospital and Shelter Facilities, and Solid Waste Sites

**03**

## Natural Resources

Outdoor Recreation Resources, Watersheds, Significant Species, Oak Woodlands, and Climate Resilient Areas

**04**

## Economic Resources

Recreation, Historic and Cultural Districts, and Government Buildings

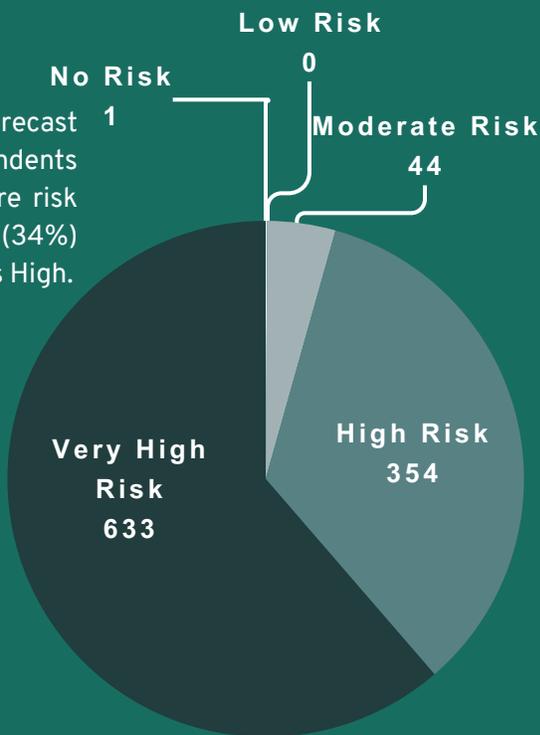
The HVRAs were ranked as Community Lifelines being the most important, followed by Community Health, then Natural Resources, and finally Economic Resources. Community Lifelines was chosen as the most important HVRA to protect from wildfire by 67% of participants. Community Health was the second most important HVRA for 44% of respondents. Natural Resources was the third most important HVRA for 36% of respondents and Economic Resources was the fourth choice for 48% of respondents. This was in alignment with the prioritization at the County-level.



# NEVADA COUNTY WILDFIRE RISK

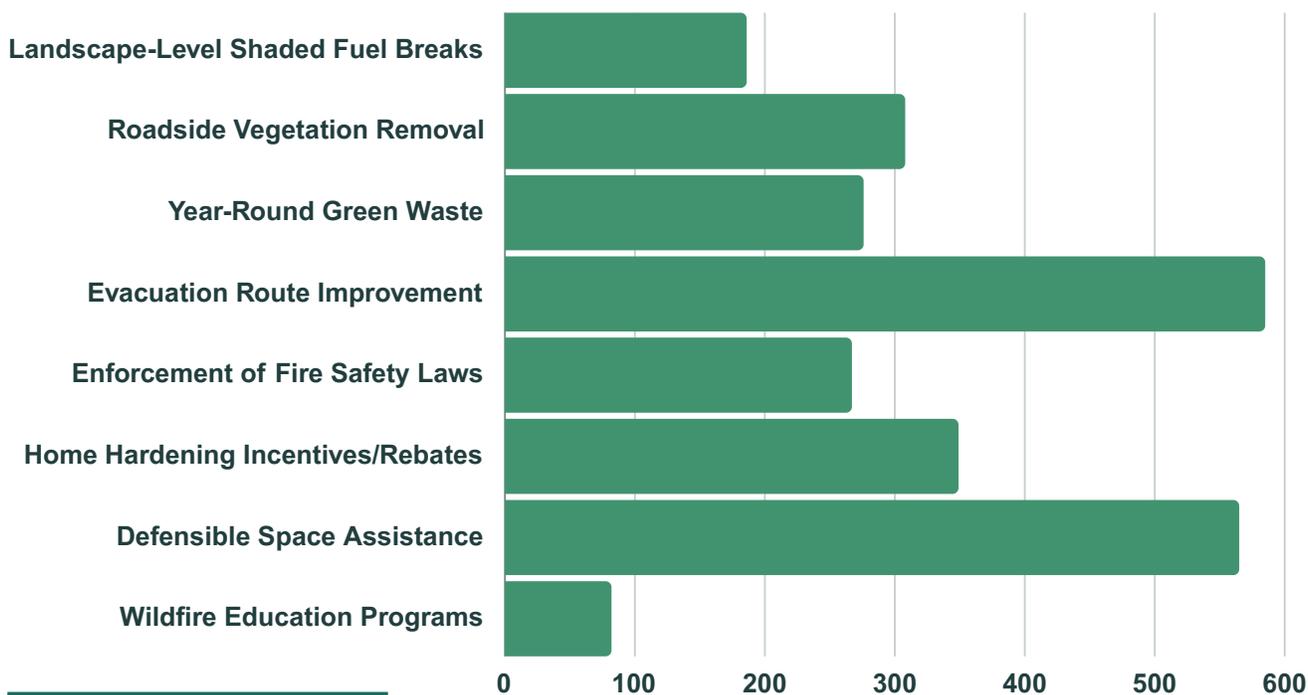
# 61%

In the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone, 61% (633) of survey respondents felt that the Nevada County wildfire risk was Very High. Thirty-four percent (34%) of respondents felt that the risk was High.



*“I would also like to see fuel reduction programs focusing on disadvantaged communities that are at the highest risk of losing property/livelihood to wildfire.” - Anonymous Response*

# NEVADA COUNTY RISK REDUCTION PRIORITIES



## Top 3 Wildfire Risk Reduction Priorities for Nevada County

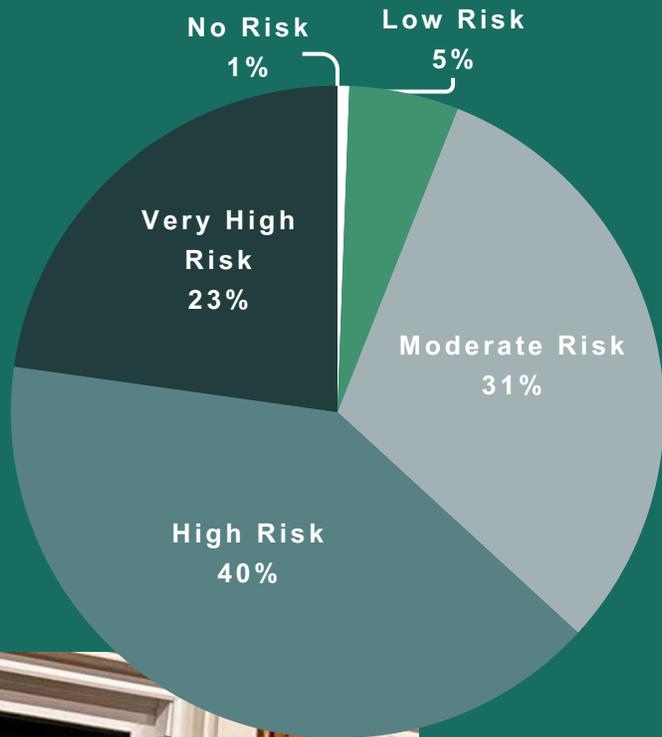
1. *Evacuation Route Improvement*
2. *Defensible Space Assistance*
3. *Home Hardening Incentives/Rebate Programs*

The survey asked participants to identify the top three wildfire risk reduction strategies for Nevada County. Evacuation Route Improvement, Defensible Space Assistance, and Roadside Vegetation Removal were identified as the top priorities at the County-level. This was partially echoed in the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone (FZ). Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents in the Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ identified Evacuation Route Improvement as their top priority for Nevada County. Defensible Space Assistance was the second highest priority for 55% of respondents from the Forecast Zone. However, unlike the County-level results the third highest priority was Home Hardening Incentives/Rebate Programs for 34% of respondents.

# PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK PERCEPTION

Personal perception of wildfire risk is how one views one's own risk from wildfire or wildfire impacts.

The majority (40%) of survey respondents felt that their personal wildfire risk was High. Comparatively, survey respondents viewed the County-level wildfire risk as Very High. Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents viewed their personal wildfire risk as Very High, 31% viewed it as Moderate, 5% viewed it as Low, and 1% viewed their personal wildfire risk as No Risk.

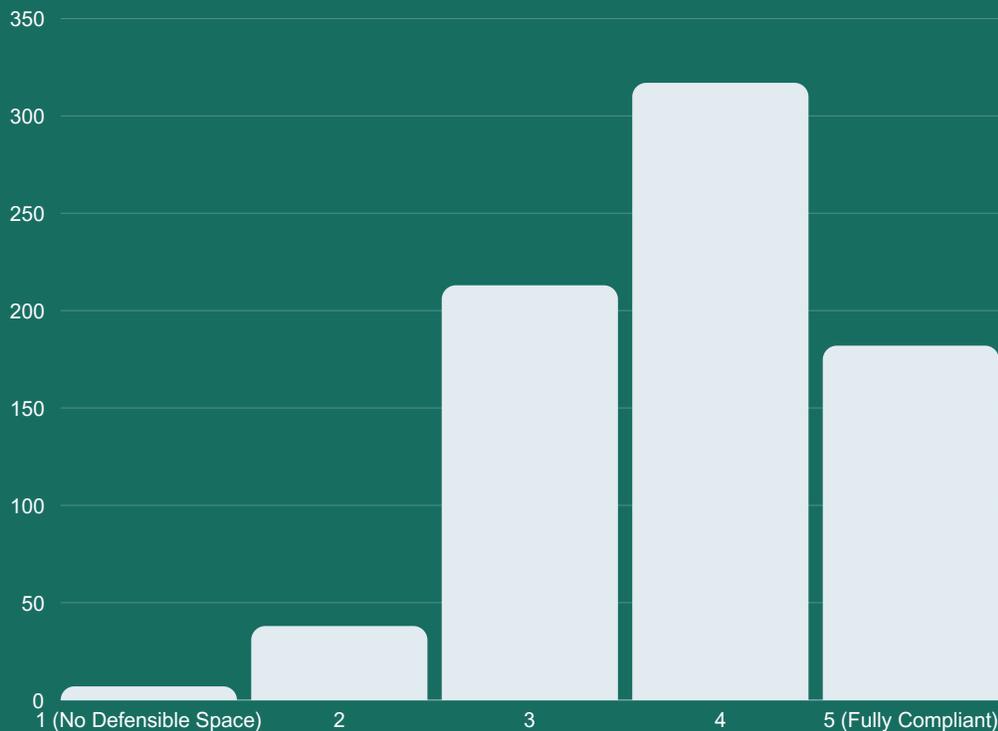


# DEFENSIBLE SPACE



The CWPP survey asked respondents to evaluate the defensible space around their home, place of residence, workplace, or business. Respondents ranked their defensible space on a scale of one to five, with one representing no defensible space and five representing fully compliant defensible space.

In the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone, the majority of participants felt that their defensible space around their property, residence, workplace, or business was almost fully compliant and ranked it as a 4. Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents viewed their defensible space as a rating of 3. Only 22% of participants indicated that they have fully compliant defensible space. One percent (1%) of respondents indicated that they have no defensible space.



**3**

*On average, survey participants scored their defensible space as a 3*

# MAIN CHALLENGES TO REDUCING WILDFIRE RISK



## 01. Fuel on Neighboring Properties

Fuel on Neighboring Properties was viewed as the greatest challenge for survey respondents in the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone in reducing their wildfire risk. Over half the survey respondents (61%) chose this as their main challenge.



## 02. Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space

Thirty-seven percent (37%) selected the Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space as a challenge to reducing their wildfire risk making it the second biggest challenge identified by the survey



## 03. Cost of Home Hardening

The Cost of Home Hardening was viewed as a major barrier to reducing one's wildfire risk and was selected as a challenge by 34% of survey respondents in the Forecast Zone, which was slightly greater than the County-wide results.

*"I have spent a lot of time and money to make my property fire-safe and to follow the recommendations. Unfortunately, due to where the property line falls on one side, I don't have the recommended 100 ft clearance as the last 30 ft of the 100 ft is on the neighbor's property." - Anonymous Response*

*"We are doing what we can to create defensible space. We have to hire help for this work and funds are scarce." - Anonymous Response*

*"Assistance for seniors that do not have the ability or funds to complete necessary fire hardening would be much needed." - Anonymous Response*

# EVACUATION WILLINGNESS



# 50%

Half of the survey respondents in the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone indicated that they had never evacuated from a wildfire in Nevada County. Thirty-two percent (32%) had evacuated from a wildfire once.

# 46%

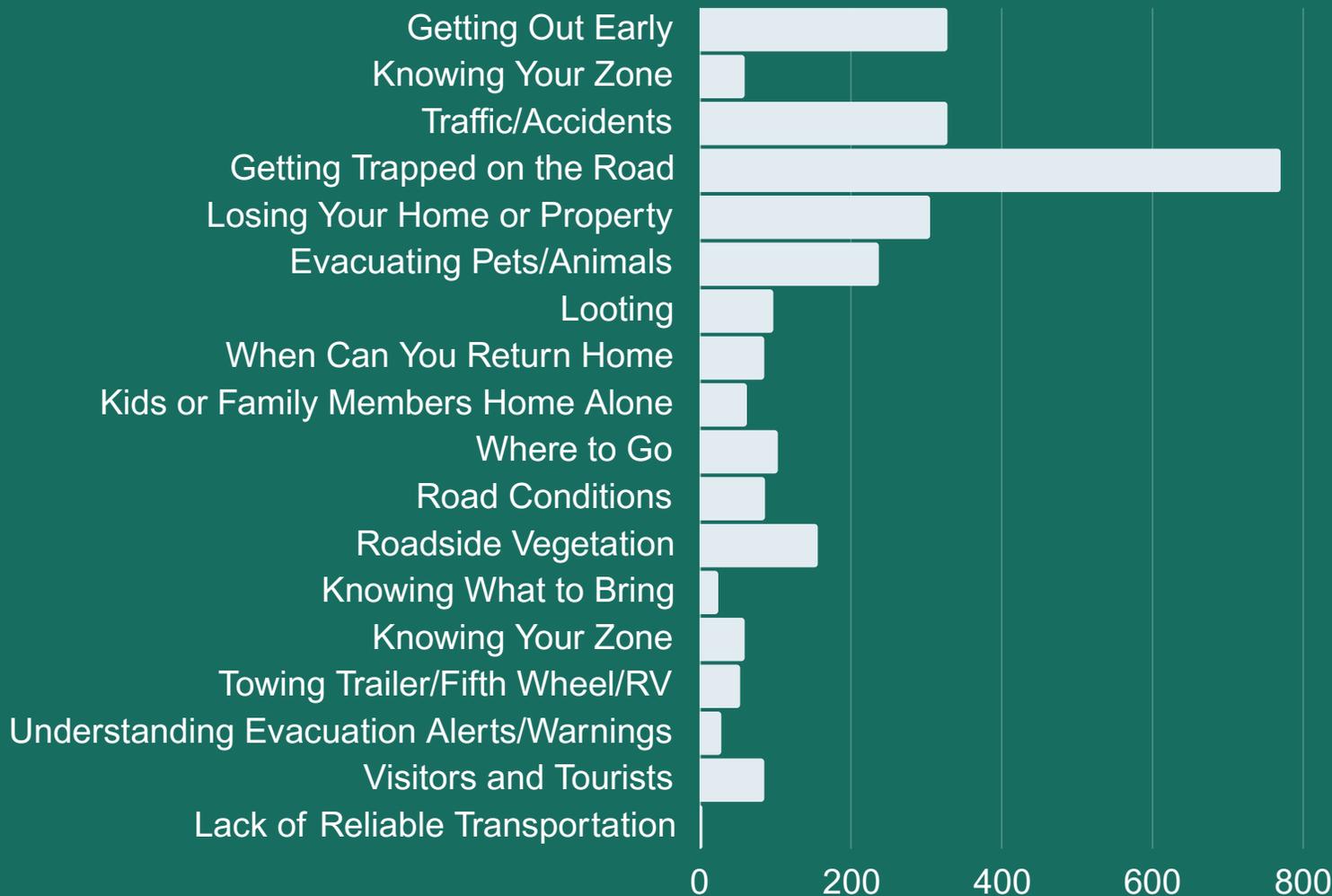
However, when the respondents were asked about their likely evacuation behavior in a wildfire event 46% of respondents said that they would leave as early as possible.

# 4%

Four percent (4%) of participants said that in a wildfire they would choose not to evacuate. When asked a follow-up question, about what could change their evacuation behavior, the majority of respondents indicated that nothing would change their decision to not evacuate.

*“My biggest fear is getting stuck in a big traffic jam with a fire bearing down.” - Anonymous Response*





## EVACUATION CONCERNS

The CWPP Survey also collected information about respondents’ main evacuation concerns. Each participant was requested to choose 3 main concerns they had about evacuation. Participants could choose from nineteen evacuation concerns. The bar chart above displays the primary evacuation concerns for the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone.

Over 70% of survey participants indicated that their main evacuation concern was Getting Trapped on the Road, which was consistent with the County-wide survey results. The second highest concern was tied between Getting Out Early and Traffic Accidents. The third highest concern was Losing Your Home or Property. The least concerning were Lack of Reliable Transportation, Visitors/Tourist, and Knowing What to Bring respectively.



# CONCLUSION

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Survey gave the Nevada County community an opportunity to share their perspective on the wildfire problem and identify priorities for becoming more wildfire resilient.

The results from the CWPP survey were incorporated into the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA) and were used to help identify the Project Priority Areas. The Project Priority Areas are geographically delineated areas on the landscape that are prioritized for risk reduction activity based on the wildfire hazard and the protection of High-Value Resources and Assets at risk that were identified by the community in the survey. The results from the survey were also used to help create the CWPP Risk Reduction Workshops and the Community Action Plans.

*“The initial question about the priority for protecting various county resources felt very difficult to answer as all 4 are crucial for our continued ability to live and thrive as a community.” - Anonymous Response*



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NEVADA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

# APPENDIX C

TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST AREA FORECAST ZONE  
COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY  
RESULTS



# WILDFIRE IN TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST AREA

*Collaborative community-based planning around wildfire protection will allow us to reduce wildfire risk and protect what the Nevada County community values.*

## Results at a Glance

In 2023, the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey which presented an opportunity to understand the wildfire challenges and the place-based expertise of community members. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses, 2% of the County population, with 648\* responses from the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone, between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.



NEVADA COUNTY HAS A VERY HIGH FIRE RISK



67% OF PEOPLE PRIORITIZED PROTECTING COMMUNITY LIFELINES



40% OF PEOPLE SAW PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK AS HIGH



FUEL ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES WAS THE MAIN CHALLENGE



EVACUATION IMPROVEMENT WAS THE HIGHEST COMMUNITY PRIORITY



54% OF PEOPLE HAVE NEVER EVACUATED BEFORE



47% OF PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE



TRAPPED ON THE ROAD WAS THE LARGEST EVACUATION CONCERN

*“This is not a matter of individual homeowners taking or not taking action. The problem requires a massive, publicly funded fuel reduction (forest thinning and other measures) campaign.” - - Anonymous Response*

\*Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone includes the 95959 and 95986 zip codes. As a result some of the survey responses overlap with the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone which also includes the 95959 zip code.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 01** Introduction
- 03** CWPP Forecast Zones
- 04** Tahoe National Forest Area
- 05** Nevada County Community
- 07** Community Wildfire Protection Plan Survey
- 11** High-Value Resources and Assets at Risk
- 10** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 12** Nevada County Wildfire Risk Perception
- 13** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 14** Personal Wildfire Risk Perception
- 15** Defensible Space
- 16** Main Challenges to Reducing Wildfire Risk
- 17** Evacuation Willingness

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**18** Evacuation Concerns

**19** Conclusion

# INTRODUCTION

In 2023 the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). CWPPs were created by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) and are important planning processes that help at-risk communities prepare for and mitigate the risk of wildfire. Public participation is both a requirement and a critical element of the CWPP process. As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey.

CWPPs are planning processes that aim to help communities understand their risk from wildfires and take on risk-reduction actions. CWPPs have evolved to become strategic wildfire planning documents. They are not regulatory documents but they do have to meet 3 minimum requirements:

- Regional Collaboration
- Identify and Prioritize Areas for Risk Reduction
- Identify Methods for Reducing Structural Ignitability

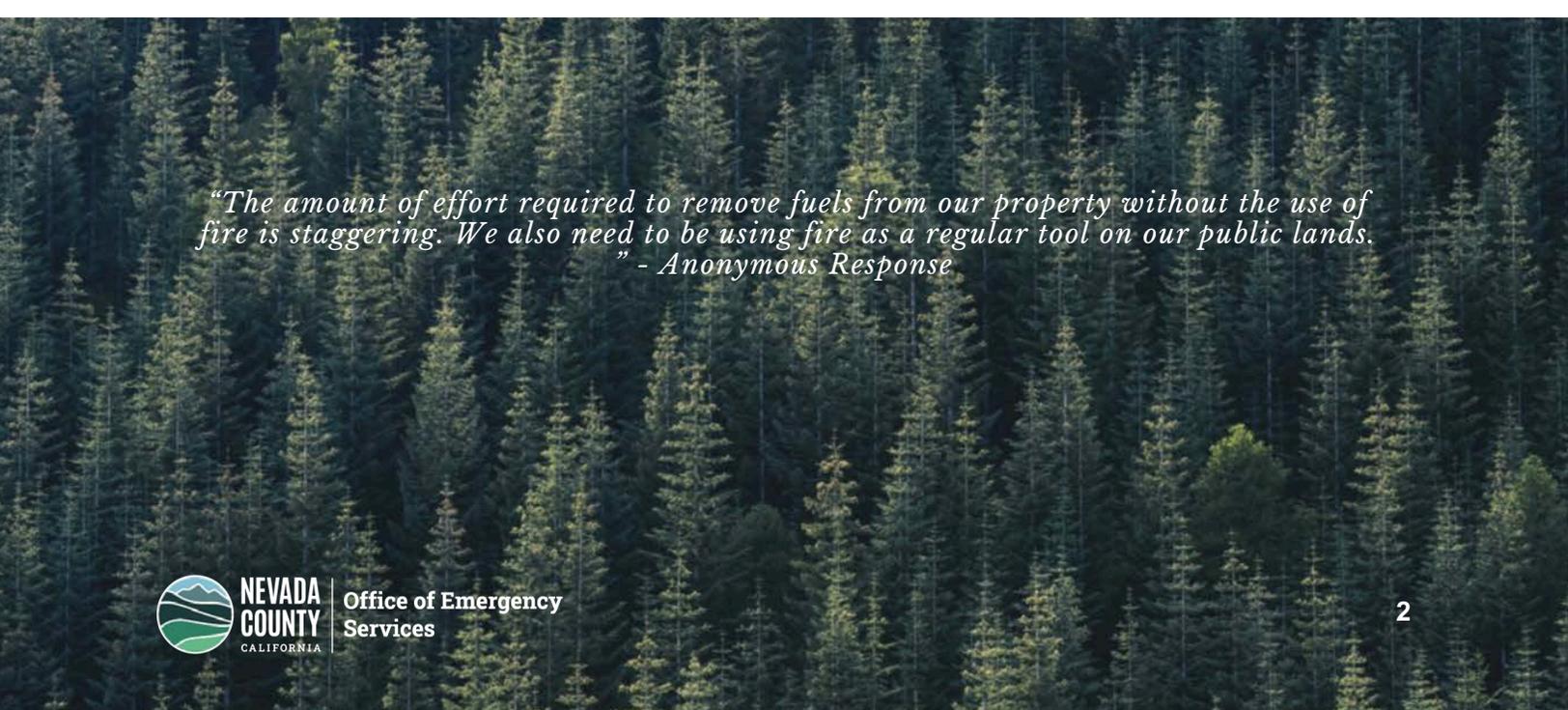
An important part of the CWPP is the development of the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA). The WRA determines wildfire risk by looking at the intersection of wildfire hazard with the High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRAs) at risk to determine their susceptibility to wildfire. The WRA is informed by community values as a crucial step in determining the prioritization of the HVRAs. This allows the results of the WRA to not only be informed by the conditions on the ground but also by what a community determines to be important to protect from wildfire. The goal of the Nevada County CWPP update was to prioritize the places and resources that are important to the residents of Nevada County and to protect what is valued most by the community.

The CWPP survey had two valuable roles in the planning process: (1) it captured information needed for the WRA, and (2) it captured information about the community's perception of wildfire risk, community values, and evacuation willingness.

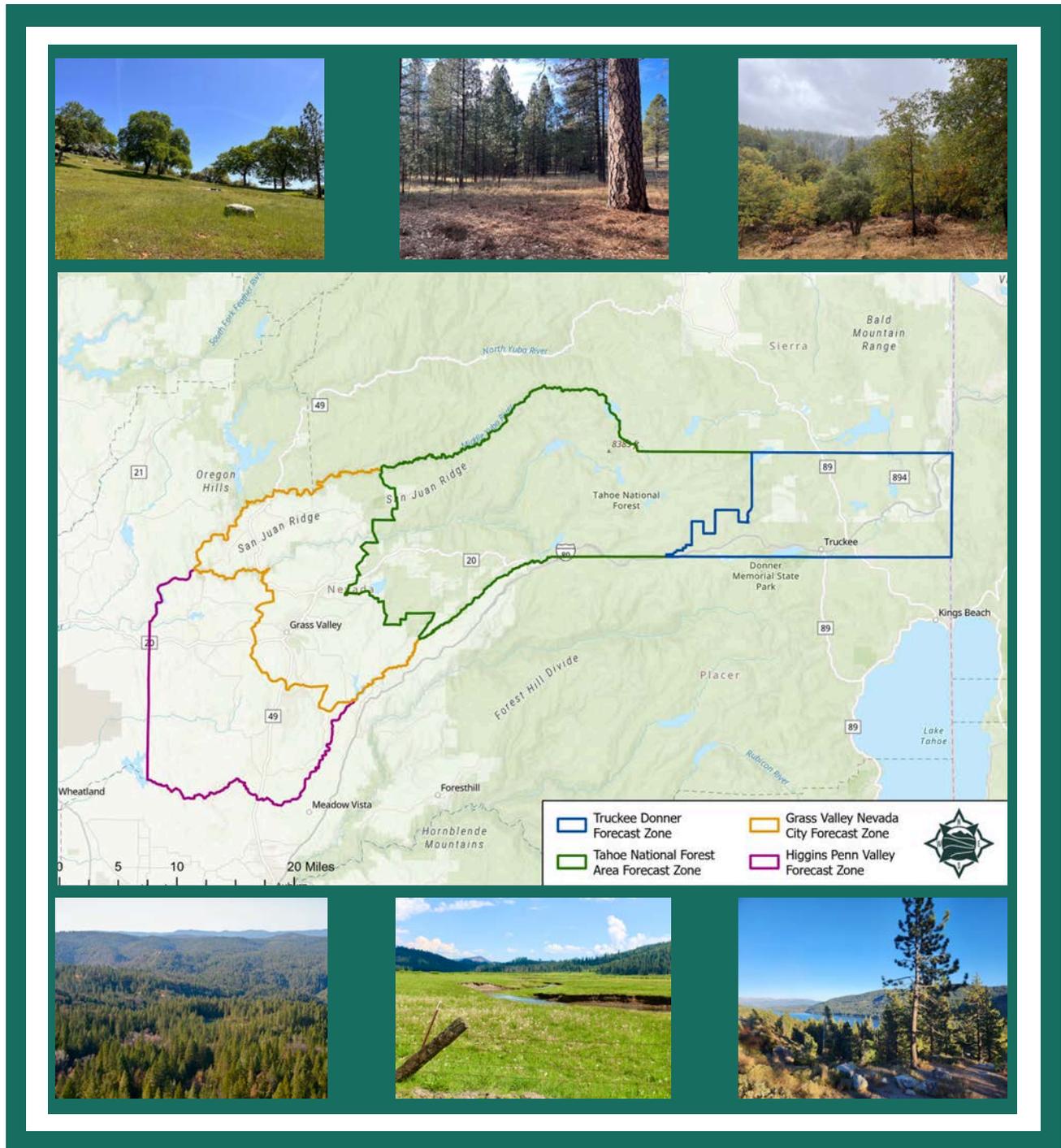


The survey was distributed through traditional means such as press releases and social media. It was also distributed through an “ email tree” which leaned on partners, members of the OES led Quarterly Wildfire Stakeholder group, and the OES Virtual Office Hours platform. Hundreds of emails were leveraged to distribute the survey on OES’s behalf. The survey was also administered in-person across the County. OES distributed the survey through various meetings (in-person and online), Defensible Space Inspectors distributed it in the field, and it was facilitated at 70 community/stakeholder events. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.

***This Appendix covers the results specific to the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone. These results do not supplant or supersede the County-wide results but rather shed light on an area-specific analysis.***



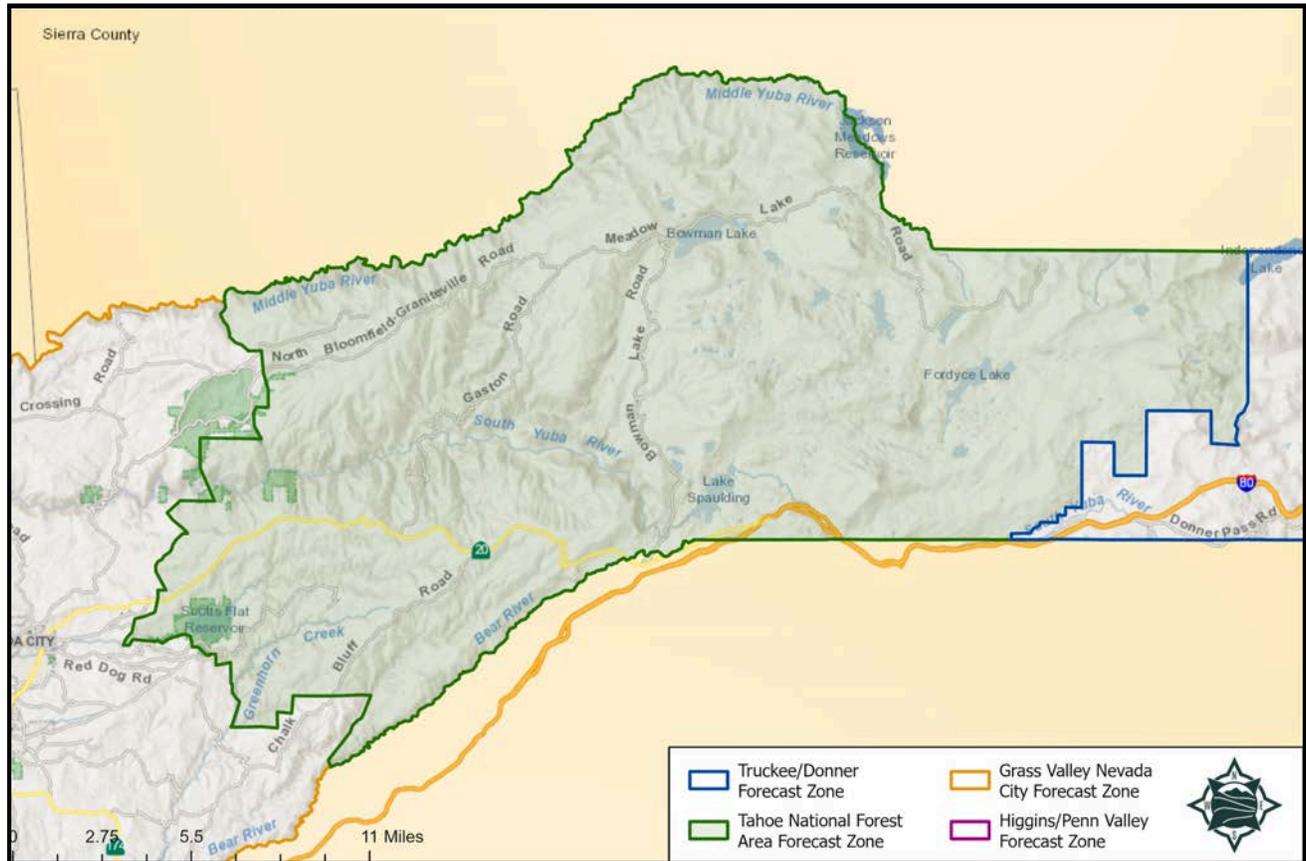
*“The amount of effort required to remove fuels from our property without the use of fire is staggering. We also need to be using fire as a regular tool on our public lands.” - Anonymous Response*



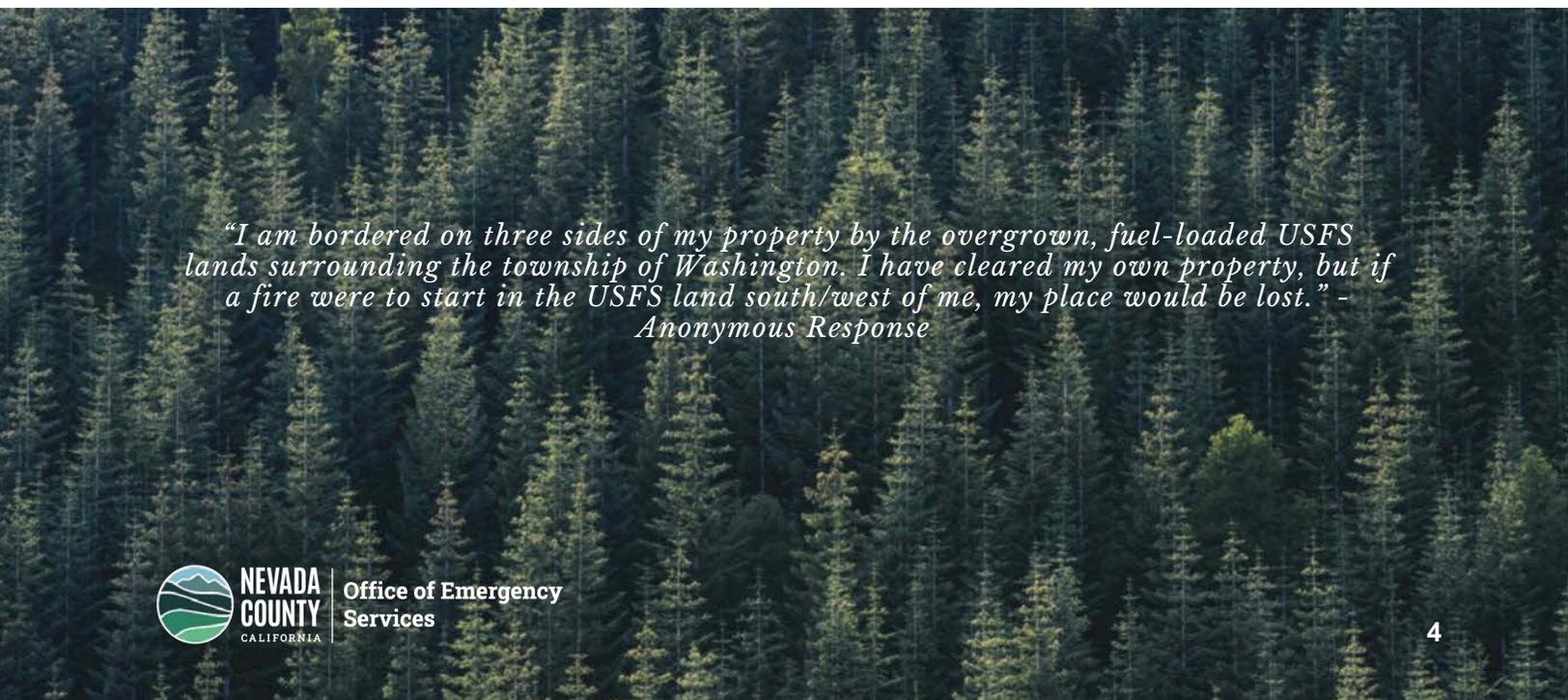
# CWPP FORECAST ZONES

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is an essential document for wildfire preparedness and risk reduction in Nevada County. In order to capture the differences in wildfire risk across the County landscape, the County was divided into four Forecast Zones (FZs). The FZs were delineated based on similarities in the fire environment and in community identity.

# THAOE NATIONAL FOREST AREA



Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone (FZ) is located between the Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ and the Truckee/Donner FZ. The FZ is 234,891 acres and is the largest FZ. While the FZ is the largest it is the least developed as it is primarily undeveloped forested federal land. The FZ is primarily defined by the boundary of the Tahoe National Forest.



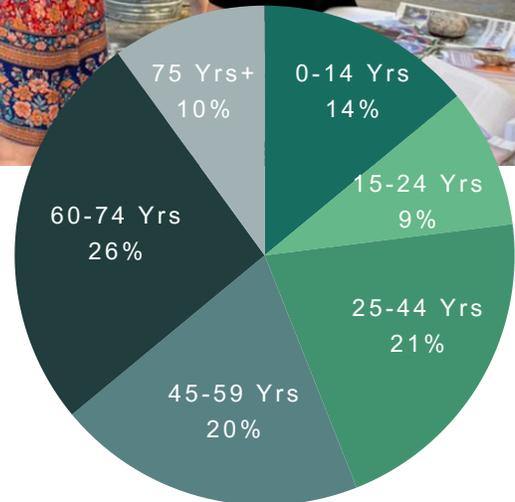
*“I am bordered on three sides of my property by the overgrown, fuel-loaded USFS lands surrounding the township of Washington. I have cleared my own property, but if a fire were to start in the USFS land south/west of me, my place would be lost.” - Anonymous Response*



# NEVADA COUNTY COMMUNITY

Nevada County is a rural community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Within the County are three incorporated cities, (the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, and the Town of Truckee), and numerous unincorporated communities. Communities in Nevada County are very diverse in terms of lifestyle, ranging from rural lifestyle and working landscape communities to traditional suburban homes and high amenity high-resource subdivisions. Nevada County's population is estimated to be 97,466 people in 2020, per the U.S. Census, with a population density of 102 people per square mile (County of Nevada, 2021). The majority of residents (67%) live in unincorporated areas of the County. Most of these residents live in the western half of the County.

Nevada County has a fairly aged population as 36% of residents are older than 60. According to the State Department of Finance, 29% of residents are under the age of 30. The Nevada County community is considered to be a well-educated



*Data Source: Nevada County 2021 Demographic and Statistical Profile*

population. Seventy-five percent of residents have attended some college and over 20% have a bachelor's degree. Of the Nevada County population, just over 8% of residents are considered to be impoverished. Nevada County has the 3rd lowest percentage of people in poverty when compared to neighboring counties. Eighty-four percent (84%) of Nevada County residents live in a single-family home. The majority of the population (52%) live in owner-occupied units.

Overall, the community is largely comprised of older residents who are generally well-educated, relatively affluent and own their own homes.

## Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone

Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone (FZ) is located between the Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ and the Truckee/Donner FZ. The FZ is very topographically diverse and includes the South Yuba River, Washington Ridge, Steephollow Creek, and numerous canyons. These features are well known for their steep topography, dense vegetation, and high ignition risk due to human activities, especially recreation.

The Tahoe National Forest Area FZ has the least developed land. The largest landowner is the U.S. Forest Service (Tahoe National Forest). Within the FZ are numerous recreation resources, natural resources, and critical resources. These resources are not only important to Nevada County but the State. For example, there are multiple freshwater reservoirs with hydroelectric dams, such as Scotts Flat and Jackson Meadows, within the FZ which provide drinking water to the County and serve as the headwaters for downstream rivers and creeks. Highway 20 runs through the FZ. Highway 20 is one of the primary ways of traveling to eastern Nevada County and is a critical transportation corridor for the County but also for the State. In 2023 the Highway was closed due to the Highway Fire on Washington Ridge, which impacted residential, tourist, and commercial travel.

There are no incorporated cities in the FZ but there are communities within the FZ such as along Highway 20, Cascade Shores, and the Little Town of Washington. The archetypes include working landscape, rural lifestyle, and high-amenity high-resource communities. The housing density is primarily low density with homes on larger acreage. It is common for residential areas to be intermixed with forested land. Because of the recreation resources in the FZ, there can be temporary increases in population density especially in the summer months.



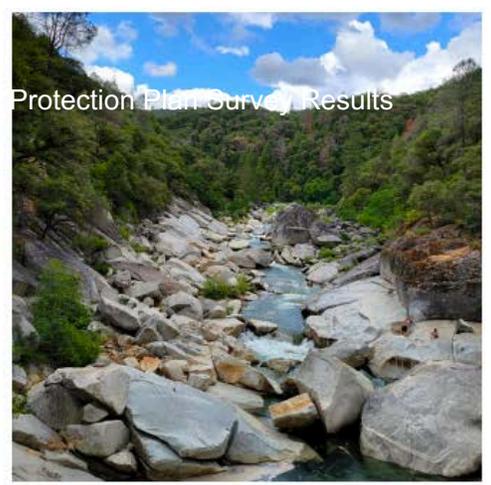
# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) survey was an online survey hosted on Microsoft Forms. It was open from June 1, 2023 until August 31, 2023. The survey was also available in print format. Both the online version and the print version were available in English and Spanish. The survey was open to residents, property owners, and workers of Nevada County.

The survey asked 15 questions in total. Of the 15 questions, four were demographic questions, three were about County Wildfire Risk, three assessed personal wildfire risk perception, five assessed evacuation willingness, and one was an open-ended feedback section. The survey was distributed through a variety of means including press releases, social media, emails, newsletters, ad buys, radio, and flyers, and available at over 70 meetings/community events during the survey period. In total, the survey captured 2,267 responses.



*“Many of these questions asked for a ranking of things that are equally important or things that are impossible to differentiate” - Anonymous Response.*



# We want to hear from you!

## Take the Community Wildfire Protection Plan

**SURVEY**



# 2,267

In total, the survey received 2,267 responses over the course of three months. Fifty percent (50%) of responses were recorded in the first 30 days of the survey being open.

# 2,220

Of the 2,267 survey responses, 2,220 participants indicated that they either lived, worked, or owned property in Nevada County. Only 47 respondents did not live, work, or own property within the County.

# 81%

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the participants identified as primary homeowners, 8% identified as secondary homeowners, 7% said they were renters, 1% said they were undeveloped property owners, 1% were workforce, <1% were business owners.

# 48%

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents were over the age of 65, the largest response group. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents were between 45 and 65. The lowest response group was people under the age of 35 with 102 responses.



## Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone

# 648

There were an estimated 648\* survey responses from the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone.

# 29%

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the total survey responses were from the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone.

# 48%

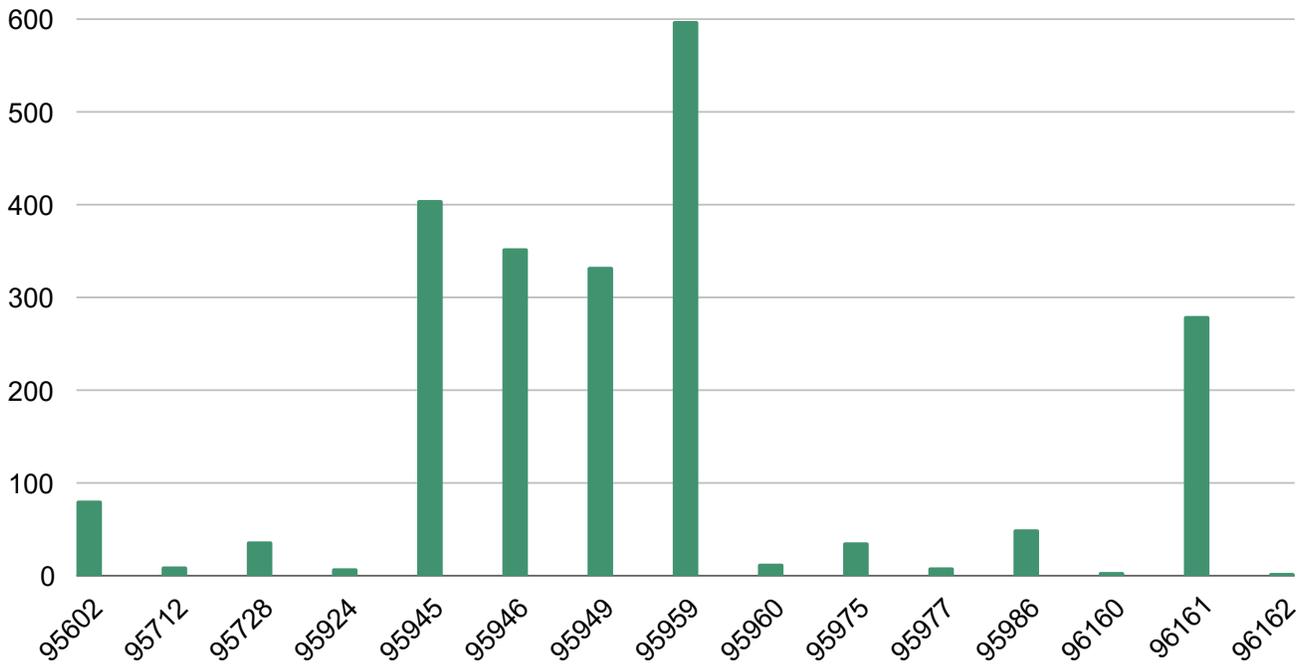
The majority of survey respondents (48%) were over the age of 65. Twenty-five percent (25%) were between the ages 56 and 65, 13% were between 36 and 45, 7% were between 46 and 55, 4% were between 26 and 35, and less than 1% were under the age of 25.

# 82%

Of the 648 survey responses, 82% (509) of respondents indicated that they were primary homeowners.

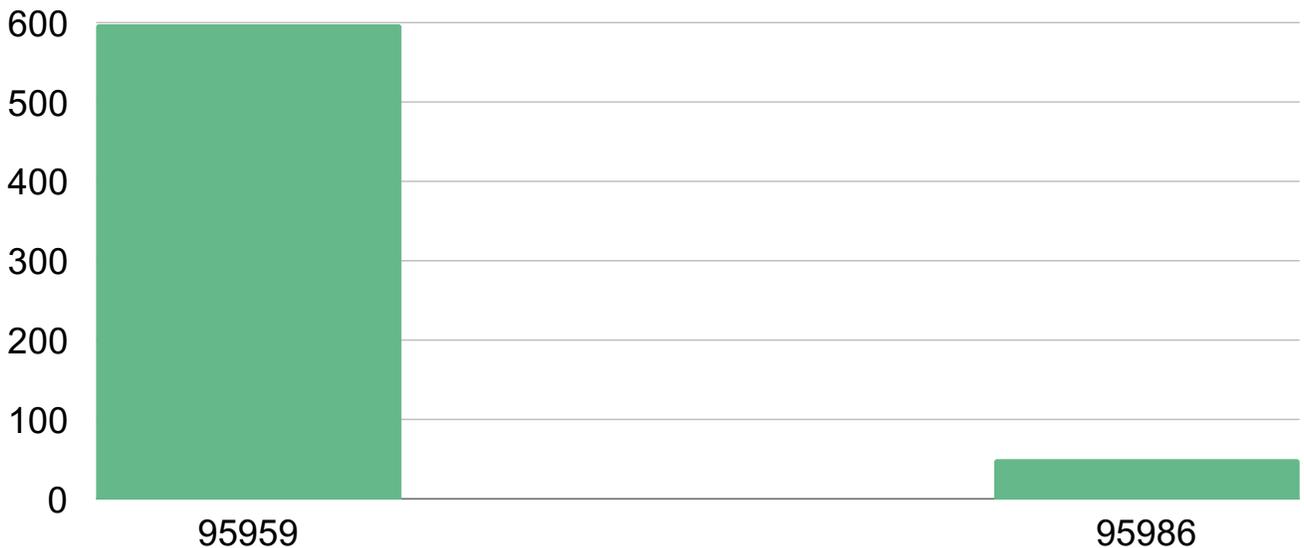
\*Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone includes the 95959 and 95986 zip codes. As a result some of the survey responses overlap with the Grass Valley/Nevada City Forecast Zone which also includes the 95959 zip code.





Number of Responses per Nevada County Zip Codes

Within Nevada County, there are 15 separate zip codes, with the majority correlating to western Nevada County. The majority (598) of respondents were from the 95959 zip code which includes the City of Nevada City and unincorporated areas of the County such as North San Juan, Banner Mountain, You Bet, and Highway 20. The second highest response rate was from zip code 95945 with 405 responses. This zip code includes the City of Grass Valley and communities living off Highway 174 such as Lower Colfax, Greenhorn, and Chicago Park. There were 287 responses from east Nevada County zip codes 96160, 96161, and 96162 which includes the Town of Truckee and unincorporated areas.



Number of Responses per Tahoe National Forest Area Zip Codes

There are two zip codes within the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone (FZ). The majority of respondents were from zip code 95959 (598 responses) which includes Cascade Shores, Scotts Flat, and Highway 20. The 95959 zip code is shared with the Grass Valley/Nevada City FZ. The 95986 zip code had 50 responses and this zip code almost entirely encompasses the Little Town of Washington.

# HIGH VALUE RESOURCES AND ASSETS AT RISK

Survey respondents were asked to rank and prioritize High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRA) at risk to protect from wildfire with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least. The highest-ranked HVRA represented the most important HVRA to protect from the impact of wildfire.

01

## Community Lifelines

Communities, Critical Water, Power, Transportation, Communication Infrastructure, and Vulnerable Populations

02

## Community Health

Wildfire Smoke Potential, Soil Vulnerability, Hazardous Waste Sites, Hospital and Shelter Facilities, and Solid Waste Sites

03

## Natural Resources

Outdoor Recreation Resources, Watersheds, Significant Species, Oak Woodlands, and Climate Resilient Areas

04

## Economic Resources

Recreation, Historic and Cultural Districts, and Government Buildings

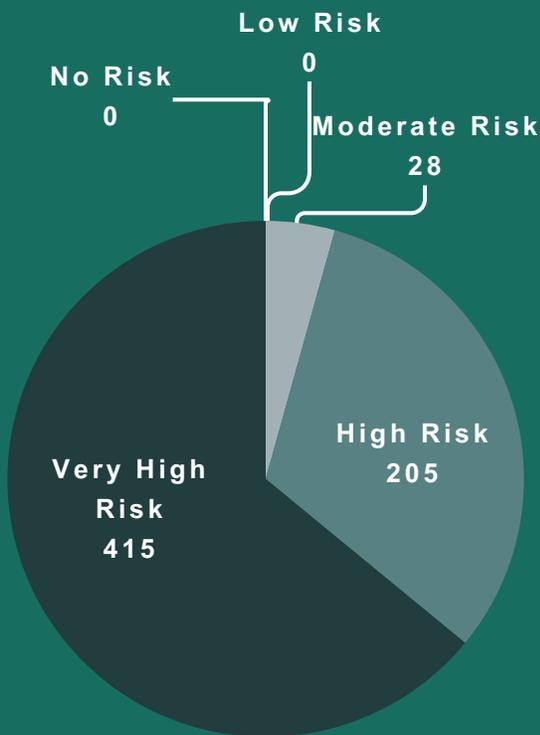
The HVRA's were ranked as Community Lifelines being the most important, followed by Community Health, then Natural Resources, and finally Economic Resources. Community Lifelines was chosen as the most important HVRA to protect from wildfire by 67% of participants. Community Health was the second most important HVRA for 42% of respondents. Natural Resources was the third most important HVRA for 37% of respondents and Economic Resources was the fourth choice for 48% of respondents. This was in alignment with the prioritization at the County-level.



# NEVADA COUNTY WILDFIRE RISK

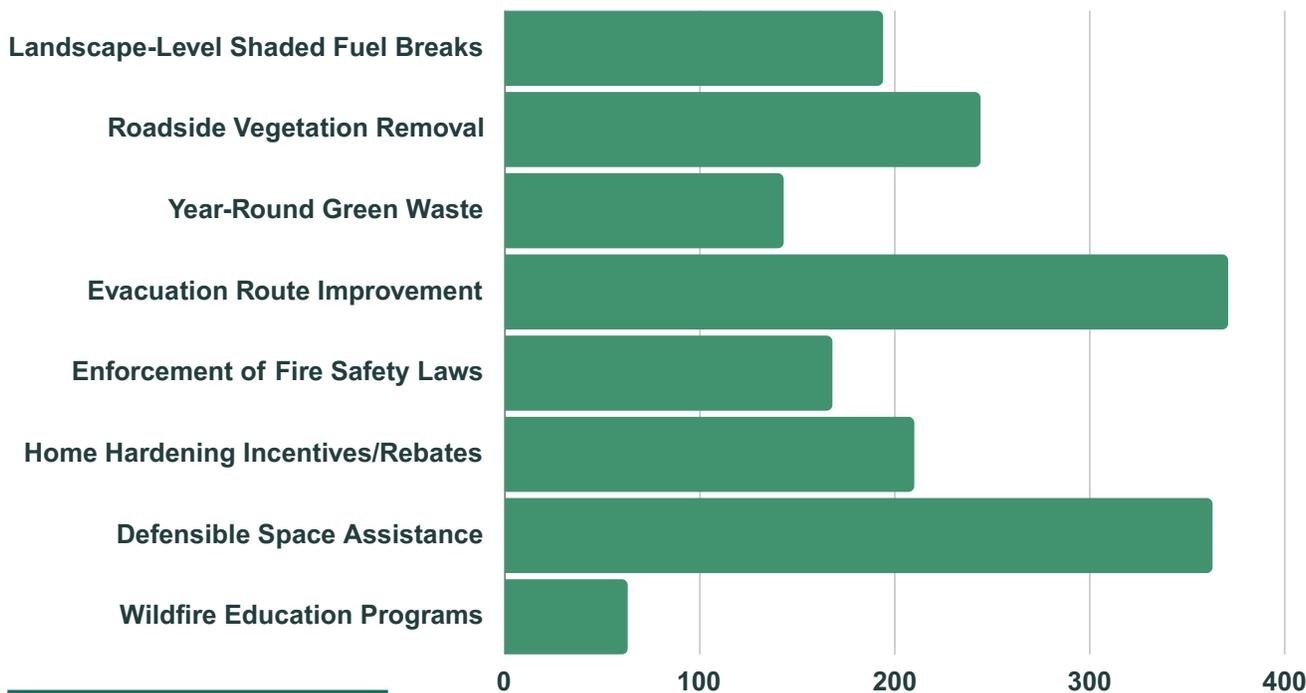
# 64%

In the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone, 64% (415) of survey respondents felt that the Nevada County wildfire risk was Very High. Thirty-two percent (32%) of respondents felt that the risk was High.



*“I would also like to see fuel reduction programs focusing on disadvantaged communities that are at the highest risk of losing property/livelihood to wildfire.” - Anonymous Response*

# NEVADA COUNTY RISK REDUCTION PRIORITIES



## Top 3 Wildfire Risk Reduction Priorities for Nevada County

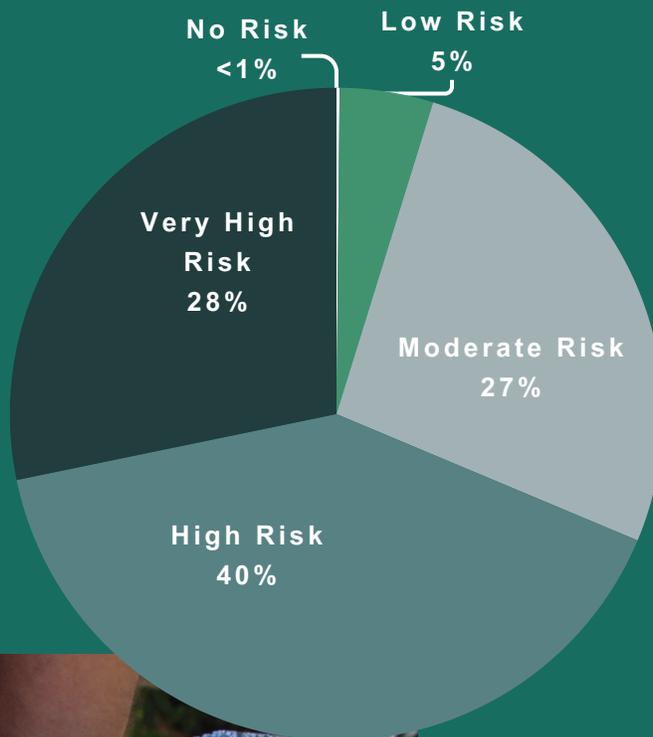
1. *Evacuation Route Improvement*
2. *Defensible Space Assistance*
3. *Roadside Vegetation Removal*

The survey asked participants to identify the top three wildfire risk reduction strategies for Nevada County. Evacuation Route Improvement, Defensible Space Assistance, and Roadside Vegetation Removal were identified as the top priorities in the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone (FZ). This was consistent with the results at the County-level. Fifty-seven percent (57%) of respondents in Tahoe National Forest Area FZ identified Evacuation Route improvement as their top priority for Nevada County. Defensible Space Assistance was the second highest priority for 56% of respondents from the Forecast Zone. The third highest priority was Roadside Vegetation Removal for 38% of respondents.

# PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK PERCEPTION

Personal perception of wildfire risk is how one views one's own risk from wildfire or wildfire impacts.

The majority (40%) of survey respondents felt that their personal wildfire risk was High. Comparatively, survey respondents viewed the County-level wildfire risk as Very High. Twenty-eight percent (28%) of respondents viewed their personal wildfire risk as Very High, 27% viewed it as Moderate, 5% viewed it as Low, and <1% viewed their personal wildfire risk as No Risk.

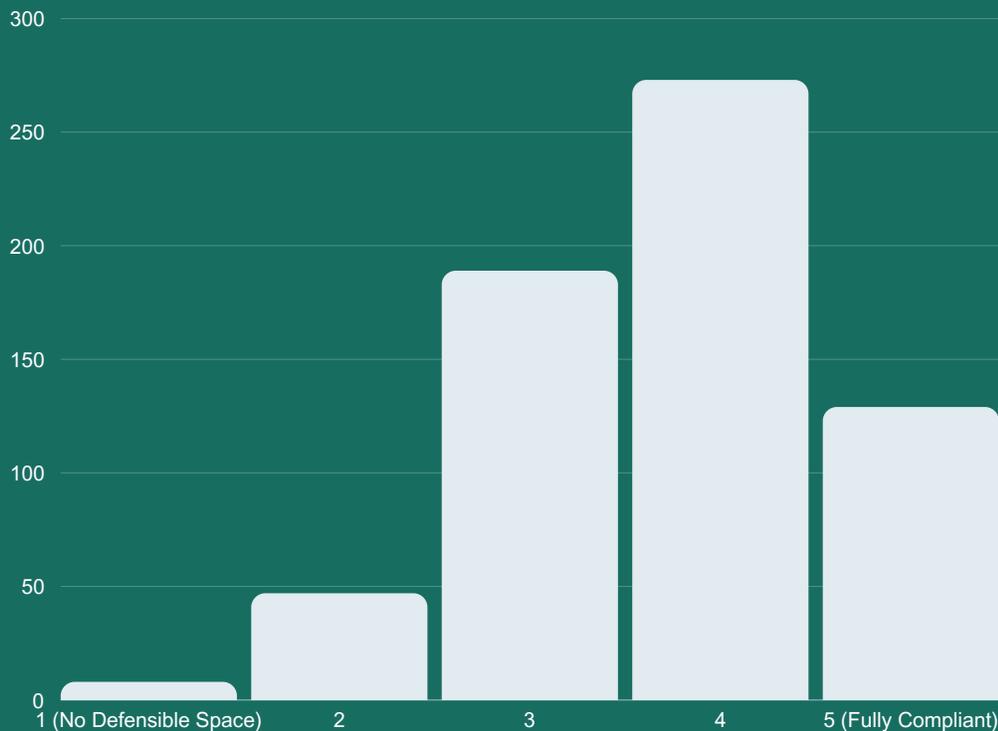


# DEFENSIBLE SPACE



The CWPP survey asked respondents to evaluate the defensible space around their home, place of residence, workplace, or business. Respondents ranked their defensible space on a scale of one to five, with one representing no defensible space and five representing fully compliant defensible space.

In the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone the majority of participants felt that their defensible space around their property, residence, workplace, or business was almost fully compliant and ranked it as a 4. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of respondents viewed their defensible space as a rating of 3. Only 20% of participants indicated that they have fully compliant defensible space. One percent (1%) of respondents indicated that they have no defensible space.



**4**

*On average, survey participants scored their defensible space as a 4*

# MAIN CHALLENGES TO REDUCING WILDFIRE RISK



## 01. Fuel on Neighboring Properties

Fuel on Neighboring Properties was viewed as the greatest challenge for survey respondents in the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone in reducing their wildfire risk. Over half the survey respondents (60%) chose this as their main challenge.



## 02. Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space

Thirty-seven percent (38%) of respondents chose Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space as a challenge to reducing their wildfire risk making it the second biggest challenge identified by the survey



## 03. Fuel Reduction Around Your Home or Property

The Fuel Reduction Around Your Home or Property was viewed as a major barrier to reducing one's wildfire risk and was selected as a challenge by 36% of survey respondents in the Forecast Zone.

*“One of the most frustrating things is keeping your own property well cared for, only to be put at risk by a neighbor who doesn't care and puts others at risk with poor property management or careless behavior.” - Anonymous Response*

*“We have removed over 300 trees off our property and the cost of tree removal is so high. All the remainder of the trees that need to be removed immediately for defensible safety are quoted at \$3000 each for removal.” - Anonymous Response*

*“I am a disabled senior (90) so I do not have the physical ability to do defensible space and home hardening work. I do not qualify for low-income assistance and cannot justify spending the thousands of dollars required for this. Who is there to help the middle-income folks be successful?” - Anonymous Response*

# EVACUATION WILLINGNESS



# 54%

Half of the survey respondents in the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone indicated that they had never evacuated from a wildfire in Nevada County. Twenty-nine percent (29%) had evacuated from a wildfire once.

# 47%

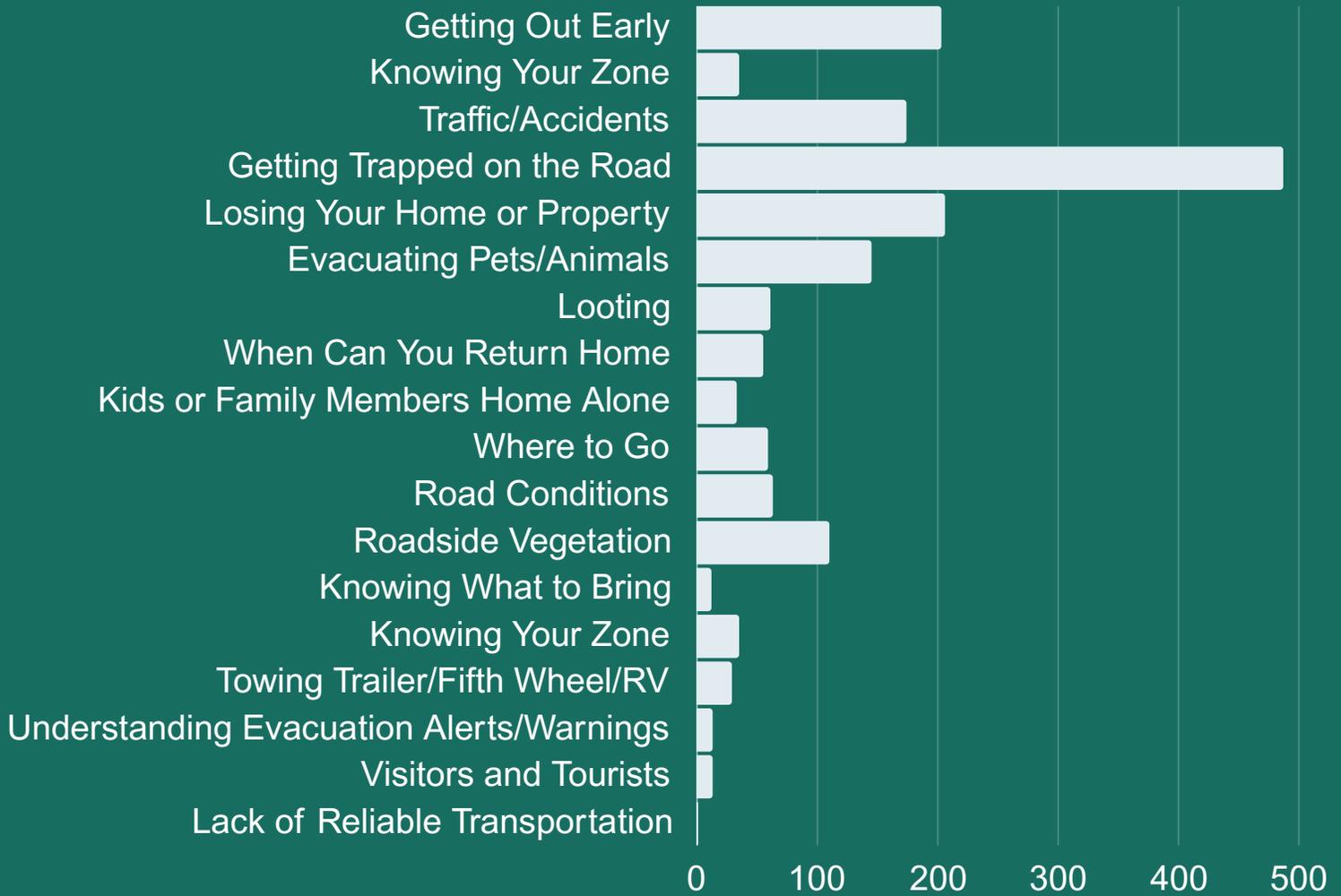
However, when the respondents were asked about their likely evacuation behavior in a wildfire event 47% of respondents said that they would leave as early as possible.

# 4%

Four percent (4%) of participants said that in a wildfire they would choose not to evacuate. When asked a follow-up question, about what could change their evacuation behavior, the majority of respondents indicated that nothing would change their decision to not evacuate.

*“Given the intensification of wildfires, we’ve realized that staying and fighting the fire is not really an option for most of us. That means more people evacuating.” - Anonymous Response*

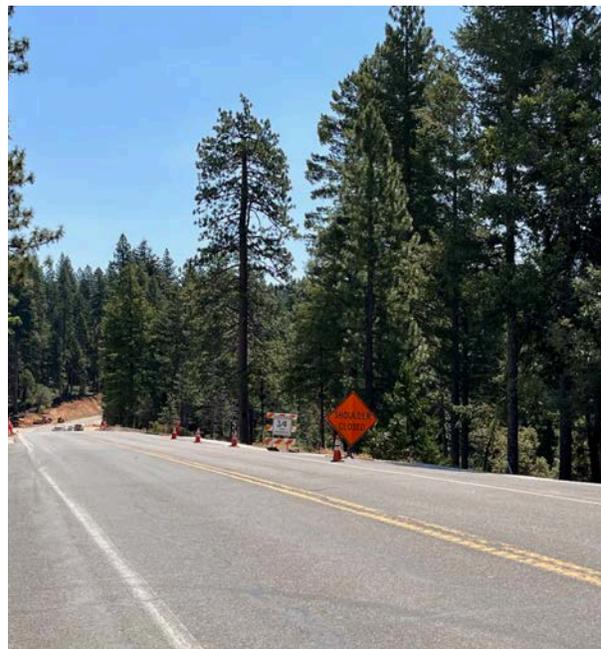




## EVACUATION CONCERNS

The CWPP Survey also collected information about respondents' main evacuation concerns. Each participant was requested to choose three main concerns they had about evacuation. Participants could choose from nineteen evacuation concerns. The bar chart above displays the primary evacuation concerns for the Tahoe National Forest Area Forecast Zone.

Over 70% of survey participants indicated that their main evacuation concern was Getting Trapped on the Road which was consistent with the County-wide results. The second highest concern was Losing Your Home or Property. The third highest concern was Getting Out Early. The least concerning were the Lack of Reliable Transportation, Visitors/Tourists, and Knowing What to Bring.





*“I hope that continuing forest management activities and property owners improving defensible and home hardening will make insurance companies more comfortable in writing affordable policies that cover losses to fire and homeowners will have the option to leave the fair plan.” - Anonymous Response*

## CONCLUSION

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Survey gave the Nevada County community an opportunity to share their perspective on the wildfire problem and identify priorities for becoming more wildfire resilient.

The results from the CWPP survey were incorporated into the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA) and were used to help identify the Project Priority Areas. The Project Priority Areas are geographically delineated areas on the landscape that are prioritized for risk reduction activity based on the wildfire hazard and the protection of High-Value Resources and Assets at risk that were identified by the community in the survey. The results from the survey were also used to help create the CWPP Risk Reduction Workshops and the Community Action Plans.

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NEVADA COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

# APPENDIX D

TRUCKEE/DONNER FORECAST ZONE COMMUNITY  
WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY RESULTS



# WILDFIRE IN TRUCKEE/DONNER

*Collaborative community-based planning around wildfire protection will allow us to reduce wildfire risk and protect what the Nevada County community values.*

## Results at a Glance

In 2023, the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey which presented an opportunity to understand the wildfire challenges and the place-based expertise of community members. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses, 2% of the County population, with 317 responses from the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone, between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.



NEVADA COUNTY HAS A VERY HIGH FIRE RISK



65% OF PEOPLE PRIORITIZED PROTECTING COMMUNITY LIFELINES



39% OF PEOPLE SAW PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK AS MODERATE



FUEL ON NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES WAS THE MAIN CHALLENGE



DEFENSIBLE SPACE ASSISTANCE WAS THE HIGHEST COMMUNITY PRIORITY



84% OF PEOPLE HAVE NEVER EVACUATED BEFORE



57% OF PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE



TRAPPED ON THE ROAD WAS THE LARGEST EVACUATION CONCERN

*"I have lived here 20 years and know about fire prevention around our home, I think my main concern is new people that are not aware of tree clearing and fire safety..."*  
- - Anonymous Response

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



- 01** Introduction
- 03** CWPP Forecast Zones
- 04** Truckee/Donner
- 05** Nevada County Community
- 07** Community Wildfire Protection Plan Survey
- 11** High-Value Resources and Assets at Risk
- 10** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 12** Nevada County Wildfire Risk Perception
- 13** Nevada County Risk Reduction Priorities
- 14** Personal Wildfire Risk Perception
- 15** Defensible Space
- 16** Main Challenges to Reducing Wildfire Risk
- 17** Evacuation Willingness

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



**18** Evacuation Concerns

**19** Conclusion

# INTRODUCTION

In 2023 the Nevada County Office of Emergency Services (OES) launched the update of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). CWPPs were created by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) and are important planning processes that help at-risk communities prepare for and mitigate the risk of wildfire. Public participation is both a requirement and a critical element of the CWPP process. As part of the public engagement plan for the Nevada County CWPP update, OES created and launched a public survey.

CWPPs are planning processes that aim to help communities understand their risk from wildfires and take on risk-reduction actions. CWPPs have evolved to become strategic wildfire planning documents. They are not regulatory documents but they do have to meet 3 minimum requirements:

- Regional Collaboration
- Identify and Prioritize Areas for Risk Reduction
- Identify Methods for Reducing Structural Ignitability

An important part of the CWPP is the development of the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA). The WRA determines wildfire risk by looking at the intersection of wildfire hazard with the High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRAs) at risk to determine their susceptibility to wildfire. The WRA is informed by community values as a crucial step in determining the prioritization of the HVRAs. This allows the results of the WRA to not only be informed by the conditions on the ground but also by what a community determines to be important to protect from wildfire. The goal of the Nevada County CWPP update was to prioritize the places and resources that are important to the residents of Nevada County and to protect what is valued most by the community.

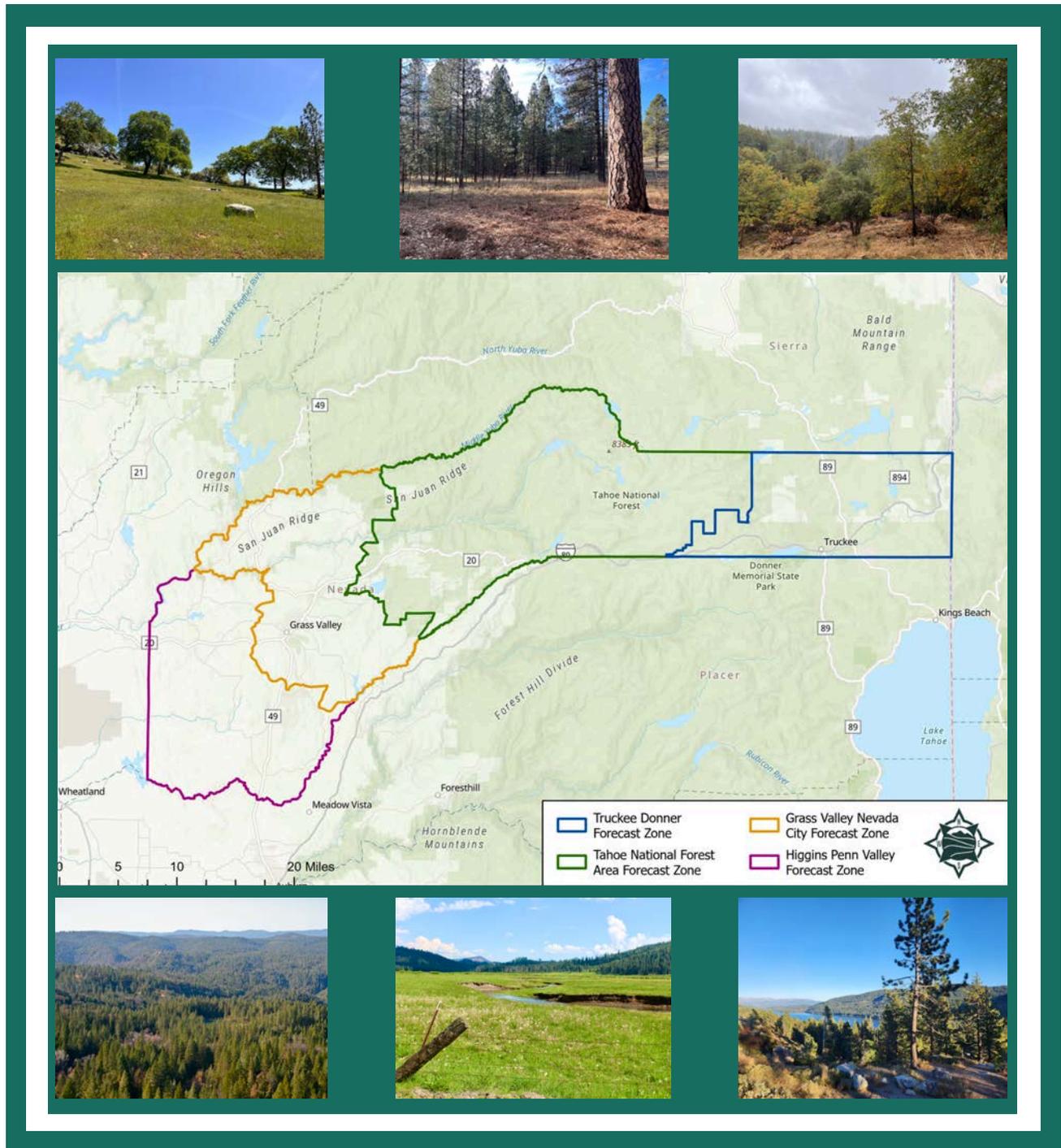
The CWPP survey had two valuable roles in the planning process: (1) it captured information needed for the WRA, and (2) it captured information about the community's perception of wildfire risk, community values, and evacuation willingness.



The survey was distributed through traditional means such as press releases and social media. It was also distributed through an “ email tree” which leaned on partners, members of the OES led Quarterly Wildfire Stakeholder group, and the OES Virtual Office Hours platform. Hundreds of emails were leveraged to distribute the survey on OES’s behalf. The survey was also administered in-person across the County. OES distributed the survey through various meetings (in-person and online), Defensible Space Inspectors distributed it in the field, and it was facilitated at 70 community/stakeholder events. In total, the survey gathered over 2,260 responses (2% of the County population) between June 1, 2023 and August 31, 2023.

***This Appendix covers the results specific to the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone. These results do not supplant or supersede the County-wide results but rather shed light on an area-specific analysis.***

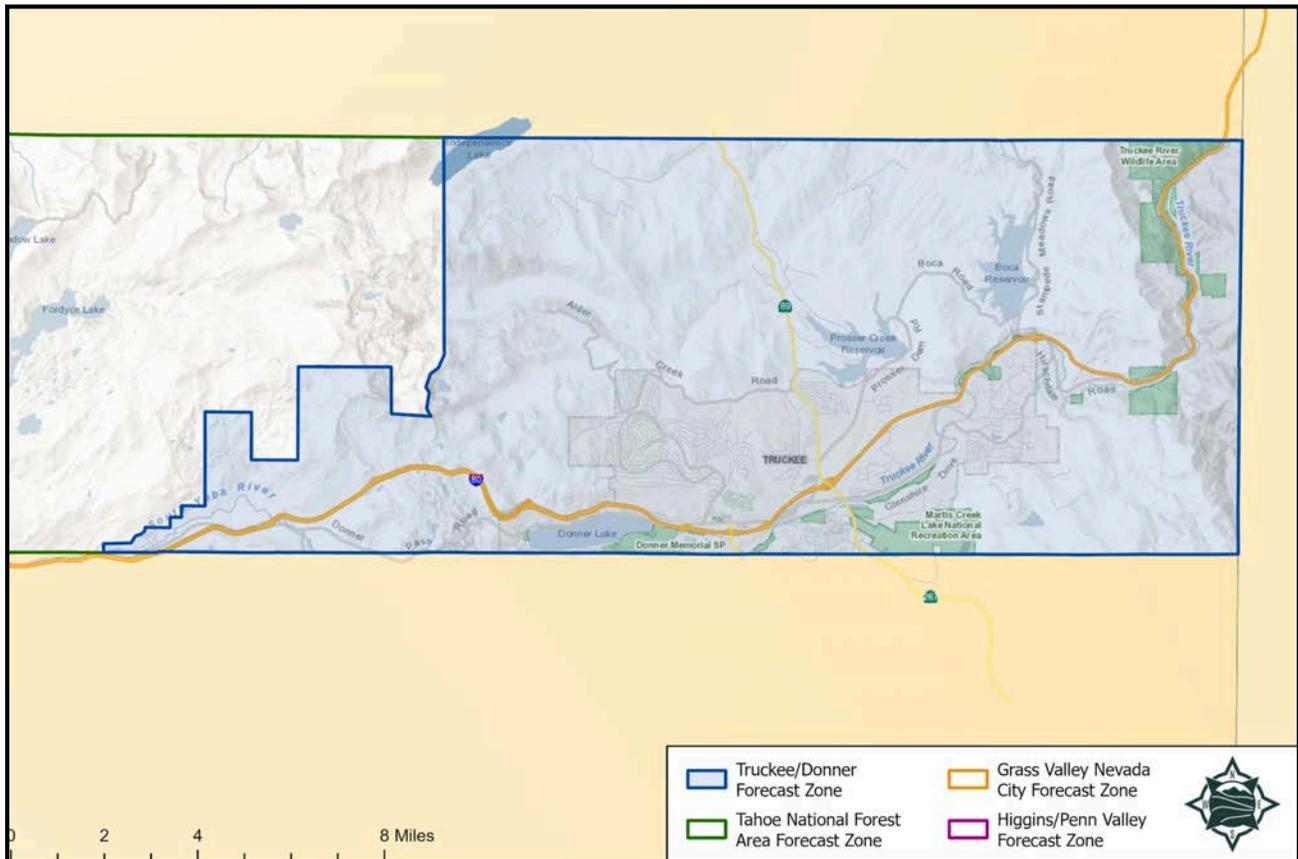
*“I live in Tahoe Donner, and for so many years they didn’t allow tree removal, so the trees just grew, got bigger, and now are expensive to remove. There is so much tree thinning that needs to happen, but because of poor forest management 20 years ago, it’s now hard to handle.” - Anonymous Response*



# CWPP FORECAST ZONES

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is an essential document for wildfire preparedness and risk reduction in Nevada County. In order to capture the differences in wildfire risk across the County landscape, the County was divided into four Forecast Zones (FZs). The FZs were delineated based on similarities in the fire environment and in community identity.

# TRUCKEE/DONNER



Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone (FZ) is located in eastern Nevada County with the Tahoe National Forest Area FZ to the west and the State of Nevada to the East. The FZ is 108,438 acres and is the smallest FZ. Within the FZ, development is concentrated around the Town of Truckee and the remainder of the FZ is undeveloped forest land.

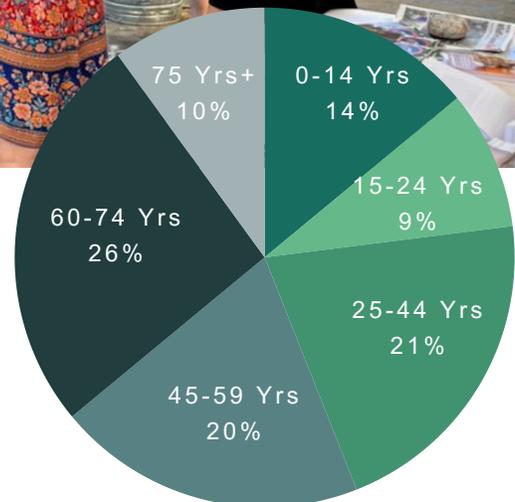
*“Local media is an important source in emergencies, local radio is understaffed and vulnerable to power outages and can't provide visuals, local cable access TV stations are understaffed and underfunded but have more reliable connectivity.” - Anonymous Response*



# NEVADA COUNTY COMMUNITY

Nevada County is a rural community in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Within the County are three incorporated cities, (the City of Nevada City, the City of Grass Valley, and the Town of Truckee), and numerous unincorporated communities. Communities in Nevada County are very diverse in terms of lifestyle, ranging from rural lifestyle and working landscape communities to traditional suburban homes and high amenity high-resource subdivisions. Nevada County's population is estimated to be 97,466 people in 2020, per the U.S. Census, with a population density of 102 people per square mile (County of Nevada, 2021). The majority of residents (67%) live in unincorporated areas of the County. Most of these residents live in the western half of the County.

Nevada County has a fairly aged population as 36% of residents are older than 60. According to the State Department of Finance, 29% of residents are under the age of 30. The Nevada County community is considered to be a well-educated



*Data Source: Nevada County 2021 Demographic and Statistical Profile*

population. Seventy-five percent of residents have attended some college and over 20% have a bachelor's degree. Of the Nevada County population, just over 8% of residents are considered to be impoverished. Nevada County has the 3rd lowest percentage of people in poverty when compared to neighboring counties. Eighty-four percent (84%) of Nevada County residents live in a single-family home. The majority of the population (52%) live in owner-occupied units.

Overall, the community is largely comprised of older residents who are generally well-educated, relatively affluent and own their own homes.

## Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone

Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone (FZ) is located in Eastern Nevada County between the Tahoe National Forest Area FZ and the State of Nevada. The FZ is topographically diverse and includes topographically significant areas such as the Sierra Crest, Donner Summit, and the Truckee River Canyon. These features are well known for their steep topography, dense vegetation, and high ignition risk due to human activities, especially recreation.

The Truckee/Donner FZ is where the majority of development in Eastern Nevada County is located. Within the FZ is the Town of Truckee which is the only incorporated city in Nevada County east of Donner Summit. Critical infrastructure and community developments are largely concentrated around and in the Town such as Tahoe Donner, West End Beach, Downtown Truckee, and Glenshire. Communities are also located west of Donner Summit along Interstate 80, such as Pla Vada, Kingvale, and Towle Mountain, and north of the Town along Highway 89 such as Prosser Lake, Hobart Mills, and Russell Valley.

There are numerous recreation and natural resources located outside the developed areas within the Tahoe National Forest. This includes hiking trails, campsites, ski resorts, and aquatic recreation. As such this area plays a critical role in the County's tourist-based economy.

Recently, the Truckee/Donner FZ experienced a lot of growth with people relocated to the area in the last four years. The FZ also has a high proportion of short-term rentals and second homeowners that impact the population at various times of the year. The community archetypes within Truckee/Donner FZ include suburban, rural lifestyle, and high-amenity high-resource communities. The housing density varies across the FZ with some areas having moderate to high density and others low density.



# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN SURVEY

The Nevada County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) survey was an online survey hosted on Microsoft Forms. It was open from June 1, 2023 until August 31, 2023. The survey was also available in print format. Both the online version and the print version were available in English and Spanish. The survey was open to residents, property owners, and workers of Nevada County.

The survey asked 15 questions in total. Of the 15 questions, four were demographic questions, three were about County Wildfire Risk, three assessed personal wildfire risk perception, five assessed evacuation willingness, and one was an open-ended feedback section. The survey was distributed through a variety of means including press releases, social media, emails, newsletters, ad buys, radio, and flyers, and available at over 70 meetings/community events during the survey period. In total, the survey captured 2,267 responses.



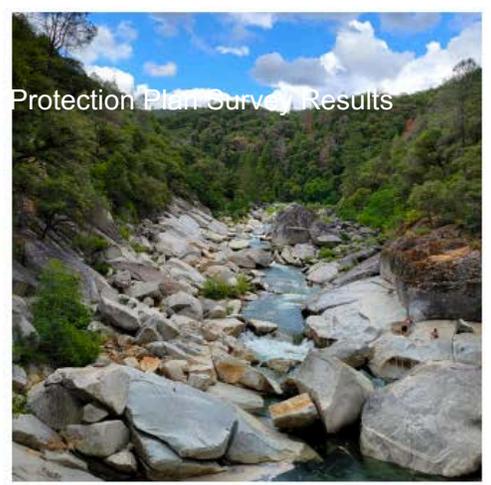
*“Thank you for soliciting input on this important community topic.” - Anonymous Response.*



Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone



Community Wildfire Protection Plan Survey Results



# We want to hear from you!

## Take the Community Wildfire Protection Plan

**SURVEY**



**2,267**

In total, the survey received 2,267 responses over the course of three months. Fifty percent (50%) of responses were recorded in the first 30 days of the survey being open.

**2,220**

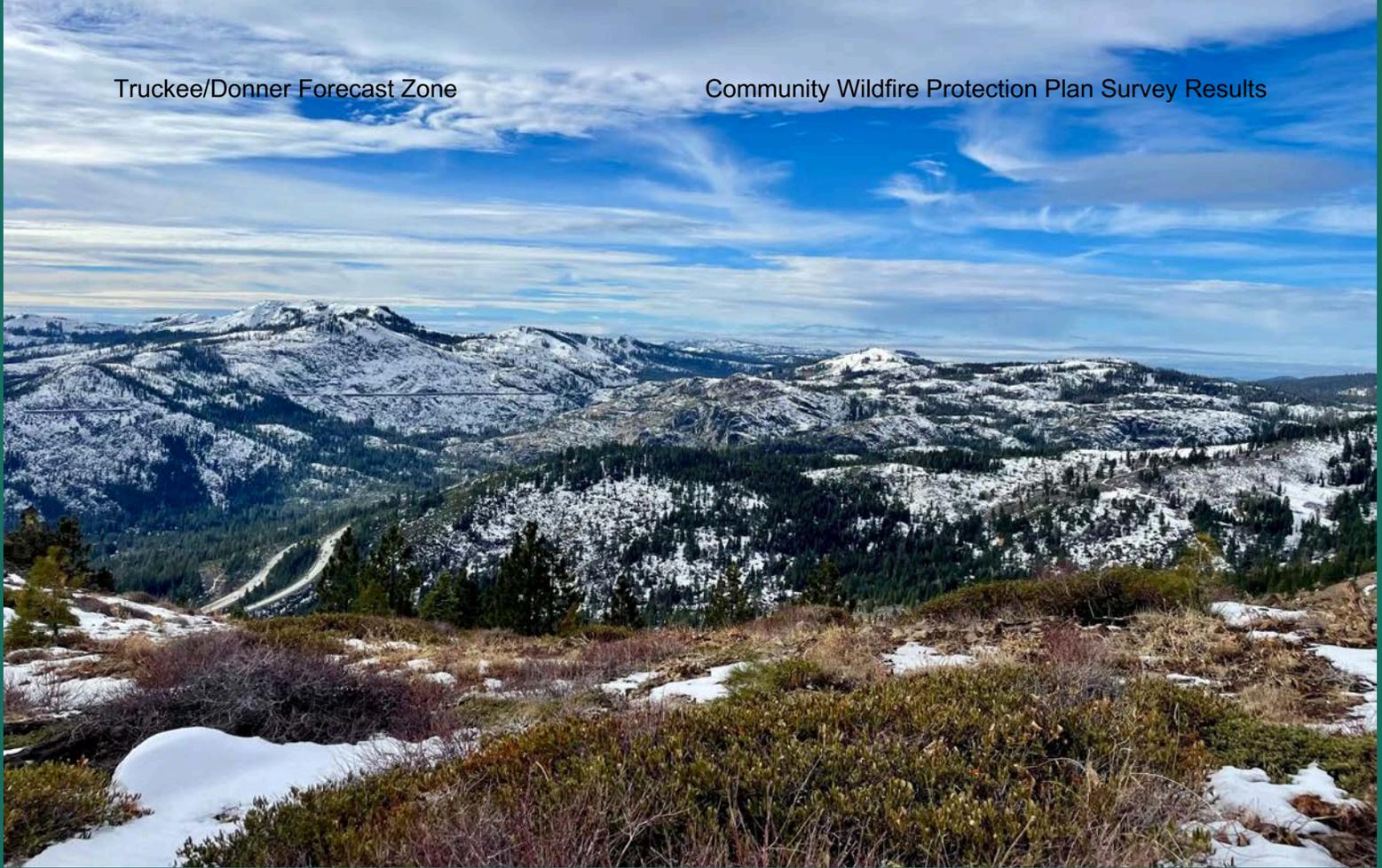
Of the 2,267 survey responses, 2,220 participants indicated that they either lived, worked, or owned property in Nevada County. Only 47 respondents did not live, work, or own property within the County.

**81%**

Eighty-one percent (81%) of the participants identified as primary homeowners, 8% identified as secondary homeowners, 7% said they were renters, 1% said they were undeveloped property owners, 1% were workforce, <1% were business owners.

**48%**

Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents were over the age of 65, the largest response group. Thirty-five percent (35%) of respondents were between 45 and 65. The lowest response group was people under the age of 35 with 102 responses.



## Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone

**317**

There were 317 survey responses from the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone.

**14%**

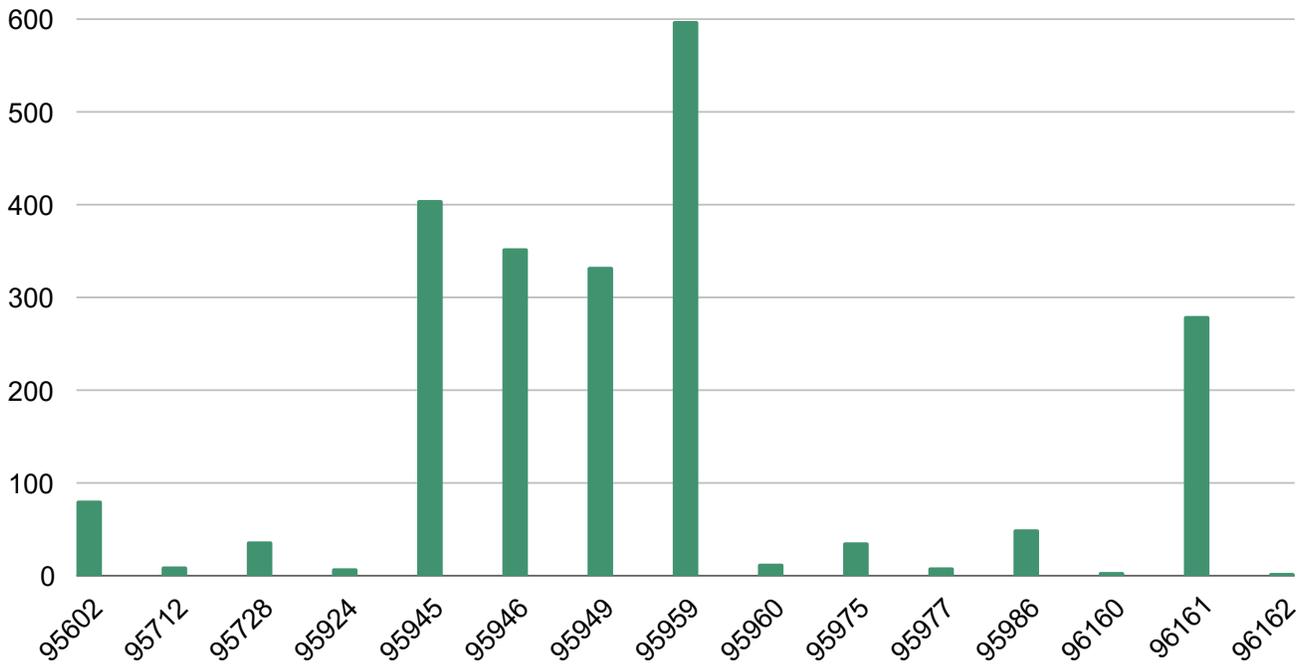
Fourteen percent (14%) of the total survey responses were from the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone.

**39%**

The majority of survey respondents (39%) were over the age of 65. Twenty-nine percent (29%) were between the ages of 56 and 65, 15% were between 46 and 55, 12% were between 36 and 45, 4% were between 26 and 35, and less than 1% were under the age of 25.

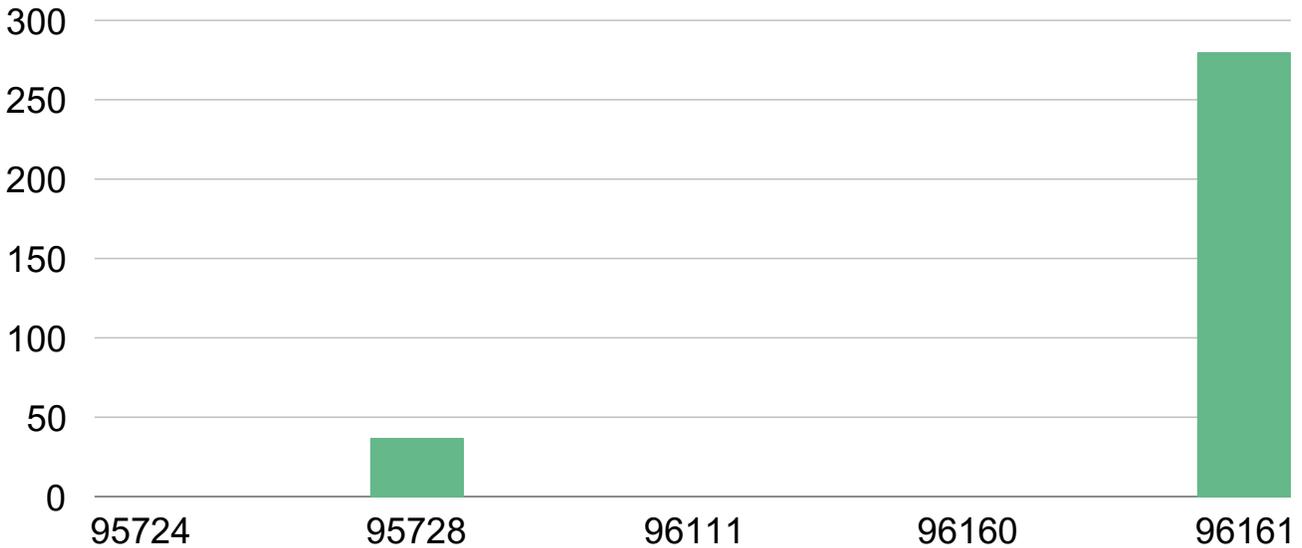
**68%**

Of the 317 survey responses, 68% (216) of respondents indicated that they were primary homeowners. Twenty-four percent (24%) were secondary homeowners.



Number of Responses per Nevada County Zip Codes

Within Nevada County, there are 15 separate zip codes, with the majority correlating to western Nevada County. The majority (598) of respondents were from the 95959 zip code which includes the City of Nevada City and unincorporated areas of the County such as North San Juan, Banner Mountain, You Bet, and Highway 20. The second highest response rate was from zip code 95945 with 405 responses. This zip code includes the City of Grass Valley and communities living off Highway 174 such as Lower Colfax, Greenhorn, and Chicago Park. There were 287 responses from east Nevada County zip codes 96160, 96161, and 96162 which includes the Town of Truckee and unincorporated areas.



Number of Responses per Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone Zip Codes

There are four zip codes within the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone (FZ) that are in Nevada County. The majority of respondents were from zip code 96161 (280 responses) which includes Tahoe Donner, Town of Truckee, Glenshire, and Prosser Lake. This zip code covers the majority of communities within the FZ. There were 37 responses from 95728 which includes the communities of Pla Vada and Kingvale.

# HIGH VALUE RESOURCES AND ASSETS AT RISK

Survey respondents were asked to rank and prioritize High-Value Resources and Assets (HVRA) at risk to protect from wildfire with 1 being the most important and 4 being the least. The highest-ranked HVRA represented the most important HVRA to protect from the impact of wildfire.

01

## Community Lifelines

Communities, Critical Water, Power, Transportation, Communication Infrastructure, and Vulnerable Populations

02

## Community Health

Wildfire Smoke Potential, Soil Vulnerability, Hazardous Waste Sites, Hospital and Shelter Facilities, and Solid Waste Sites

03

## Natural Resources

Outdoor Recreation Resources, Watersheds, Significant Species, Oak Woodlands, and Climate Resilient Areas

04

## Economic Resources

Recreation, Historic and Cultural Districts, and Government Buildings

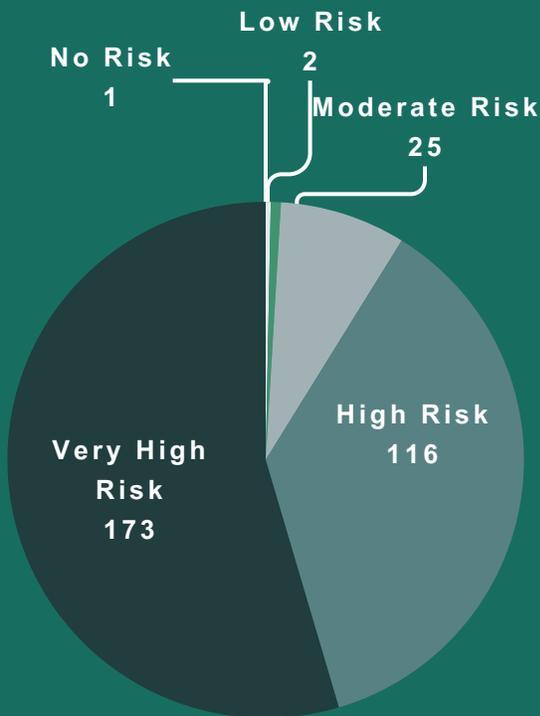
The HVRA's were ranked as Community Lifelines being the most important, followed by Community Health, then Natural Resources, and finally Economic Resources. Community Lifelines was chosen as the most important HVRA to protect from wildfire by 65% of participants. Community Health was the second most important HVRA for 42% of respondents. Natural Resources was the third most important HVRA for 37% of respondents and Economic Resources was the fourth choice for 58% of respondents. This was in alignment with the prioritization at the County-level.



# NEVADA COUNTY WILDFIRE RISK

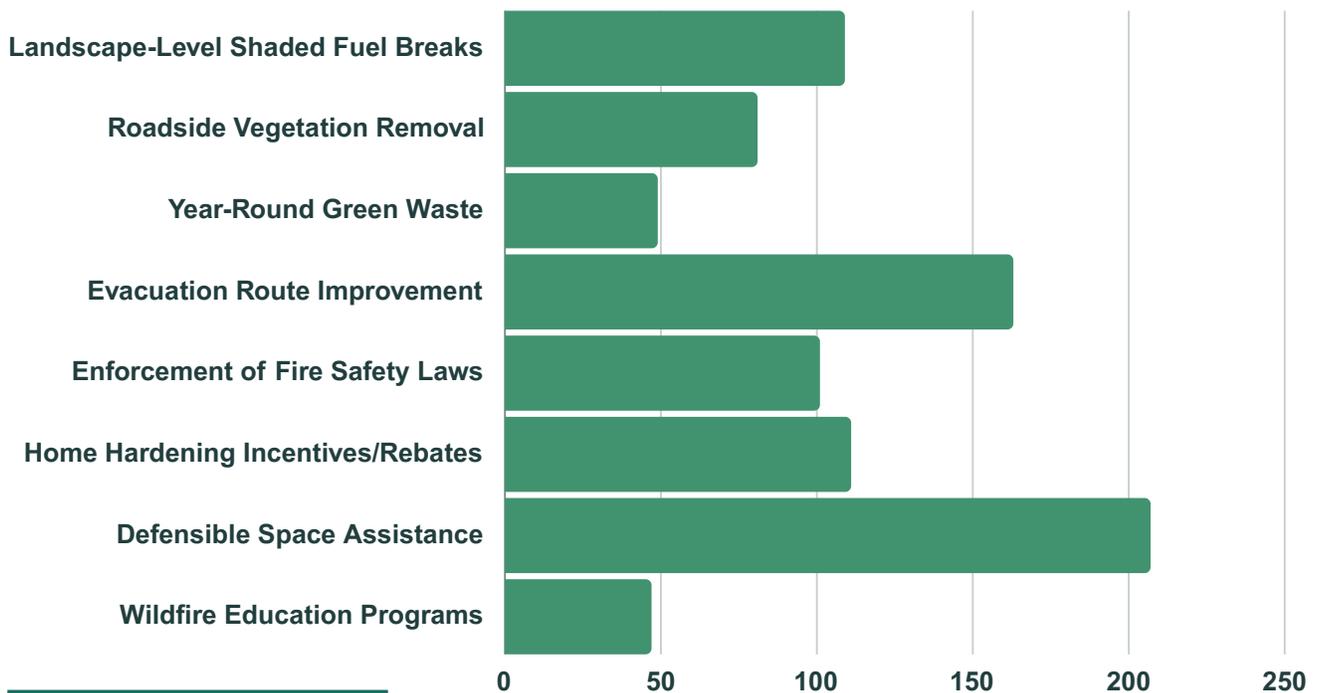
# 55%

In the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone, 55% (173) of survey respondents felt that the Nevada County wildfire risk was Very High. Thirty-six percent (36%) of respondents felt that the risk was High.



*“I think there needs to be a countywide program to remove dead trees from bark beetle. I see them everywhere and I just don't think most people can afford to remove them...” - Anonymous Response*

# NEVADA COUNTY RISK REDUCTION PRIORITIES



## Top 3 Wildfire Risk Reduction Priorities for Nevada County

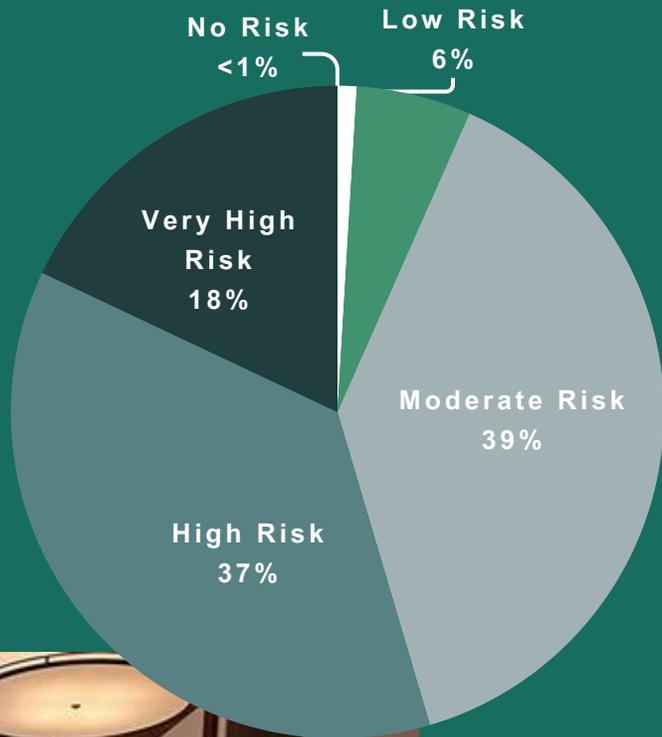
1. *Defensible Space Assistance*
2. *Evacuation Route Improvement*
3. *Home Hardening Incentives/Rebates*

The survey asked participants to identify the top three wildfire risk reduction strategies for Nevada County. Evacuation Route Improvement, Defensible Space Assistance, and Home Hardening Rebates were identified as the top priorities in the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone (FZ). This was partially consistent with the results at the County-level. Sixty-five percent (65%) of respondents in Truckee/Donner FZ identified Defensible Space Assistance as their top priority for Nevada County. Evacuation Route Improvement was the second highest priority for 51% of respondents from the Forecast Zone. The third highest priority was Home Hardening Incentives/Rebates for 35% of respondents. This was very closely followed by Landscape-Level Shaded Fuel Breaks and Enforcement of Fire Safety Laws.

# PERSONAL WILDFIRE RISK PERCEPTION

Personal perception of wildfire risk is how one views one's own risk from wildfire or wildfire impacts.

The majority (39%) of survey participants felt that their personal wildfire risk was Moderate. Comparatively, the majority of survey respondents viewed the County-level wildfire risk as Very High. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents viewed their personal wildfire risk as High, 18% viewed it as Very High, 6% viewed it as Low, and <1% viewed their personal wildfire risk as No Risk.

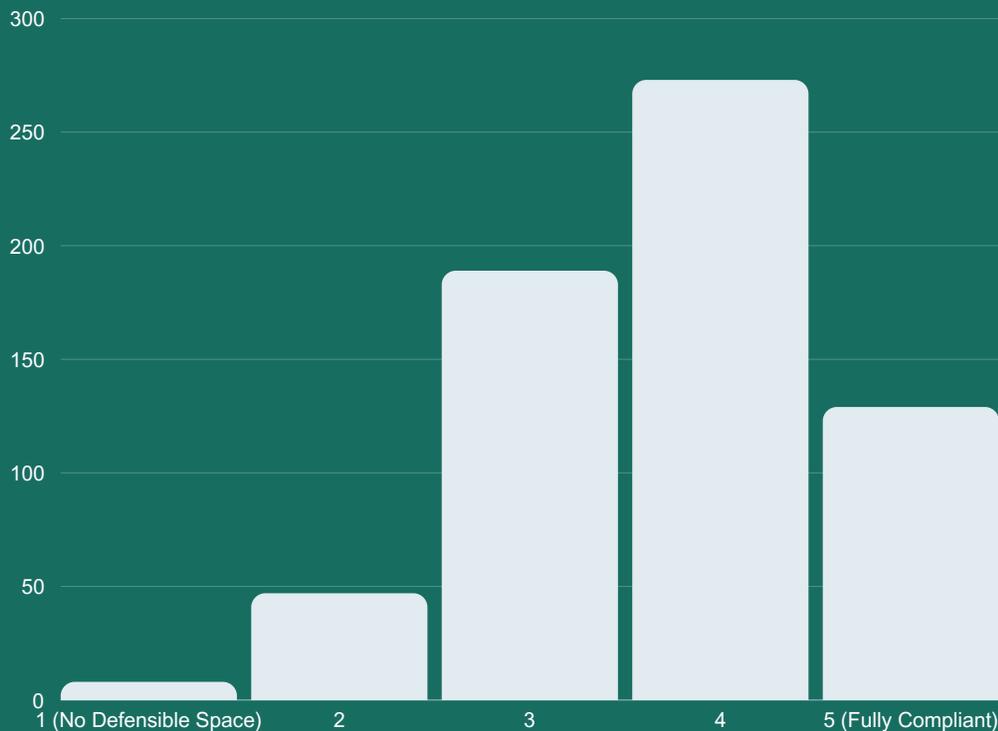


# DEFENSIBLE SPACE



The CWPP survey asked respondents to evaluate the defensible space around their home, place of residence, workplace, or business. Respondents ranked their defensible space on a scale of one to five, with one representing no defensible space and five representing fully compliant defensible space.

In the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone the majority of participants felt that their defensible space around their property, residence, workplace, or business was almost fully compliant and ranked it as a 4. Thirty-four (34%) of respondents viewed their defensible space as being fully compliant. Less than 1% of respondents indicated that they have no defensible space.



4

*On average, survey participants scored their defensible space as a 4*

# MAIN CHALLENGES TO REDUCING WILDFIRE RISK



## 01. Fuel on Neighboring Properties

Fuel on Neighboring Properties was viewed as the greatest challenge for survey respondents in the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone in reducing their wildfire risk. Over half the survey respondents (46%) chose this as their main challenge.



## 02. Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space & Fuel Reduction Around Your Home or Property

Cost of Fuel Reduction/Defensible Space and Fuel Reduction Around Your Home or Property were tied as the second highest challenge.



## 03. Removing Dead Trees

Removing Dead Trees was viewed as a major barrier to reducing one's wildfire risk and was selected as a challenge by 27% of survey respondents in the Forecast Zone, which was unique to the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone.

*“Defensible space only works when all residents participate in the program. Our neighbors do minimal defensible space.” - Anonymous Response*

*“Need more funds to mitigate dangerous underbrush and overgrown areas.” - Anonymous Response*

*“It would be very helpful to have some sort of financial assistance to assist in removing these drying trees. Being a retired 76-year-old state worker the financial burden is great and I cannot drop this tree by myself. I have already spent over \$2000 for assistance by an arborist to remove to trees that could have hit my house.” - Anonymous Response*

# EVACUATION WILLINGNESS



# 84%

The majority of survey respondents in the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone indicated that they had never evacuated from a wildfire in Nevada County. This was higher than any other Forecast Zone.

# 57%

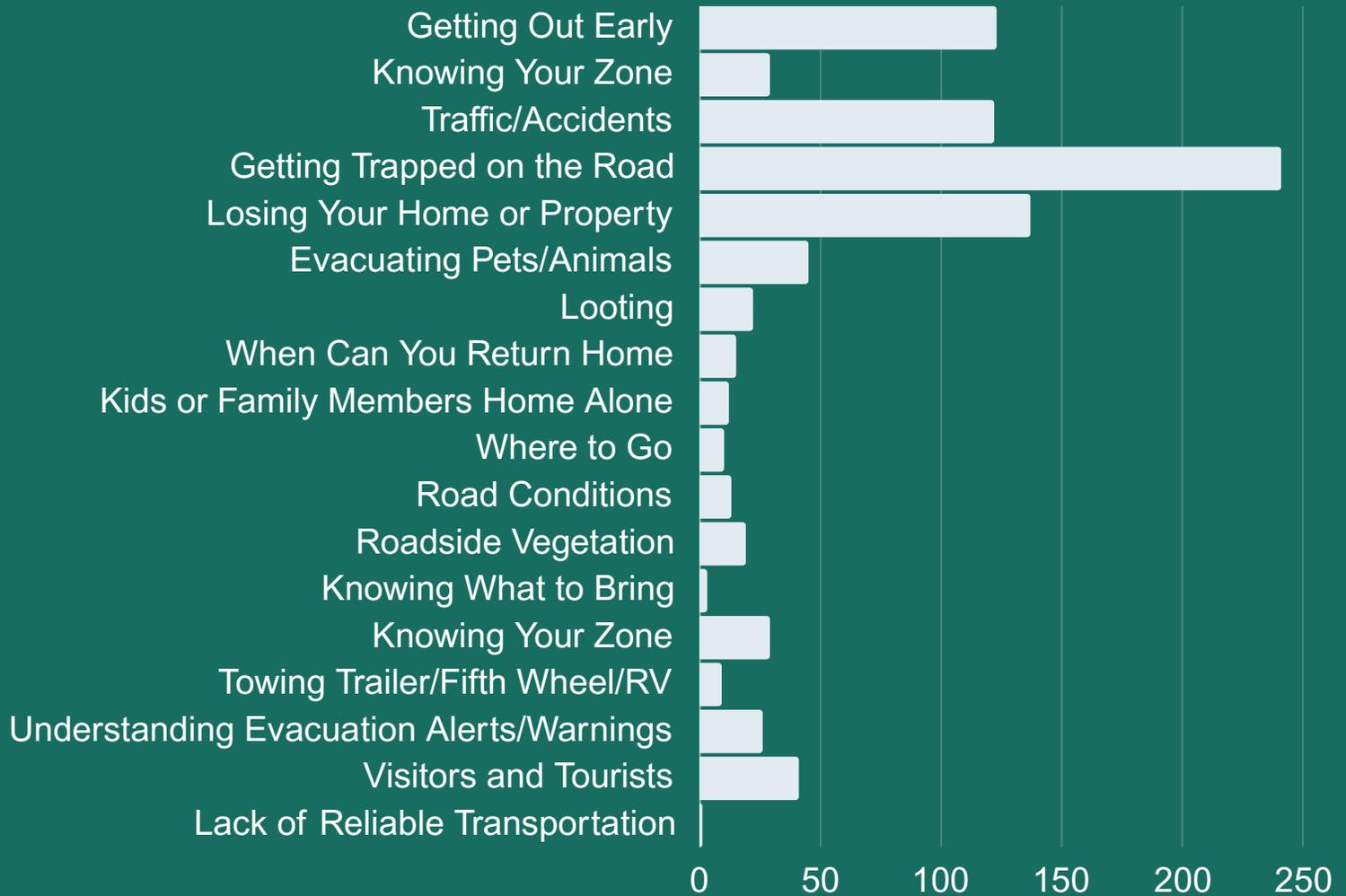
However, when the respondents were asked about their likely evacuation behavior in a wildfire event 57% of respondents said that they would leave as early as possible.

# 2%

Two percent (2%) of participants said that in a wildfire they would choose not to evacuate. When asked a follow up question, about what could change their evacuation behavior, the majority of respondents indicated that nothing would change their decision to not evacuate.

*“Traffic gets gridlocked easily in Truckee with tourist and recreation traffic. Sometimes we can't get our kids to school or to the grocery stores because of the gridlock.” - Anonymous Response*





## EVACUATION CONCERNS

The CWPP Survey also collected information about respondents' main evacuation concerns. Each participant was requested to choose three main concerns they had about evacuation. Participants could choose from nineteen evacuation concerns. The bar chart above displays the primary evacuation concerns for the Truckee/Donner Forecast Zone.

Over 70% of survey participants indicated that their main evacuation concern was Getting Trapped on the Road which was consistent with the County-wide results. The second highest concern was Losing Your Home or Property. The third highest concern was a one-response difference between Getting Out Early and Traffic/Accidents. The least concerning was the Lack of Reliable Transportation, Towing a Trailer/Fifth Wheel, and When Can You Return Home.





# CONCLUSION

The Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) Survey gave the Nevada County community an opportunity to share their perspective on the wildfire problem and identify priorities for becoming more wildfire resilient.

The results from the CWPP survey were incorporated into the Wildfire Risk Assessment (WRA) and were used to help identify the Project Priority Areas. The Project Priority Areas are geographically delineated areas on the landscape that are prioritized for risk reduction activity based on the wildfire hazard and the protection of High-Value Resources and Assets at risk that were identified by the community in the survey. The results from the survey were also used to help create the CWPP Risk Reduction Workshops and the Community Action Plans.

*“We need significant investment and partnership with surrounding communities/counties to fully mitigate the risk of wildfire spreading in our county.” - Anonymous Response*

