

# PLUMAS COUNTY 2035 GENERAL PLAN PUBLIC HEALTH & SAFETY ELEMENT

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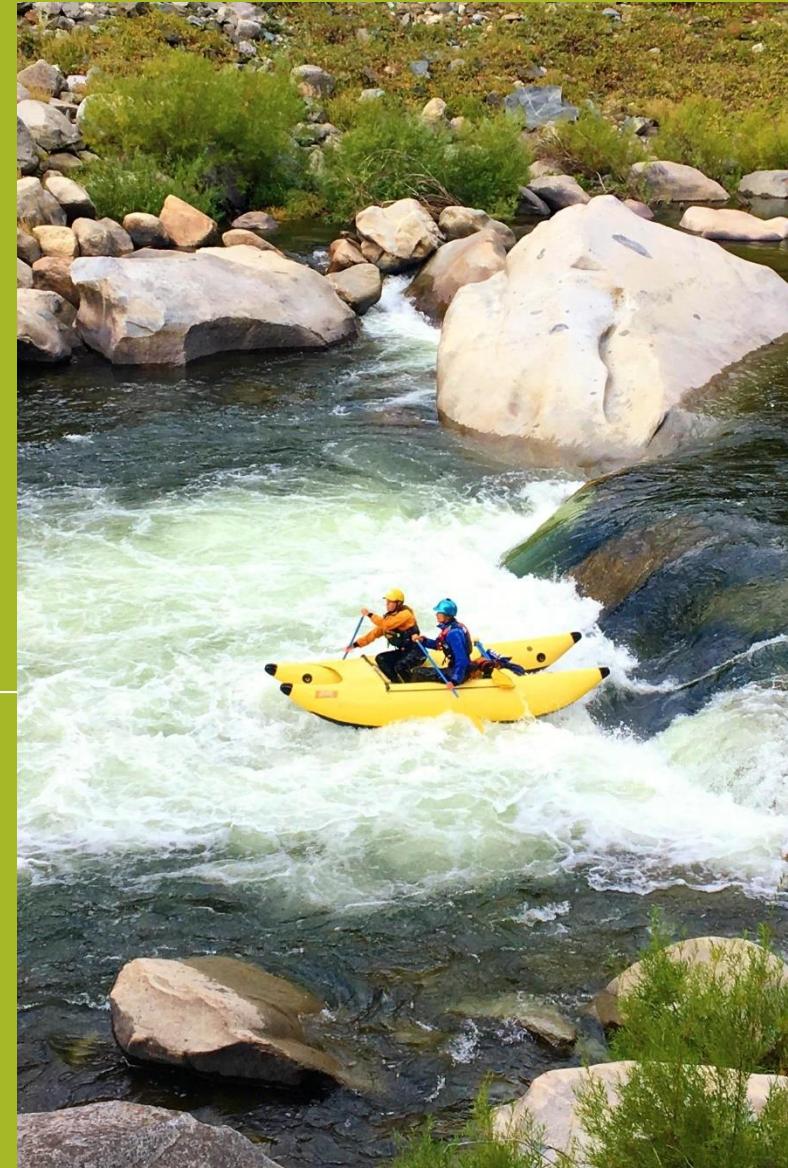


Photo Credit: North Fork Feather River with rafters  
by Tracey Ferguson

# GOAL PHS 6.1 – General Plan Policies

To protect local communities from injury and damage resulting from natural catastrophes and man-made hazardous conditions.

## ***6.1.1 Development Constraints***

The County shall limit the density and intensity of development in areas to the levels needed to reduce hazards to public health and safety.

## ***6.1.2 Building and Code Updates***

Except as otherwise noted by State law, the County shall ensure that all new structures intended for human habitation are designed in compliance with the latest adopted editions of the California Building Standards Code.

## ***6.1.3 Hazard Awareness and Public Education***

The County shall continue to promote awareness and education among residents regarding possible natural hazards, including soil conditions, landslides, earthquakes, flooding, wildfire hazards and emergency procedures.

## ***6.1.4 Public Safety Programs***

The County shall promote all applicable public safety programs, including neighborhood-watch programs, hazards materials disposal, public awareness and prevention of wildfire hazards, and other public-education efforts.



# GOAL PHS 6.2 – Geological and Seismic Hazards

To identify and prevent development in “areas of unstable geologic conditions,” which include: active faults, landslides and areas of potential ground failure such as liquefaction, mudslides and subsidence.

## ***6.2.1 Maintenance of Updated Geologic and Seismic Hazard Information***

The County shall maintain updated geologic, seismic and avalanche hazard maps and other hazard inventory information in cooperation with the State Office of Emergency Services, California Department of Conservation—Division of Mines and Geology, United States Forest Service, California Department of Transportation and other agencies as this information is made available.

## ***6.2.2 Design Measures***

The County shall require earthquake resistant designs consistent with the requirements of the California Building Standards Code for all critical structures, such as fire stations, emergency communication centers, private schools, high occupancy buildings, and non-highway bridges.

## ***6.2.3 Seismic Retrofitting***

The County shall support and encourage seismic upgrades to older buildings that may be structurally deficient. Upgrades shall consider any applicable historic building preservation requirements.

## ***6.2.4 Development on Slopes***

The County shall not allow development on slopes 30 percent or greater, unless the applicant can sufficiently mitigate the inherent problems associated with developing on steep slopes.



# GOAL PHS 6.2 – Geological and Seismic Hazards

## ***6.2.5 Avalanche, Landslide and Mudflow Hazards***

The County shall prohibit new subdivisions in high risk areas of known avalanche, landslide or mudflow hazards.

## ***6.2.6 Naturally Occurring Asbestos***

The County shall work with the Northern Sierra Air Quality Management District to map locations of naturally occurring asbestos and to mitigate potential hazards from development.

## ***6.2.7 Development Requirements***

The County shall continue to address seismic standards of dam safety as required by the State Division of Safety and Dams.



# GOAL PHS 6.3 – Wildland Fire Hazards and Fire Protection

To minimize the possibility of the loss of life, injury, damage to property, and loss of habitat and natural resources as a result of fire.

## ***6.3.1 Defensible Space***

The County shall review and update its Fire Safe ordinance to attain and maintain defensible space through conditioning of tentative maps and in new development at the final map and/or building-permit stage.

## ***6.3.2 Limitations in Fire Hazard Areas***

The County shall consult the current Fire Hazard Severity Zone Maps during the review of all projects so that standards and mitigation measures appropriate to each hazard classification can be applied. Land use densities and intensities shall be determined by mitigation measures in areas designated with a high or very high fire hazard rating. Intensive development in areas with high or very high fire hazard rating shall be discouraged.

## ***6.3.3 Structural Fire Protection***

All developments within the service boundaries of an entity which provides structural fire protection may be required to make contribution to the maintenance of the existing level of structural service proportionate to the increase in demand for service structural fire protection and Emergency Medical Services resulting from the development.



# GOAL PHS 6.3 – Wildland Fire Hazards and Fire Protection

## ***6.3.4 New Development Requirements***

As a requirement for approving new development, the County must find (based on information provided by the applicant and the responsible fire protection district), that concurrent with development, adequate emergency water flow, fire access and fire-fighting personnel and equipment, will be available in accordance with applicable State, County, and local fire district standards.

## ***6.3.5 Emergency Access***

As a requirement of new development, the applicant must demonstrate that adequate emergency access exists or can be provided to ensure that emergency vehicles can access the site and that private vehicles can evacuate the area.

## ***6.3.6 Fire Protection and Roadside Maintenance***

As a condition of development, the County shall require the long-term maintenance of private roads, including roadside vegetation management, to the standards of original improvements.

## ***6.3.7 Rural Fire Protection Water System***

The County shall research the feasibility of a countywide rural fire protection water system that provides a cost-effective, adequate water supply.



# GOAL PHS 6.3 – Wildland Fire Hazards and Fire Protection

## ***6.3.8 Fire Protection Facility Upgrades***

The County shall encourage upgrading facilities within existing fire protection districts and encourage expansion of existing districts where warranted by population density allowed under the General Plan.

## ***6.3.9 Fuel Modification***

The County shall require new development within high and very high fire hazard areas to designate fuel break zones that comply with defensible space requirements to benefit the new and, where possible, existing development.

## ***6.3.10 Prescribed Burning***

The County shall encourage the use of prescribed burning as a management tool for hazardous fuels reduction, timber management purposes, livestock production and enhancement of wildlife habitat. The County shall support removal of fuels and chipping and onsite distribution of chipped materials as an alternative to burning.

## ***6.3.11 Regional Cooperation***

The County shall cooperate with Federal, State, community fire safety groups and other fire protection entities in fire prevention programs and in identifying opportunities for hazardous fuel reduction projects in zones of high and very high fire hazard either prior to or as a component of project review.



# GOAL PHS 6.3 – Wildland Fire Hazards and Fire Protection

## ***6.3.12 Fire Prevention Education***

The County, in cooperation with Federal and State agencies, community fire safety groups, and the local fire protection districts, shall educate the public about the hazards of wildfires, methods to reduce the potential for fires to occur, and mitigation measures, including reducing fuel loads, to lessen the impacts of wildfires.

## ***6.3.13 Landscape-Scale Fuel Modification***

The County shall support fuel modification across public and private forestlands to reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfires, with the highest priority directed toward reducing hazardous fuel levels in the wildland-urban interface.



# GOAL PHS 6.4 – Flood and Dam Inundation Hazards

To minimize the loss of life, injury or damage to property as a result of floods in Plumas County.

## ***6.4.1 Coordination with Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States Army Corps of Engineers and Department of Water Resources Division of Flood Management***

The County shall continue participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program, utilizing the Flood Insurance Rate Maps and the County's floodplain ordinances that implement Federal and State flood management standards. The County shall continue to utilize floodplain management and flood control information provided by the Department of Water Resources Division of Flood Management and the United States Army Corps of Engineers and coordinate with these agencies when undertaking updates to the County's floodplain ordinances and policies.

## ***6.4.2 Development in Floodways and Dam Inundation Areas***

The County shall prohibit the development of new critical or high-occupancy structures within the floodway of any river, stream or other body of water. Similar structures should not be located within the inundation area resulting from failure of dams identified by the State Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams.



# GOAL PHS 6.4 – Flood and Dam Inundation Hazards

## ***6.4.3 New Parcels in Floodplain***

The County shall strongly discourage the creation of new residential parcels which lie entirely within Special Flood Hazard Areas as identified on the most current version of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Proposals for new parcels that are partially located within designated Special Flood Hazard Areas must be evaluated to determine if sufficient land is available outside the Special Flood Hazard Area to support residential development and that potential flood impacts can be sufficiently mitigated.

## ***6.4.4 Floodplain Development Restrictions***

The County shall ensure that riparian areas and drainage areas within floodplains are free from development that may adversely affect floodway capacity or characteristics of natural/riparian areas or natural groundwater recharge areas.

## ***6.4.5 Multi-Purpose Flood Control Measures***

The County shall encourage multi-purpose flood control projects that incorporate recreation, resource conservation, preservation of natural riparian habitat and scenic values of the County's waterways.



# GOAL PHS 6.4 – Flood and Dam Inundation Hazards

## ***6.4.6 Flood Control Design***

The County shall avoid flood control projects involving further channeling, straightening or lining of waterways until alternative multi-purpose modes of treatment, such as wider berms and landscaped areas in combination with recreation amenities, are studied.

## ***6.4.7 Limit Surface Runoff***

The County shall review development projects to determine that such development can be permitted without alteration of off-site historical flood patterns or contribution to flooding hazards for downstream users. Each project with the potential to create off-site drainage shall be required to submit a plan showing how the impacts of such drainage will be addressed, both on-site and off-site.

## ***6.4.8 Storm Water Retention/Detention and Groundwater Infiltration***

As appropriate, the County shall require development to incorporate storm-water retention/detention ponds to encourage groundwater recharge and to make efficient use of storm water.



# GOAL PHS 6.5 – Hazardous Wastes

To protect the community from hazardous materials through safe and efficient use, storage, transport and disposal.

## ***6.5.1 Hazardous Materials***

The County Environmental Health Division, as the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA), shall strive to ensure hazardous materials are used, stored, transported and disposed of in a safe manner in compliance with local, State and Federal safety standards.

## ***6.5.2 Hazardous Materials Studies***

The County shall ensure that a site investigation, undertaken by a person with State-recognized credentials, shall be submitted to the County for any subdivision or parcel that is located on a known or suspected contaminated site included in a list as provided by applicable State and Federal agencies. The recommendations of these site investigations will be implemented prior to development of the specific site.

## ***6.5.3 Transportation of Hazardous Wastes***

The County shall continue to coordinate with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) and railroad operators to establish procedures for the movement of hazardous wastes and explosives within the County.



# GOAL PHS 6.5 – Hazardous Wastes

## ***6.5.4 Contamination Prevention***

The County shall require new developments to protect soils, air quality, surface water and groundwater from hazardous material contamination associated with site development and construction activities.

## ***6.5.5 Incompatible Land Uses***

The County shall review project applications to prevent incompatible land uses near properties that produce or store hazardous waste.

## ***6.5.6 Hazardous Materials Databases***

The County shall continue to maintain maps or databases that identify known or suspected contaminated sites which include active, abandoned or closed mines; closed landfills; leaking underground tanks; or other areas where soils may have become saturated or otherwise contaminated with toxic or hazardous materials.

## ***6.5.7 Increase of Public Awareness***

The County shall work to educate the public about household hazardous waste and proper methods of disposal.



# GOAL PHS 6.5 – Hazardous Wastes

## ***6.5.8 Hazardous Materials and Waste Management***

The County shall ensure the safe and effective management of hazardous materials and hazardous wastes generated within the county. Primary management strategies include waste minimization, waste reduction and recycling. Should applications for the treatment, processing or disposal of hazardous wastes or materials be received, such facilities shall be located in a manner consistent with State law as well as criteria established in the State-approved Plumas County Hazardous Waste Management Plan approved by the County.

## ***6.5.9 Hazardous Materials Remediation***

The County shall work with project applicants to actively promote clean-up or remediation of properties contaminated by mine waste or other hazardous materials and shall not grant any discretionary or ministerial land-use approvals to develop or change boundaries or reconfigure parcels believed to be contaminated unless and until the nature, extent, type and location of contamination is determined and satisfactory arrangements are made for clean-up or remediation, in accordance with Plumas County standards and state regulations.



# GOAL PHS 6.6 – Airport Safety

To protect the community from the risks associated with airport operations and to protect airports from the economic impacts of encroachment from incompatible land uses.

## ***6.6.1 Consistency with the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan***

The County shall review all development proposals near county airports to ensure consistency with the current ALUCP's height, noise and safety policies and land use criteria set forth in the Plumas County ALUC's statement of Policies, Rules and Regulations, and each ALUCP. When required, development proposals shall be referred to the ALUC for review and recommendations.

## ***6.6.2 Compliance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Regulations***

The County shall ensure that development within the airport approach and departure zones is in compliance with Part 77 of the FAA Regulations.

## ***6.6.3 Private Airfields and Land Use Compatibility***

The County shall ensure that the development of future private airstrips and helipads address land use compatibility issues. As part of the approval process of these private facilities, the County shall consult and coordinate with the Plumas County Airport Land Use Commission to address any setback, height, or land use restrictions associated with operation of the private airfield/helipad.



# GOAL PHS 6.7 – Emergency Operations Management and Planning

To provide effective emergency response to natural or human-made hazards and disasters.

## ***6.7.1 Emergency Response Services Coordination with Government Agencies***

The County shall coordinate emergency response with local, State and Federal governmental agencies, community organizations, volunteer agencies and other response partners during emergencies or disasters utilizing the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

## ***6.7.2 Mutual Aid Agreement***

The County shall participate in established local, State and Federal mutual aid systems. Where necessary and appropriate, the County shall enter into agreements to ensure the effective provision of emergency services, such as mass care, heavy rescue, hazardous materials or other specialized functions.



# GOAL PHS 6.7 – Emergency Operations Management and Planning

## ***6.7.3 Maintenance of Emergency Evacuation Plans***

The County shall continue to create, revise and maintain emergency plans for the broad range of natural and human-made disasters and response activities that could be foreseen to impact Plumas County. This shall include, but not be limited to, flooding, dam failure, extreme weather, evacuation/transportation, mass care and shelter, and animal evacuation and sheltering. Emergency Planning projects shall be in line with the County's Emergency Operations Plan and incorporate current guidance and initiatives from State and Federal Emergency Management Agencies.

## ***6.7.4 Streets and Highways Upgrades***

The County shall evaluate and strive to upgrade vital streets and highways to an acceptable level for emergency services and for public safety.

## ***6.7.5 Search and Rescue***

The County should continue to provide search and rescue operation capabilities through the Plumas County Sheriff's Department.

## ***6.7.6 Joint Exercises***

The County shall encourage fire, law enforcement, emergency medical services, resource management, public health and other governmental and non-governmental response partners to periodically conduct joint training exercises with the goal of developing the best possible coordinated action and effective response times in the event of a natural or human-made disaster across all local jurisdictions.



# GOAL PHS 6.8 – Healthy Communities

To support the community values for healthy lifestyles and access to health care facilities among residents of Plumas County through the built environment and land-use decisions that play an important role in shaping the pattern of community development and in promoting good health and food security for visitors and County residents.

## ***6.8.1 Promotion of Healthy Communities***

To the maximum extent feasible, the County shall strive through its land-use decisions to promote community health and safety for all neighborhoods in the County by encouraging patterns of development that are safe and influence crime prevention, promote a high-quality physical environment and encourage physical activity by means such as sidewalks and walking and biking paths that discourage automobile dependency in existing communities.

## ***6.8.2 Walkable Communities***

The County shall require where feasible the development of parks, open space, sidewalks, and walking and biking paths that promote physical activity and discourage automobile dependency in all towns and communities.



# GOAL PHS 6.8 – Healthy Communities

## *6.8.3 Support for Local, Organic and Grass-Fed Agriculture*

The County shall encourage and protect a variety of local ecologically sound agricultural practices as a way to increase on-farm income, diversify Plumas County agricultural production, and provide a healthy, secure food source for local supply that complies with accepted public health and safety standards.

## *6.8.4 Promotion of Small-Scale Agricultural Production*

The County shall encourage small-scale or community garden row crop production that contributes to local food security on appropriate sites throughout the County and complies with accepted public health and safety standards.

## *6.8.5 Community Food Security*

Encourage countywide nutrition self-reliance and resiliency. Direct the development of policy that creates robust and just food systems in the County.



# PHS Implementation Measures

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
1. The County shall update and maintain geologic, flooding and natural hazards mapping (including avalanche hazard zones) that are within areas of existing or potential development. The County shall use these maps during the development review process to evaluate a proposed project's potential exposure or impacts to hazardous areas and conditions.	6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4 6.2.6, 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.4, 6.3.5, 6.3.9 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 6.4.3, 6.4.4, 6.4.5, 6.4.6 6.4.8, 6.5.1, 6.5.2, 6.5.3, 6.5.4, 6.5.5 6.5.6, 6.5.8, 6.5.9	Planning, Public Works
2. County shall maintain countywide hazard land-use planning data—such as fire district boundaries, hazard areas and associated educational materials on the County's website.	6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.1.4, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3 6.2.4, 6.2.6, 6.3.1 6.3.2, 6.3.4, 6.3.5, 6.3.9, 6.3.12, 6.4.1, 6.4.2, 6.4.3, 6.4.4 6.4.5, 6.4.6, 6.4.8 6.5.1, 6.5.2, 6.5.3, 6.5.4, 6.5.5, 6.5.6, 6.5.8, 6.5.9, 6.7.1, 6.7.2, 6.7.3, 6.8.1	Planning, GIS

# PHS Implementation Measures

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
3. The County shall require a geotechnical analysis for construction in areas with potential geological hazards and/or for purposes of environmental analysis. Recommendations of the geotechnical analysis shall be implemented.	6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.4	Planning, Public Works
4. The County shall work with appropriate fire protection agencies to develop community fire plans to identify the desired level of service and methods for delivering such services.	6.3.3, 6.3.4, 6.3.5 6.3.7, 6.3.8	Planning, Public Works
5. The County shall research the feasibility of a county-wide rural fire protection water system that provides a cost-effective and adequate water supply for emergency protection.	6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.7	Planning, Public Works
6. During the review of development proposals, the County shall require appropriate building setbacks and fuel modification requirements within fire hazard zones, as appropriate to each specific hazard zone	6.3.1, 6.3.2 6.3.4, 6.3.9	Planning, Public Works
7. County staff shall review wildfire safety policies, codes and ordinances and report the findings to the Board of Supervisors at regular intervals, every three years, and will consider new wildfire safety codes and ordinances to meet the County's Fire Safe needs.	6.3.1, 6.3.2 6.3.3, 6.3.4 6.3.5, 6.3.7 6.3.8, 6.3.9	Planning
8. County public safety facilities shall be included in the County's development impact fee program to provide for new facilities or upgrading of existing facilities necessary to serve new development.	6.3.3, 6.3.4	Planning

# PHS Implementation Measures

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
9. The County shall adopt all appropriate California Building Standards Code revisions.	6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.3, 6.2.4 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.4 6.3.9, 6.4.1, 6.4.2 6.4.3, 6.4.4, 6.4.5 6.4.6, 6.4.8, 6.5.4 6.5.5, 6.5.8	Building Services
10. The County shall continue to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program and utilize the Flood Insurance Rate Maps and the County's floodplain ordinances that implement Federal and State flood management standards.	6.4.1, 6.4.2, 6.4.3 6.4.4, 6.4.5 6.4.6, 6.4.8	Planning Department Public Works Department
11. The County shall develop regulations for the placement of hazardous waste sites and develop standards for types of uses which would be compatible. Existing hazardous waste development requirements shall be enforced.	6.5.1, 6.5.2 6.5.3, 6.5.4 6.5.5, 6.5.6 6.5.7, 6.5.8 6.5.9	Plumas County Environmental Health Division
12. The County shall maintain a Plumas County Emergency Operations Plan to meet current Federal and State emergency requirements.	6.7.1, 6.7.2, 6.7.3	Plumas County Office of Emergency Services
13. The County shall develop a healthy community checklist for new residential, commercial, office and public developments that lists standards for land use, transportation, street design, parks, and open space.	6.8.1, 6.8.3, 6.8.4	Planning

# PHS Implementation Measures

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
14. Encourage Countywide food security by allowing limited backyard small animal husbandry, including chickens, rabbits and miniature livestock, for home-scale food production based on appropriate zoning.	6.8.1 6.8.3 6.8.4	Planning
15. Create a resiliency plan that address community needs county-wide in the event of a major natural disaster or long term disruption of food and fuel transportation into the county.	6.8.1 6.8.2 6.8.3 6.8.4	Planning
16. The County shall promote the continued effectiveness and public awareness of the Plumas County Emergency Operations Plan.	6.1.3 6.1.4	
17. The County shall promote the public's awareness of the programs available through the Federal and State agencies, community fire safety groups, and local fire protection districts.	6.1.3 6.1.4	
18. Emergency access to new developments shall be in accordance with county wildfire safety policies, which are certified in lieu of Public Resources Code Section 4290, or as may be modified and recertified in compliance with Public Resources Code Section 4290.	6.3.5	
19. The County shall cooperate with Federal, State and Local agencies, community fire safety groups and other fire protection entities in developing fire prevention programs and facilities.	6.3.8	
20. Develop codes and standards to address drainage.	6.4.8	
21. The County shall require emergency backup systems in county emergency facilities to enable uninterrupted continuous operations as required by the California Essential Facilities Act.	6.7.3	

# PHS Implementation Measures

Implementation	Implements What Policy	Who is Responsible
22. The County shall encourage sustainable timber and biomass production and harvesting along with more intensive forest management practices to protect watershed quality, productive forests, forested lands, and habitats, and to reduce the potential of catastrophic wildfires.	6.3.13	
Also Implementation Measure from the Water Element:	6.3.3 6.3.4 6.3.7	
6. The County shall work with and encourage water agencies and fire protection agencies to conduct a county-wide assessment of fire-flow requirements as they relate to compliance with fire protection standards.		