

**Lake County, Michigan Community Wildfire
Protection Plan**

July 2023 Update




Photo Courtesy of USDA Forest Service, Huron-Manistee National
Forest

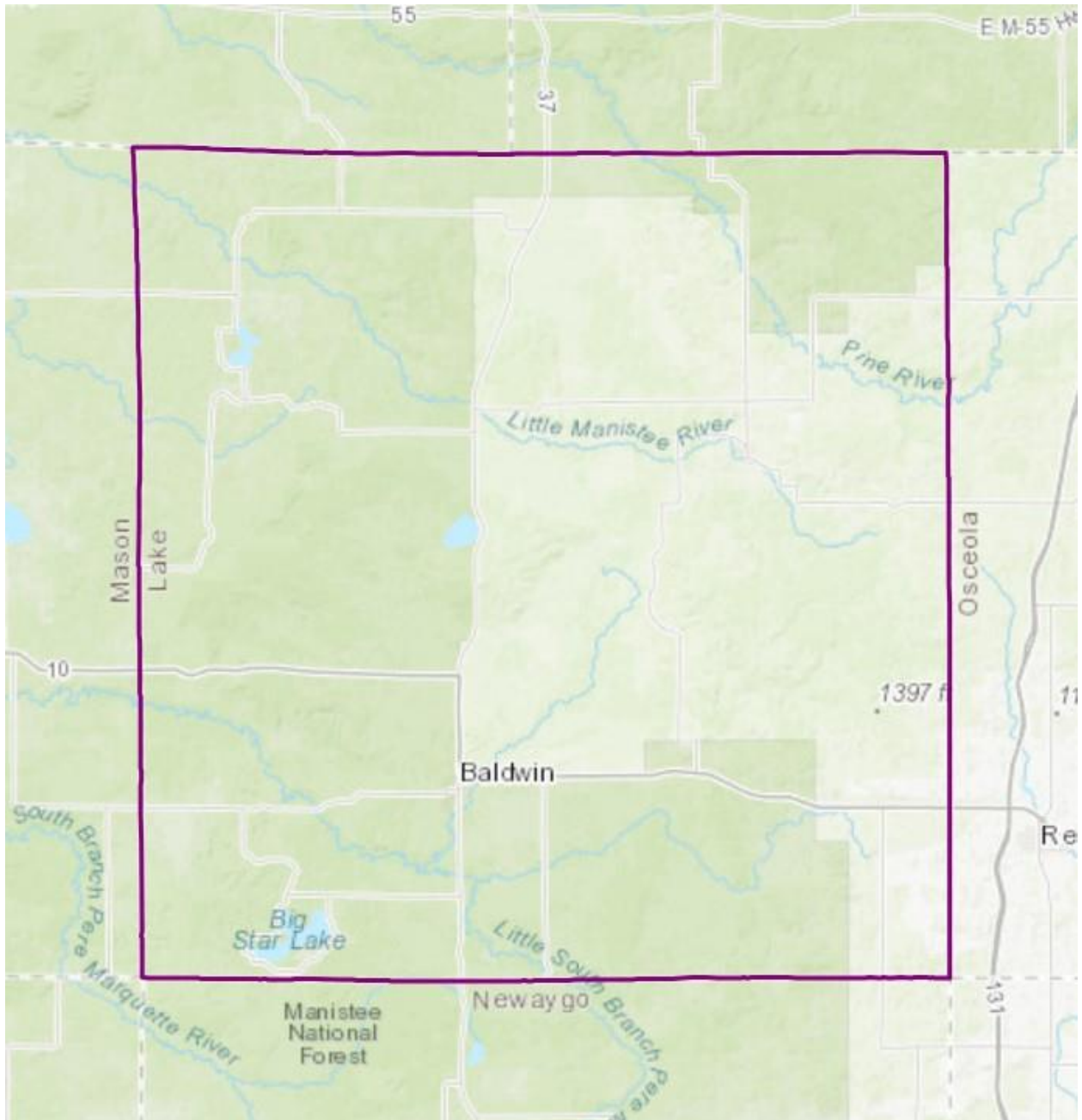
Signatory Approval

_____ Date: 06/10/2024
U.S. Forest Service

 Date: 11/3/2023
Michigan Department of Natural Resources


Erik M. King, Director Date: 06/10/2024
_____ Lake County Emergency Management

Lake County, Michigan



Executive Summary

With large areas of State and National Forest, lake and streamside communities, numerous woodlots, and hunting camps, Lake County has many areas at significant risk from wildfire. Lake County Emergency Management with the support of all county fire departments and the U.S. Forest Service, secured a grant in 2006 to complete a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). The grant funding was used to convene local, state, and federal stakeholders to develop a CWPP which evaluates wildfire risk, areas of concern, firefighter resources and limitations, and identify priority actions to complete.

This plan was completed in 2011, and identified multiple state and federal projects on private, state and National Forest land ownership. This included Prescribed fire, hazard fuel reduction utilizing timber harvest, and hazardous fuels removal on private lands under an agreement.

Over the course of the last 12 years, thousands of acres of private, state and federal lands have been treated to reduce the risk of wildfire, but this will be a continuous project as the county grows in the urban interface and fuels continue to increase.

Forests provide clean air and water, hold special importance to Tribal partners. We go to these special places to hike, camp, hunt, fish, and engage in recreation that revitalizes us and connects us to history and nature. Many local economies thrive because of these outdoor and forest management activities, including in the sustainable forest product sector. This is Lake County.

This update works off the baseline CWPP documents of 2011 will need to continuously be updated as priorities change within the signatory organizations. Wildfire risk in Michigan is not going away, and it is definitively not leaving Lake County, Michigan. you will find the latest tools, programs, and information for the 2023 update.

Local, State, & Federal Risk Assessment Updates:

In 2023 The Northeast-Midwest State Foresters' Alliance developed and implemented an excellent tool for not only emergency responders and Local emergency management planning officials, but for local citizens. This tool incorporates all data previously used in Risk Assessments and updated information The website for this invaluable resource is: <https://northeastmidwestwildfirerisk.com/>

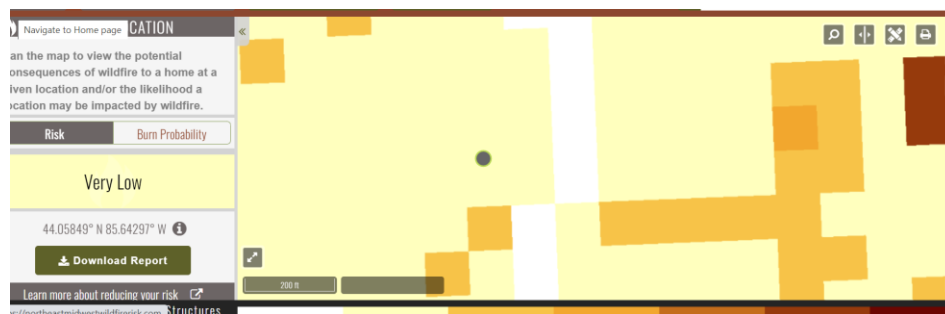
Sharing this portal with all responding agencies, county officials and most importantly the public on their risk in Lake County will pay great dividends to the future.

Some of the important features of these tools are as follows:

RISK EXPLORER:

<https://northeastmidwestwildfirerisk.com/#risk-map-widget>

This tool is easy to use and allows the citizens to enter their address and a determination is made of their risk, ranging from Very Low-Extreme. A screenshot is provided and a detailed report is then provided (See Below for an example from Luther, MI)



Luther Mi Address

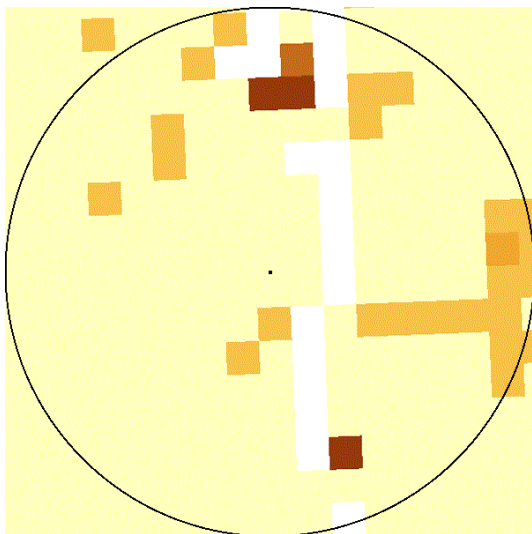
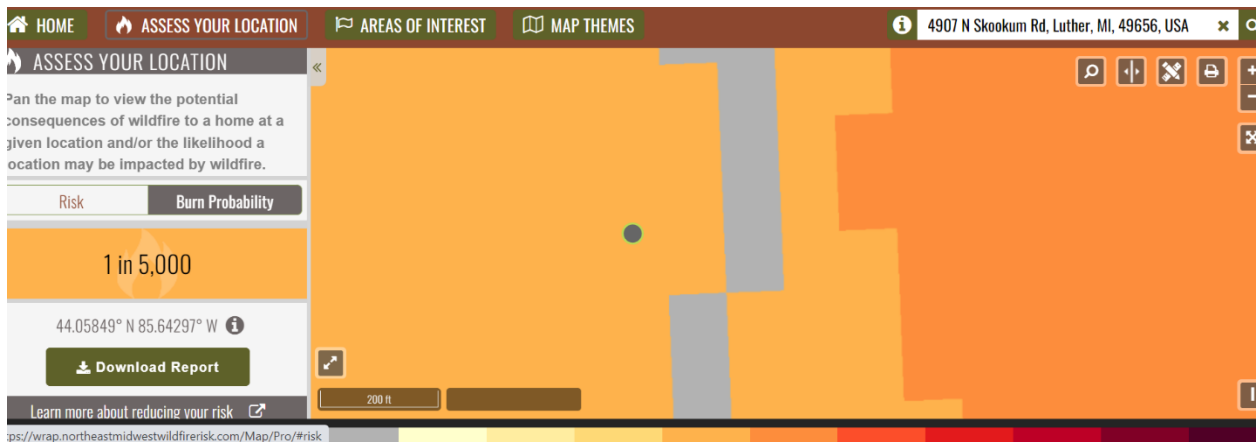


Figure 1

Risk to Homes	
	Minimal Direct Wildfire Impacts
	Very Low
	Low
	Moderate
	High
	Very High
	Extreme

Figure 2

Assessment Report for Your Location

Introduction

Thank you for using the Northeast-Midwest Wildfire Risk Explorer. The following report provides the potential consequences of wildfire to a home for the location you have selected and mitigation activities that are recommended based upon the generalized risk level at the location.

Location

The information in this Assessment Report is based on an area that is approximately 45 acres in size centered at your location with the GPS coordinates of 44.0585° N 85.643° W.

How to Read Your Assessment

Assess Your Location is derived from the Conditional Risk to Potential Structures (cRPS) or “Risk to Homes” and the Burn Probability layers. More information on each part of the assessment is detailed below.

Risk to Homes

The Risk to Homes or cRPS value of your assessment represents the potential consequences of fire to a home at a given location, if a fire occurs there and if a home were located there. It is a measure that integrates wildfire intensity with generalized consequences to a home on every pixel, but does not account for the actual probability of fire occurrence. There are six potential scores for cRPS: Very Low, Low, Moderate, High, Very High, and Extreme risk. There are also areas of the map with no risk data available, which include waterbodies and urban areas. The potential score values are summarized in figure 2 below.

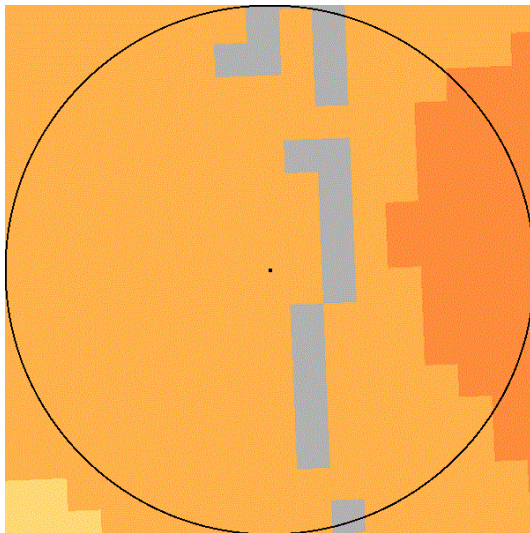


Figure 3

Annual Probability of Wildfire	
	Minimal Direct Wildfire Impacts
	0 to 1 in 50,000
	1 in 50,000
	1 in 10,000
	1 in 5,000
	1 in 2,000
	1 in 1,000
	1 in 500
	1 in 200
	1 in 100
	1 in 10

Figure 4

The Risk to Homes score for your location is Very Low.

Burn Probability is the probability that a specific geographic location (30-meter pixel) will experience a wildland fire during a specified time period (1 year). Estimates of burn probability were generated with the large-wildfire simulation system, FSim. There are nine potential burn probabilities for this layer including 1:50,000, 1:10,000, 1:5,000, 1:2,000, 1:1,000, 1:500, 1:200, 1:100, and 1:10. There are also areas of the map with no burn probability data available, which include waterbodies and urban areas. The potential burn probability categories are summarized in figure 4 above.

The annual probability of a wildfire reaching your location is 1 in 5,000.

Due to the complex nature of the mapping models, it is recommended that you do an on-the-ground assessment to truly evaluate your exposure level to the negative effects of wildfires.



Precautions and Preparations

Basic preparedness measures are an important step in better protecting your home and property. Additionally, it is an important consideration in areas where sufficient firefighting resources may not be readily available to protect lives or property.

To be aware of the potential occurrence of wildfire, the Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance recommends utilizing the Fire-wise model.

This means homeowners are encouraged to create at least a 100-foot Defensible Space Zone around homes and structures (figure 5).



Figure 5

This Defensible Space Zone allows for reduced fire intensity near homes and structures, allowing firefighters to safely implement fire protection measures in the area. Remember, firefighters can only implement fire protection measures if their personal safety can be assured.

Your Goal

Create a Defensible Space Zone

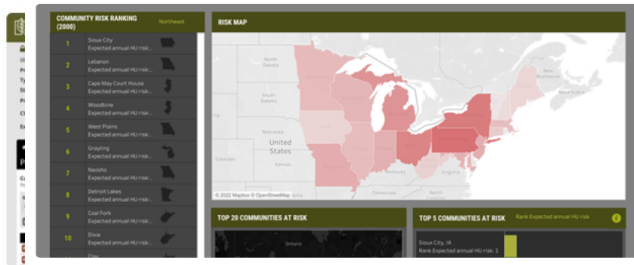
Immediate Zone 1: 0–5 feet

From your home to 5' from the foundation (including decks, fences, and other attached structures), keep fuels away from the foundation of your house. Clear all debris (including firewood) and remove all other flammable material out of the Defensible Zone. Remove plants containing resins, oils, and waxes. Do not forget to clean gutters and keep your roof clear of debris.

Intermediate Zone 2: 5–30 feet

From 5 to 30 feet around your home and structures, create an area with a lower risk of ignition. Remove all flammable vegetation and any dead or dying plants within 30 feet of each building or structure. It is acceptable to keep single trees or other vegetation that are trimmed of all dead and dying foliage and are well pruned and maintained. Green grass and vegetation that is low to the ground are acceptable in this area. Remove branches from trees that overhang your roof.

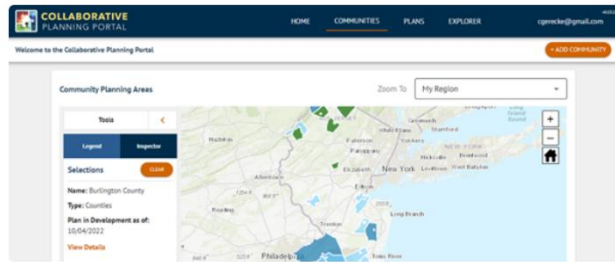
In addition to the Risk Assessment Tool, below are the other tools available to community emergency responders and planners to use for wildfire risk planning.



Community Exposure Dashboard

The Community Exposure Dashboard allows users to view exposure and risk data for communities throughout the Northeast-Midwest region or a specific state. The communities have been ranked by exposure to wildfire risk and hazard per region and state.

[View Dashboard](#)



Collaborative Planning Portal

The Collaborative Planning Portal provides tools and information to assist with community wildfire protection planning and CWPP development throughout the Northeast-Midwest region. This tool is used by state forestry agencies.

[Sign In](#)

Recommend that local officials promote the use of this portal to the citizens of Lake County.



Values Explorer

Prioritizing Communities for Wildfire Defense Grants

The Prioritizing Communities for Wildfire Defense Grants StoryMap is focused on visualizing at-risk, vulnerable, and disadvantaged communities to help highlight funding opportunities for grant-based programs (including the Community Wildfire Defense Grants (CWDG)).

[Try It](#)

Additional Assessment Tools:

Wildfire Home Assessment & Checklist: <https://wildfireprepared.org/>

Ready, Set Go: https://www.wildlandfirersg.org/s/?language=en_US

FireWise: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>

WILDLAND FIRE RESPONSE

Wildfire response in Lake County is primarily handled by the volunteer fire departments, with supplemental response for resources and equipment provided by the Michigan DNR-Baldwin Office and the U.S. Forest Service, Huron-Manistee National Forest-Baldwin District.

From 2011-2023, the DNR has responded to approximately 60 requests for assistance in Lake County. During this same time period, the U.S. Forest Service has responded to a yearly average of 30+ fires per year.

The U.S. Forest Service has expanded its capabilities for fire response since 2011, by adding multiple full-time firefighter positions to staff equipment and upgrading of facilities and equipment during this time.

The U.S. Forest Service continues to bring in “extra” firefighting resources to provide fire response in Lake County and surrounding counties under their protection. This ranges from dozers, engines and hand-crews.

Aviation resources provided by the Forest Service are placed in Gaylord or Cadillac at the airport for increased efficiency.

Fire detection continues to be 911 with both the DNR and Forest Service using aerial assets to keep fires small, by detecting them early and on critical fire days.

Fire prevention continues to be an important piece in wildfire reduction and elimination by keeping public informed and educated on the dangers of wildfire. All fire agencies in Lake County have a stake in providing a high level of fire prevention messaging.

HAZARD FUELS REDUCTION

Work by the land management agencies over the last 12 years to reduce hazardous fuels in Lake County has been tremendous. Several thousand acres of Prescribed Fire (RX), thinning, fuel break installation and maintenance, and timber sales in critical areas of state and national forest lands in proximity to the wildland urban interface has made Lake County a much safer place since 2011. This effort must continue and take advantage of all opportunities for funding to complete important projects in and around communities at risk.

For example, over the last 10 years, the Forest Service has completed important work in and around the Big Star Lake and Idlewild communities to protect the citizens residing there.

Future work must continue in High Hazard areas identified by the land management agencies with public and emergency responder input. Having support for these projects from the public is crucial for successful implementation.

The DNR and the Forest Service will continue to implement critical RX Fire, timber sales, and mechanicals fuels removal to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire in Lake County. One example of this type of work will be a DNR implemented Fuel Break in the northern portion of Lake County, located in “jackpine” fuel type. The project is in its infancy, but is an important project for all parties invested in this plan to support and work together for its accomplishment.

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Lake County Fire Chiefs 2023

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DEP.CHIEF	KEVIN BRADDY	702		616-312-8969	pptfd.dc@gmail.com
LAKE TWP(Lake County)	FAX 231-898-2076		15580 S STAR LAKE DR, BALDWIN 49304		
CHIEF	DOUG WOLGAMOTT	600		231-580-7211	djwolgamott@gmail.com
DEP.CHIEF	BRAD HYSELL	601	231-898-4313	231-301-1202	brad_hysell@hotmail.com
WEBBER TWP(Lake County)	FAX 231-745-7122		2280 W SPRINGTIME ST (PO BOX 939), BALDWIN 49304		
CHIEF	AL DAILY	500		231-729-4363	webberfirechief@gmail.com
ASST.CHIEF	JEREMY ANDERSON	501		231-729-3279	firefighter43108@yahoo.com
YATES TWP(Lake County)	FAX 231-745-9083		2155 E US10, IDLEWILD 49642		

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ASST.CHIEF	JAMES WILLIAMS	301	231-745-7546		
IRONS FIRE(Lake County)			6711 W 8 MILE RD (PO BOX 68), IRONS 49644		
CHIEF	GREG BOMBICH	400		231-233-3996	greg@bombichfamily.com
DEP.CHIEF	JOEL BOYER	401		616-813-5402	jowboyer03@gmail.com
LUTHER FIRE(Lake County)	FAX 231-797-9075		PO BOX 129, LUTHER 49656		
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ASST.CHIEF	SHELDON MARTIN	202	231-797-5925	231-388-3853	
CARR FIRE(Mason County)	FAX 231-898-4311		4930 S MASTEN RD, BRANCH 49402		
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LILLY TWP FIRE(Newaygo County)			11664 N GORDON AVE, BITLEY 49309		
CHIEF	SCOTT DEBRYNE	C1			
ASST.CHIEF		C2			
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