

Threat Assessment 5 Wildland Fire/Urban Interface

General Situation

Due to its weather, topography, and native vegetation, the entire southern California area is at risk from wildland fires. The extended droughts characteristic of California's Mediterranean climate result in large areas of dry vegetation that provide fuel for wildland fires. Furthermore, the native vegetation typically has a high oil content that makes it highly flammable. The area is also intermittently impacted by Santa Ana winds, the hot, dry winds that blow across southern California in the spring and late fall.

A wildfire that consumes thousands of acres of vegetated property can overwhelm local emergency response resources. Often, when a wildland fire encroaches onto the built environment, multiple ignitions develop as a result of "branding", the term for wind transport of burning cinders over a distance of a mile or more. If ignited structures sustain and transmit the fire from one building to the next, a catastrophic fire can ensue. Insurance carriers consider fire a catastrophe if it triggers at least \$25 million in claims or more than 1,000 individual claims. The Oakland Hills firestorm of October 1991 and the California wildfires of 2003 and 2005 were such events. Firestorms, especially in areas of wildland-urban interfaces can be particularly dangerous and complex, posing a severe threat to public and firefighter safety, and causing devastating losses of both life and property. Continuous planning, preparedness, and education are required to reduce the fire hazard potential, and to limit the destruction caused by fires.

The City of Bradbury is located approximately 23 miles north east of downtown Los Angeles and within the eastern section of the County of Los Angeles. The City consists of about 1.9 square miles, nearly all which is developed. The City contains specific areas, which are considered to be at special risk. All of these areas are against the foothills (urban interface) and are at significant risk during the summer months, of extended periods of heat, and long periods of no rain. Strong periodic Santa Ana winds add to the fire danger in the City.

Specific Situation

Wildfire hazard areas are commonly identified in regions of the wildland/urban interface. Ranges of the wildfire hazard are further determined by the ease of fire ignition due to natural or human conditions and the difficulty of fire suppression. The wildfire hazard is also magnified by several factors related to fire suppression/control such as the surrounding fuel load, weather, topography and property characteristics. Generally, hazard identification rating systems are based on weighted factors of fuels, weather and topography. The City is vulnerable to very high fire hazard areas.

The Wildland interface area runs across the entire north border of the City, and includes populated residential properties. All streets north of Royal Oaks Drive North in the city are considered to be in the "Very High Extreme Fire Hazard Zone, and are at significant risk in the event of a Wildland fire. Areas in the Southern and Western portions of the City that are not highlighted in the attached map are considered to be in the Moderate and/or High Fire

Hazard Zone. Structures in these areas may sustain minor damage, while structures inside the “Very High Extreme Fire Zone” can sustain heavy damage or complete destruction during a fire.

Emergency Response Actions

Emergency response actions applicable to all hazards are included in **Part Two Annexes, Checklist Actions for each Section.**

Note: For more detailed information and maps, refer to the City’s Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Attachment 1 – Fire Hazard Map

Attachment 1, Threat Summary 5 Fire Hazard Map



