HANCOCK COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

COUNTY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN
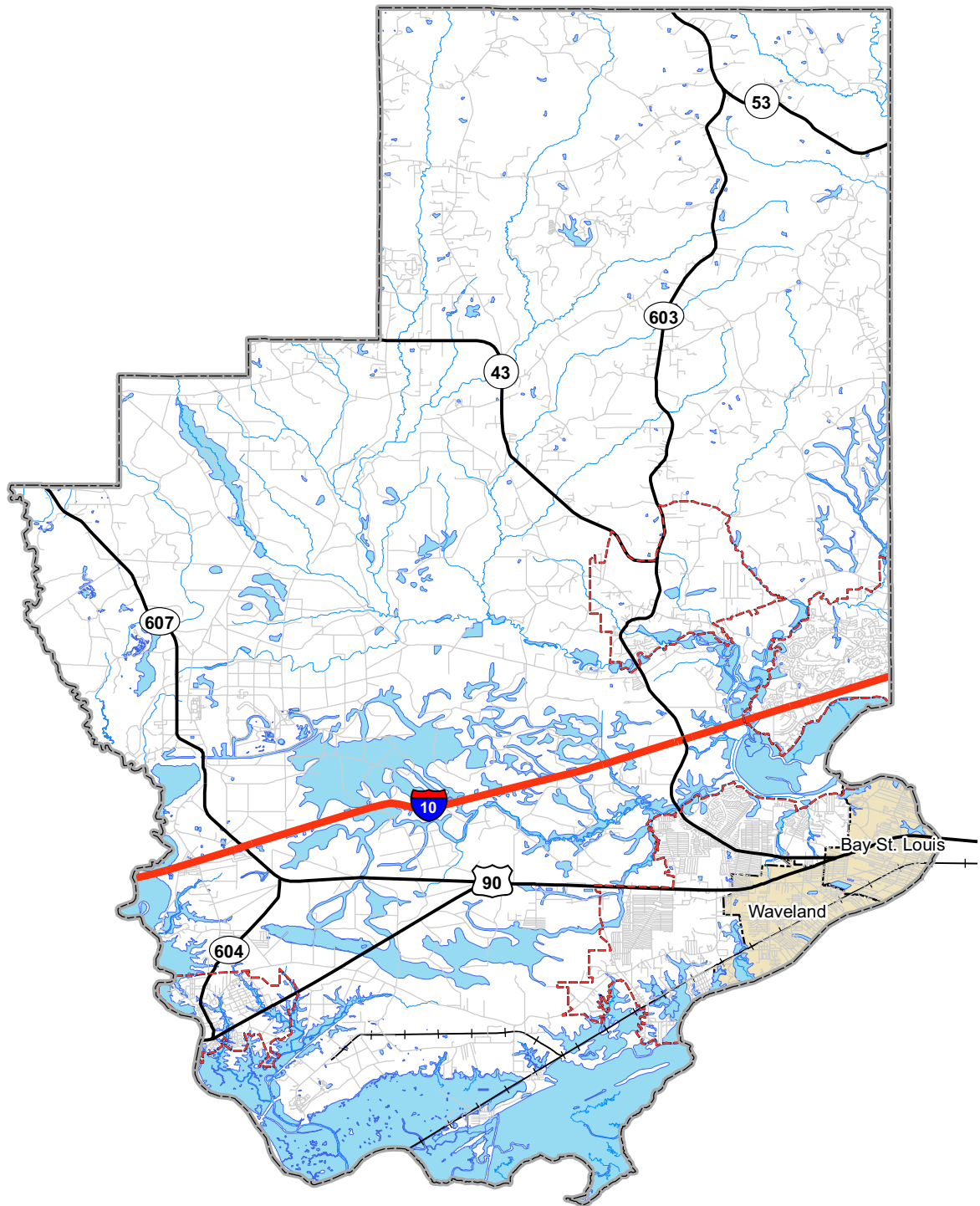
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Introduction

In late 2006, the Mississippi Forestry Commission and The Nature Conservancy commissioned the preparation of wildfire protection plans for a fifteen-county south Mississippi region. The plan is an effort to address changes to the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) brought about by Hurricane Katrina as well as from increased development in many parts of the region in recent years. While some downed timber was salvaged, an increased risk of future wildfire remains a threat because of residual debris.

The Wildland-Urban Interface, where structures and other developments merge with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels, can create one of the most dangerous and complex situations for firefighters. The WUI zone can pose a significant risk to communities in the event of a large-scale wildfire. In a proactive effort to address these increased risks and others, Hancock County has agreed to create a County Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). A CWPP can reduce the potential for loss in the event of a wildfire by identifying priorities for the protection of life, property and critical infrastructure within the WUI.

With 5 plans already completed by the end of 2007, SMPDD officials began gathering geographical data, historical fire information, etc. for Hancock County in early 2008. Planners then met with the local county fire coordinator to review the information and obtain input on the strengths and weaknesses of the county fire departments and their ability to fight wildfires. Later, a Steering Committee was formed through cooperation of local, state and federal agencies, and other interested parties. The Steering Committee included a subcommittee of members from the Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, the Mississippi Forestry Commission, the County Fire Coordinator, and Volunteer Fire Departments.

Over the next several months the Steering Committee, with the opportunity for public input, produced a County Wildfire Protection Plan. The Plan includes several components: Geographic Information System produced maps, a County Risk Assessment, a Mitigation Projects List, Structure Ignitability Recommendations and an Action Plan and Assessment Strategy. It is the intent of the Steering Committee that this plan will guide development and educate landowners, as well as address and then treat at-risk wildfire areas within the County.

This plan was developed with an effort toward consistency with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Area Description

Hancock County lies on the extreme southwest border of the District and is one of the three coastal counties of the State of Mississippi and is separated from Louisiana by the Pearl River. Though still largely rural in context, Hancock County is becoming more urban in character. The City of Bay St. Louis is the largest municipality within Hancock County, with Waveland being the only other incorporated area. Both of these cities are located on the Gulf of Mexico; however, the planned community of Diamondhead now has the second largest concentration of population in the county.

Major transportation routes within Hancock County include state highways 43 and 603 for North/South access. U.S. Interstate 59 crosses the northwest corner of Hancock County and provides direct access to Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Birmingham, Alabama, and other northeast metropolitan areas. U.S. Interstate 10 and U.S. Highway 90 travel East/West through Hancock County. These major highways give the area immediate access to major urban centers such as New Orleans, Louisiana, Gulfport, Mississippi, Pascagoula/Moss Point, Mississippi, and Mobile, Alabama.

The population of Hancock County in 2000 was 42,967, evidencing a 26% growth in residency since 1990; a growth rate slightly higher than the 23% reported for the 1980-1990 interval. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates a 2007 population of 39,687, a 7.7% decrease since 2000, which can be largely attributed to Hurricane Katrina. The Census Bureau projection for Hancock County's population in 2010 is 55,117; this would be a 22% increase for the ten year period.

Hancock County contains 552 square miles. Hancock County has a wide array of facilities that offer its residents access to several outdoor activities. There is access to sports parks with baseball fields, basketball and tennis courts. Access to natural resources that provide access for camping, hunting, fishing are also plentiful, such as: Buccaneer State Park and the Gulf Islands National Seashore. The major water sources in Hancock County are the Mississippi Sound, the Bay of St. Louis, and the Pearl River. The Beach Boulevard Historic District, The Main Street Historic District, and the Sycamore Street Historic District are just a few of the locations on the National Register of Historic Places.

The climate of Hancock County is mild with the mean annual temperature in the mid 60's. Average winter temperatures range from 39 to 61 degrees Fahrenheit with summer temperatures ranging from 72 to 92 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall averages approximately 66 inches annually with the majority of accumulation from November to July. Because of high annual precipitation amounts, Hancock County is not typically prone to property damaging wildfires. Occasionally, however, drought-like conditions prompt fire service officials to issue bans against burning and encroachment of urban development into wildlands becomes more of a concern. County wind speeds are generally less than 10 miles per hour, but often increase during storms. Thunderstorms occur frequently and are sometimes accompanied by strong to severe winds, including tornadoes.

 Woodland fires are controlled by rural volunteer firefighting departments and/or forestry service personnel. Based on historical occurrences, wildfires can be expected annually in the less urbanized parts of the county. It is the threat of a spread of rural wildfires to

the urban fringe that poses the greatest concern. Mitigation measures such as prescribed burns, training and equipping firefighters, and public education on fire protection and Firewise strategies all help to control the risk to life and property.

While climate conditions and debris can cause ignitability, certain industrial operations and facilities can also raise the overall threat of fire. Major transportation arteries through Hancock County such as U.S. Interstates 10 and 59, U.S. Highway 90 and MS Highways 43, 53, 603, and 607 are used daily to transport flammable, toxic, and/or explosive materials, thus exposing the county to potential transportation incidents involving hazardous and/or explosive materials. Several facilities located within Hancock County and NASA's Stennis Space Center use, store, or process flammable, toxic, and/or explosive materials. In addition, there are several wells and pipelines spanning the County which contain petroleum, natural gas, and other substances. Volunteer fire departments within the County serve as first responders if an accident involving hazardous materials occurs.

Hancock County is divided into the following ten (8) rural fire response areas covering the entire county: Bayside Park, Clermont Harbor, Fenton, Kiln, Leetown, Necaise, and Pearlington. The city of Bay St. Louis has a paid department that responds to fires inside the city limits. All fire response areas and station locations are listed below

Fire Response Area	Fire Department	Station Location(s)	Total Number of Volunteers
Bayside Park	Bayside Park VFD Station 1	6206 W. Hinds St.	25
	Bayside Park VFD Station 2	6218 W. Hinds St.	*
Clermont Harbor	Clermont Harbor VFD	5272 Clermont Blvd.	6
Fenton	Fenton VFD	20224 Fenton Dedeaux Rd.	40
Kiln	Kiln VFD	16148 Fire Dept. Rd	28
	Post 58 VFD	25150 Hwy. 603	7
Leetown	Leetown VFD	24440 Rester Rd.	26
	Leetown VFD Station 2	20361 Hwy. 43	*
	Leetown VFD Substation	9970 Caesar Necaise Rd.	*
Necaise	Post 58 VFD Station 2	2214 Hwy. 53	*
Pearlington	West Hancock VFD	16016 Washington St.	25
Bay St. Louis (paid)	Bay St. Louis Fire Dept.	10316 Chapman Rd.	xxxxxxxx

Departments with 2 or more stations do not have volunteers separated by station.
x- Paid fire department

Strategic Goals of the County Wildfire Protection Plan

At the beginning of the planning process, the Hancock County CWPP Steering Committee identified several goals. These goals were set to provide a common vision during the process and to identify specific results to be obtained upon completion of the final document.

1. Define the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) for Hancock County.

2. Identify and prioritize high-risk areas within the WUI.

3. Identify treatment methods for prioritized high risk areas.

4. Make recommendations to reduce structure ignitability.

5. Identify the equipment and manpower needs of the volunteer fire departments and research funding opportunities.

6. Develop new volunteer firefighter recruitment program.

7. Identify strategies to encourage collaboration and increase communication between Hancock County and the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

8. Identify location needs for new hydrants.

9. Research volunteer firefighter retention programs such as gas reimbursement, pay per call, etc.

Mapping

The Hancock County Wildfire Protection Plan contains seven maps created by the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District (SMPDD) Geographic Information System Department. These maps were created for planning purposes to aid in the assessment of county wildfire occurrence and emergency preparedness. The maps include the Hancock County Base Map, Hancock County Risk Assessment Ratings, Hancock County Fire Data 2001-2007, High Occurrence Wildfire Areas, Arson Fires 2001-2007, Hancock County Fire Response Area, and Wildfires by Fire Response Area.

The county-wide base map provides a graphic baseline of infrastructure, roadways, inhabited areas, areas of community importance and a WUI designation. Initially, the WUI was set at ½-mile from existing municipal boundaries in accordance with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003. The Steering Committee then edited this line to include area developments within the county but not adjacent to municipalities. It was noted by the Steering Committee that the county has many areas where wildland meets development. For this reason, the Hancock County WUI will identify areas where the highest amount of development occurs and aid in identifying specific risk factors and treatment projects that have the potential to reduce the risk to life, property and critical infrastructure.

In addition to the WUI, the Steering Committee identified several areas of critical infrastructure including roadways for evacuation, water towers, utilities and the communication towers. The Base Map has become a visual representation of the core elements of county protection as identified for the CWPP.

The Risk Assessment Map graphically reflects the results of the risk assessment portion of the county wildfire protection plan process. The risk assessment process is explained in detail below. The resulting map reflects the infrastructure, roadways, municipalities and areas of community importance found on the base map. The Steering Committee assigned a risk rating to each of these attributes by considering available fuel load, frequency of wildfire occurrence, vulnerability of development and infrastructure, and emergency preparedness. These ratings were then displayed in map form to better enable review and assessment of the entire county.

Several fire occurrence maps were created from data collected from the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC). The data reflect both wildfires and controlled burns, and several different causes of fires. Fire causes include lightning, campfire, smoking, debris burning, arson, and equipment use. Mississippi Forestry Commission data for Hancock County shows a total of 23 fires in the year 2001, 97 fires in 2002, 88 fires in 2003, 107 fires in 2004, 102 fires in 2005, 320 fires in 2006, and 104 fires in 2007. The fire occurrence maps were utilized in the Risk Assessment portion of the CWPP and as a valuable reference during the process of formulating mitigation projects and action items.

Through the use of the SMPDD Geographic Information System, all fires and all causes, tracked for years 2001-2007 by the MFC, are reflected on the Hancock County Wildfires 2001-2007 map. When these data are mapped, it becomes apparent that there are specific geographic areas where there is a high occurrence of wildfire.

The High Occurrence Wildfire Areas are based on a computer calculation used to determine density and distribution by comparing each fire occurrence to its surrounding neighbors. The resulting calculation was then separated into nine classes to isolate areas with higher density. The lowest six classes were eliminated, and the remaining three classes were converted to single polygons to represent the six regions displayed as high occurrence areas. The regions were then manually edited to exclude fringe incidents leading to distinct and cohesive boundaries. Area 1 is geographically located in the northwest portion of the county north of the Leetown community. Area 2 is geographically located along the northwest county boundary in the vicinity of the north Stennis buffer zone and runs north along the county boundary from Highway 43 towards the Leetown community. Area 3 is a large area located in the northeast portion of the county running from the north county boundary to Interstate 10 and from the mid section of the county to the eastern county boundary with Highway 603 traversing the majority of the area. Area 4 is located in the west-central portion of the county within the Stennis buffer zone with Highway 607 intersecting the west section of the area. Area 5 is located in the southwest portion in the county from the Pearlington community north to Interstate 10. Area 6 is located in the south central portion of the county from the western fringe of Waveland to the Port Bienville vicinity and north to Interstate 10.

A majority of the fires within Hancock County, approximately 50%, are attributed to arson. According to Forestry Commission wildfire data, 420 out of 841 fires tracked from 2001-2007 were attributed to arson. The map of Arson Fires by Year reflects the geographic distribution of these fires throughout the county.

The Hancock County Fire Response Areas map reflects the county fire station response areas with respective boundaries and each volunteer fire station location. Also included is a map reflecting all wildfires from 2001-2007, as well as all fire district boundaries and the department locations. Wildfires 2001-2007 by Fire Response Area will aid in the assessment of numbers of fires and their general location within each district.

County Risk Assessment

Through the County Risk Assessment, fuel hazards, frequency of wildfire occurrence, vulnerability of development and infrastructure, and emergency preparedness were all considered to compile the following list of county areas at risk from wildfire.

The Steering Committee attempted to identify large facilities that may be at risk from wildfire due to their location, function, or potential impact to the community if damaged or lost to wildfire. Once identified, these at-risk areas were prioritized to focus available financial and human resources on specific mitigation projects in the future.

For the purpose of this exercise, these areas were rated from low to high. Areas receiving the highest rating pose an increased risk due to their function, amount of nearby fuel load or may cause significant community impact in the event of damage or loss due to a wildfire. Mitigation projects for the at-risk areas include a wide array of activities. Removal or reduction in fuel load may be suggested for some areas, with a public awareness campaign suggested for others.

Rating Key

- Low
- Medium
- High

Critical Infrastructure:

- Hancock Industries Annex

Area is well maintained.
This risk rating is low.

- Hancock County Annex

Area is well maintained.
This risk rating is low.

- Fenton Volunteer Fire Department.

This facility is a relatively wooded area, and the effect on the local community if this facility was damaged is substantial.
This risk rating is medium.

- Leetown Volunteer Fire Departments

These facilities are in a relatively wooded area, and the effect on the local community if these facilities were damaged is substantial.
This risk rating is medium.

■ Post 58 Volunteer Fire Department (Kiln)

This facility is a relatively wooded area, and the effect on the local community if this facility was damaged is substantial.
This risk rating is medium.

■ Post 58 Volunteer Fire Department 2 (Necaise)

This facility is a relatively wooded area, and the effect on the local community if this facility was damaged is substantial.
This risk rating is medium.

■ West Hancock Volunteer Fire Department

This facility is not in a heavily wooded area; however the effect on the local community if this facility was damaged is substantial.
This risk rating is medium.

■ Hancock County Board of Supervisors E911 communication tower and dispatch

This facility is well maintained.
This risk rating is low.

■ Pinnacle Towers also carries E911 communications

This facility is well maintained.
This risk rating is low.

■ Pipelines throughout the county and railroads throughout the county

<u>Vulnerable Facilities</u>

■ Port Bienville Industrial Park – Storage of explosive materials

■ Transmission Station - Tennessee Gas Co. – Petroleum, Natural Gas

■ El Paso Gas Pumping Station – Tennessee Gas Co. – Petroleum, Natural Gas

■ Stennis Space Center Buffer Zone – Rocket testing and hazardous materials – responsibility of VFDs

■ Stennis International Airport

■ Demex – Dummyline Road – Explosives on-site

All of the above facilities pose some risk due to function and impact to the community and beyond if damaged or destroyed. It is noted that the companies that operate the facilities take adequate fire precautions. However, the overall rating for each is high.

Areas of Community Importance

- Annunciation Church and School

- McLeod Park

- West Hancock Elementary

- Hancock County North Central Elementary – currently the only shelter in unincorporated Hancock County

- Hancock County Middle School

- Hancock County High School

The centers listed above are important to the quality of life of the residents of Hancock County. There is not, however, a substantial smoke or fire risk. All of the centers are ranked low.

Areas of Concern

- Any areas in the county that continue to have a heavy fuel load, in the form of downed timber, especially since Hurricane Katrina.

- Southwest portion of the county, where there are a lot of hunting camps.

- Poisonous gas fields at Texas Flat Road.

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness for each of the county volunteer fire departments is continually reviewed and assessed by Hancock County. This assessment involves factors such as equipment availability and age, public protection classification, and manpower.

There are informal mutual aid agreements outside of the county, but it is recommended that formal written agreements be established with the neighboring counties. It is important to note that any fire department can be dispatched to assist with fires in any part of the County.

Fire Districts and municipalities in the State of Mississippi receive a public protection classification through the Mississippi State Rating Bureau (MSRB). This classification is the basis for determining the fire insurance rating for each district. The Fire Districts within Hancock County are listed below, with the corresponding MSRB classification.

Mississippi State Rating Bureau Public Protection Classification List

District	Class
Bayside Park	10
Clermont Harbor	10
Fenton	10
Kiln	9
Leetown	10
Post 58	8
West Hancock	9

In general, the departments are well-equipped and able to respond to the needs of the areas they serve. However, Steering Committee members did identify improvements that could be made to provide better service within the districts. The county would like to purchase brush trucks and strategically place them throughout the county for use by multiple stations.

Often times, the local firefighters work side-by-side with the Mississippi Forestry Commission.   Generally, there is a good relationship between the two agencies. However, it is suggested that biannual meetings be established to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each agency. These meetings would allow any other inter-agency concerns to be addressed as well as to provide training opportunities and project coordination.

Hancock County is generally rural and many residents commute to work in nearby cities. Some of the volunteer firefighters find work outside their fire district and have trouble leaving work to respond to a fire call. To help alleviate this problem, it is recommended that a larger volunteer force be recruited.

A community outreach and awareness program may help address some of the manpower issues. Several volunteer fire departments across the county are involved

with the local Boy Scouts of America through the explorer program (www.scouting.org/).
Many times, BSA can provide program direction, resources, and insurance to cover the
department which allows for much more involvement by an explorer scout than a typical
youth under 18.

An apprentice firefighter program working with local youth is also an option. While not
allowed to fight fires, these youth may be able to gain training through department
exercises. The youth would support by providing drinks, supplies or other equipment
that is needed on-site. Involvement in the program may then lead to a career as a
volunteer firefighter.

Additionally, recruitment kits should be created and kept on-hand for prospective
candidates. Recruitment messages can be posted in local newspaper inserts and by
placing flyers at local restaurants and other businesses. Adding recruitment information
to the county website and local cable service announcements may also be effective.

In addition to the MSRB Rating and manpower issues, equipment status is tracked and
assessed. A current listing of large equipment with description and location is provided
below. Brush trucks are needed throughout the County and a mule/4-wheel vehicle with
100 gallon tank is also listed as a need. More equipment needs are expected to arise
as the existing equipment ages.

Hancock County Volunteer Fire Department
Equipment List

Department	Year	Make/Model	Type
Bayside	2004	Ferrara	Pumper (1000 gallons)
	1990	4 Guys	Pumper (1000 gallons)
	1978	Ford	Tanker (5200 gallons)
	2007	Ford F-550	Rescue/Brush (300 gallon)
	1998	Chevy Suburban	Rescue Truck
	2007		All Terrain (80 gallons)
	2007		12ft. Rescue Boat
Clermont Harbor	2006	Freightliner	Pumper (1000 gallon)
On order	2009	Freightliner	Pumper (2000 gallon)
On order	2005	Ford F-550	Brush Truck (300 gallon)
Fenton	1980	Mack	Pumper (500 gallon)
	1986	GMC	Brush Truck (200 gallon)
	1997	GMC	Pumper (2000 gallon)
	2007	Kenworth	Tanker (2000 gallon)
Kiln			***Do Not Have Information***
Leetown	1984	Chevy	Tanker (3000 gallon)
	2006	Kenworth	Pumper (1000 gallon)
	1991	Chevy 2500	Mini Pumper (350 gallon)
Out of Service	1977	Ford	Tanker
Out of Service	1975	Chevy	Pumper
	1973	International	Brush Truck (200 gallon)
	1984	Ford F-800	Pumper (500 gallon)

Department	Year	Make/Model	Type
	1978	Ford	Brush Truck (200 gallon)
	1995	E-500	Ambulance
	1973	Chevy	Pumper (500 gallon)
Post 58	2000		Pumper/Tanker (1000 gallon)
	2008		Pumper/Tanker (1000 gallon)
	1995		Pumper/Tanker (350 gallon)
	1982		Pumper/Tanker (1000 gallon)
	1984		Pumper/Tanker (2000 gallon)
	1982		Tanker (7300 gallon)
	1971		Pumper/Tanker (750 gallon)
West Hancock			*Do Not Have Information*

While the county water sources are adequate at this time, it is recommended that the fire departments work with the independent rural water associations to ensure that new towers with access to hydrants and pumps are erected in the high growth areas.

Mitigation Projects and Structure Ignitability Recommendations

Through the Community Risk Assessment several areas for improvement were identified. Mitigation projects for the at-risk areas may involve removal or reduction in fuel load for some, a public awareness campaign for others, or a combination approach.

No fuel treatment projects for Critical Infrastructure, Vulnerable Facilities or Areas of Community Importance were identified or found to be necessary at this time. These sites are generally well maintained and have moderate to low ignitability potential. However, it is suggested that the county partner with the Mississippi Forestry Commission to work with large, private landowners to identify areas with dead trees, remove them and/or create fire breaks. No specific landowners were named.

Structure ignitability recommendations should be addressed by the county and distributed to homeowners. These recommendations, as condensed from information found at www.firewise.org, are steps that property owners can take to improve the protection and survivability of a structure in the event of a wildfire. It was also recommended by the Steering Committee that a minimum distance between structures should be designated and included in county construction ordinances.

Structure Ignitability Recommendations

County

1. Develop a homeowner education program

2. Home assessments to help residents identify ways to create defensible space

3. Partner with Mississippi Forestry Commission to work with large, private landowners to identify areas with standing dead trees, remove them and/or create fire breaks

Homeowners

1. Provide a clearing of at least 30 feet around structures for firefighting equipment access

2. Provide a driveway at least 12 feet wide with 13 feet of vertical clearance

3. If home is gated, display a clearly visible address, provide a gate that swings inward and is at least 30 feet off of the main road.

4. Remove "ladder fuels" that can link grasses to tree tops

5. Maintain an irrigation system

6. Prune tree limbs so the lowest is between 6' - 10' from the ground

7. Remove leaf clutter from roof and yard

8.   Mow regularly

9.   Remove dead and overhanging branches

10.   Store firewood away from the house

11.   Don't keep combustible materials under decks or elevated porches

12.   Make trellises of non-flammable metal

13.   Prevent sparks from entering house by covering vents with wire mesh no larger than 1/8"

14.   Use construction materials that are fire-resistant or non-combustible when possible

15.   Prevent collection of leaf clutter or other combustible materials beneath mobile homes by installing proper skirting

County Ordinance

1.   Maintain minimum distance between structures as recommended by the National Fire Protection Association

2.   Maintain a minimum radii of outside edge at dead-end turnaround circle of 45 feet to provide for emergency vehicles on both surface ditch and curb/gutter roadways

3.   Maintain minimum width standards for subdivision roads and access roads to individual homes per pending subdivision regulations

       Min. width of surface ditch roadway with *local* designation: 28 ft.
       Min. width of surface ditch roadway with *collector* designation: 34 ft.
       Min. width of curb and gutter streets with *local* designation: 27 ft.
       Min. width of curb and gutter streets with *collector* designation: 33 ft.

Action Plan and Assessment Strategy

The action plan and assessment strategy portion of the County Wildfire Protection Plan serves to identify roles and responsibilities, determine funding needs, set timetables for carrying out identified activities and measure the plan's effectiveness.

The Action Plan is an outline of the work to be completed. The Assessment Strategy portion of the CWPP will ensure that Mitigation Projects and Action Plan items are accomplished in a timely manner and monitored to measure the project's success.

1. Staggered purchase of brush trucks that could be strategically placed at fire stations to better fight wildfires.

    Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, Volunteer Fire Departments, Board of Supervisors

    Funding: $150,000 each, possibly through Homeland Security or other grant funds

    Timetable for Completion: Every 2 years or as grants become available

    Expected Outcome: Better access and firefighting capability

    Assessment Timetable: Review progress annually

2. Establish biannual meetings between the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Hancock County Volunteer Fire Departments. Get information about prescribed burn areas from the Mississippi Forestry Commission, including maps of what areas have been burned and what areas are planned to be burned. Also relay information on grants through MFC.

    Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency and the Mississippi Forestry Commission

    Funding: $0

    Timetable for Completion: Implement immediately

    Expected Outcome: Improved communication and coordination in the areas of firefighting, training, safety and project management

    Assessment Timetable: 2–5 years

3. Create community outreach and education program including mail-out and county website, listing specific fire concerns in the area and steps that homeowners can take to reduce ignitability potential. Include steps that will improve response time such as proper house numbering, signage and access to locked gates at private residences.

   Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency in coordination with Mississippi Forestry Commission and local Volunteer Fire Departments

   Funding: Homeland Security Fire Safety Grant, possible coordination with local utility or county agency for inclusion in regular mail-out

   Timetable for Completion: October 2009, possibly coordinate with Fire Prevention Awareness Month

   Expected Outcome: Implementation of Firewise safety measures by homeowners, including an increase in properly assigned and visible residential addressing as well as a decrease in non-compliant residential burns

   Assessment Timetable: Winter 2009

4. Community outreach program to educate citizens, specifically young adults (18 years of age and older), about the volunteer firefighter program and its importance. This program could include a high school component where students are made aware of the program so that they might consider serving at some point in the future. Program also to include National Fire Protection Association public service announcements.

   Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, Volunteer Fire Departments, Mississippi Forestry Commission

   Funding: Volunteer Fire Departments, grants, Mississippi Forestry Commission

   Timetable for Completion: 1-2 times per year, before peak fire seasons.

   Expected Outcome: Increased community awareness of the need for volunteer firefighters and increase in volunteer recruitment

   Assessment Timetable: Annual review of recruitment efforts and numbers

5. Maintain and update the grants/funding resource list included in CWPP document.

    Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District

    Funding: $0

    Timetable for Completion: Yearly

    Expected Outcome: Additional grant applications resulting in an increase of grant funds

    Assessment Timetable: Review applications v. funding annually

6. Maintain, update and redistribute the CWPP maps to all county departments, volunteer fire departments and other organizations utilizing the document.

    Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency and Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District

    Funding: $0

    Timetable for Completion: Yearly

    Expected Outcome: Increased awareness of fire activity leading to implementation of action plan in an effort toward reduction of fire incidents

    Assessment Timetable: Make any additions or changes to maps on an annual basis and interview other organizations to see if the maps make their role in wildfire prevention more effective

7. Identify and map existing hydrants to determine locations for additional hydrants.

    Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency

    Funding: Grant

    Timetable for Completion: Summer 2009

    Expected Outcome: More access to water to fight wildfires

    Assessment Timetable: Summer 2009 – update every 2 years

8. Encourage Mississippi Insurance Commissioner to consider rebate program to allow for home assessments and homeowner mitigation projects (creating defensible space).

   Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, Board of Supervisors, Volunteer Fire Departments, Mississippi Forestry Commission

   Funding: $0

   Timetable for Completion: Spring 2009

   Expected Outcome: More homeowners participating in mitigation activities, lower insurance premiums for homeowners and additional funds for volunteer fire departments

   Assessment Timetable: Review progress in May 2009 after legislative session ends

9. Purchase of mule/4-wheel vehicle with 100 gallon tank.

   Responsibility: Hancock County Emergency Management Agency, Board of Supervisors

   Funding: $30,000

   Timetable for Completion: Fall 2009

   Expected Outcome: Increased access and ability to fight fires.

   Assessment Timetable: Review progress in Winter 2010

Potential Funding Sources

1. Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program
    Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
    Application Period: Spring 2009
    Program Description: Funding for training, equipment, vehicles, firefighter
                                   health and safety program and operations

2. Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) Grant Program
    Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
    Application Period: Fall 2008
    Program Description: Outreach to high risk target groups including children,
                                   seniors and firefighters. Monitor website for further
                                   information on eligible activities

3. Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant Program
    Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
    Application Period: Summer 2009
    Program Description: Funding for the hiring of fire personnel and incentives
                                   for volunteer recruitment and retention

4. USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grant Program
    Website: www.rurdev.usda.gov
    Application Deadline: Contact local USDA Representative
    Program Description: Funding for assistance in developing an essential
                                   community facility. Funds can be used to construct,
                                   enlarge, or improve community facilities for health
                                   care, public safety and community and public
                                   services.

5. U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company Polaris Ranger Donation Program
    Website: www.ustinc.com
    Application Period: October 2008
    Program Description: Donation of Polaris Ranger 6X6 utility vehicles for
                                   firefighting, rescue, police, emergency medical
                                   service, and wildlife law enforcement organizations.

6. Responder Knowledge Base Website
    Website: www.rkb.us/
    Program Description: Website contains information on currently available
                                   products, standards, training and grants

7. Firegrantshelp.com Website
    Website: www.firegrantshelp.com
    Program Description: Website contains information on resources for Fire
                                   and EMS assistance

References

1. Hancock County Hazard Mitigation Plan

2. Hancock County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan

3. Firewise
    Around Your Home brochure
    www.firewise.org

4. USDA Forest Service
    Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan
    March 2004

Project Contact Information

1.   Hancock County Emergency Management Agency
      310 Sold Spanish Trail
      Bay St. Louis, MS
      Phone: (228) 466-8320
      Fax: (228) 466-8229

2.   Mississippi Forestry Commission
      477 South Gate Road
      Hattiesburg, MS 39401
      Phone: (601) 583-4240
      Fax: (601) 583-2500
      www.mfc.state.ms.us

3.   Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District
      9229 Highway 49
      Gulfport, MS 39503
      Phone: (228) 868-2311
      Fax: (228) 868-7094
      www.smpdd.com

Legend

- ✚ Hospital
- ◉ Fire Station
- 🚔 Law Enforcement
- ▲ Electric Power Plant
- ▲ Electric Substation
- ▲ Gas/Oil Facility
- — Electric Transmission Line
- — Gas/Oil Pipeline
- — Highway
- — Road
- —+— Railroad
- Named Stream
- Water Body
- Stennis Buffer
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Incorporated City

Morning Glory Lake

Lee Lake

Josephs Bay

Long Bay

Devils Swamp

Cutoff Lake

Lower Devils Swamp

Jackson Marsh

Mud Bayou

Sprotsmeny Lakes

53

603

43

607

10

90

604
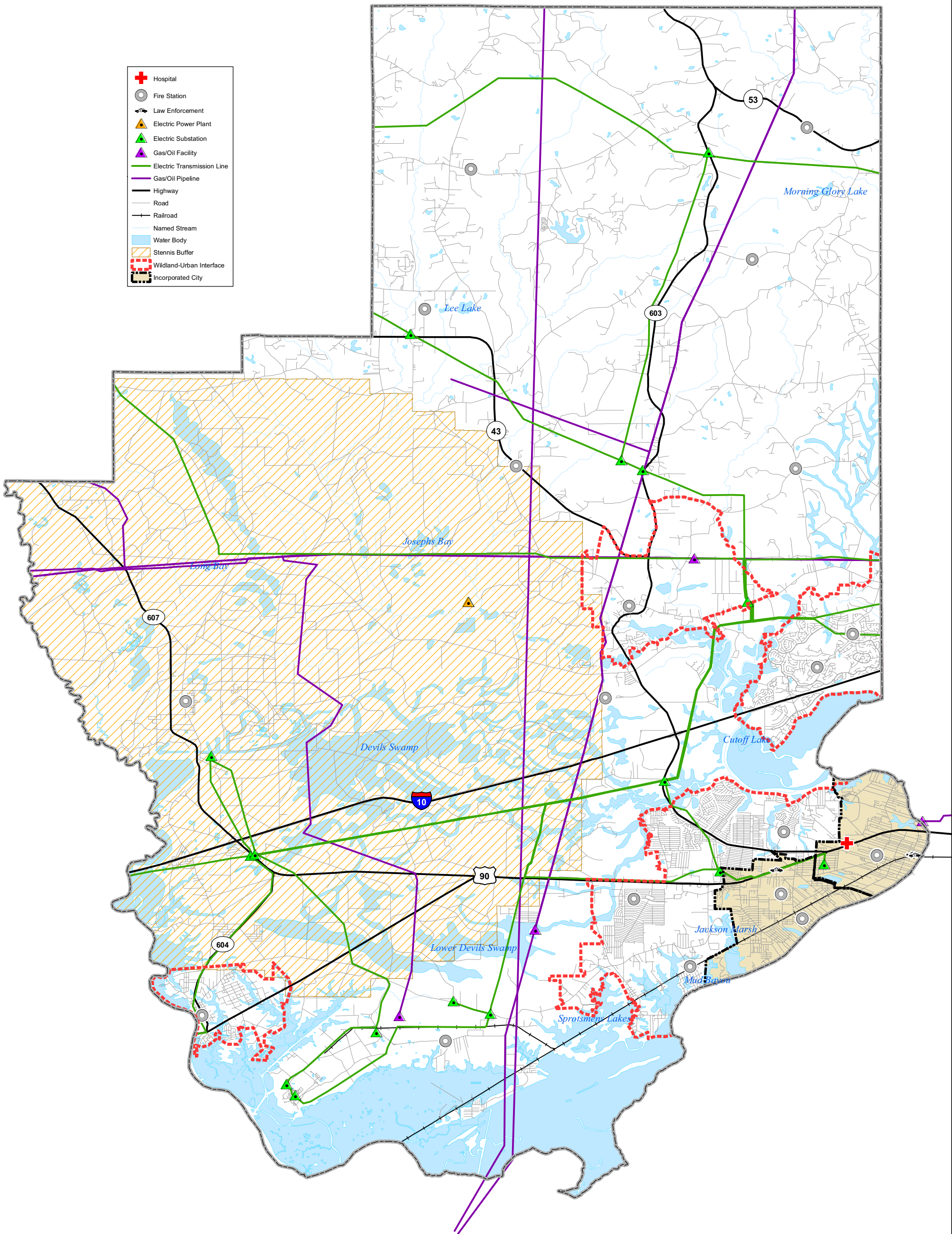
Hancock County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan
Base Map

For Planning Use Only.

Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12

N
W   E
S

Hancock County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan
Risk Assessment Ratings

At Risk Areas
- 🟠 Area of Community Importance
- 🔴 Critical Infrastructure
- 🩷 Vulnerable Facility
- ➕ Hospital
- ⊙ Fire Station
- Law Enforcement
- 🔺 Electric Power Plant
- 🔺 Electric Substation
- 🔺 Gas/Oil Facility
- Electric Transmission Line
- Gas/Oil Pipeline
- Highway
- Road
- Railroad
- Named Stream
- Water Body
- High Fire Occurence
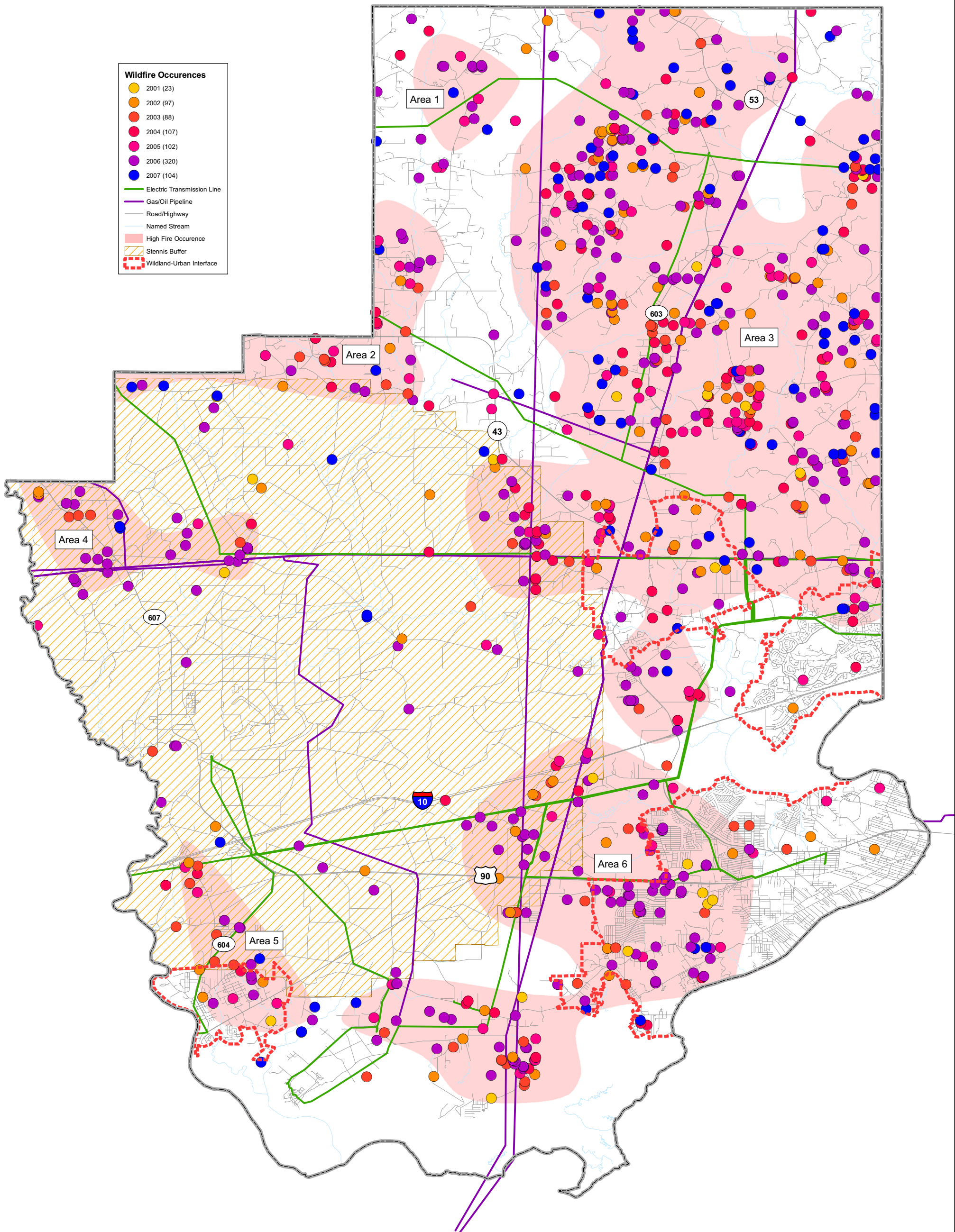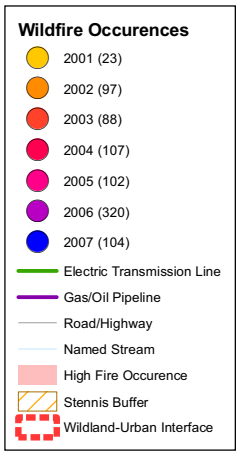- Stennis Buffer
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Incorporated City
- County Boundary

Area 1
Leetown VFD Substation 1
Post 58 VFD Station 2
Post 58 VFD
Demex
Morning Glory Lake
Leetown VFD Main Station
Area 3
West Hancock Elementary
Hancock North Central Elementary
Fenton VFD
Leetown VFD Substation 2
Hancock County Dispatch / E911 Tower
Poisonous Gas Fields at Texas Flat Rd
Josephs Bay
Hancock County Public Library
Area 4
Hancock County Annex
McLeod Park
Annunciation Church and School
Cutoff Lake
Stennis Space Center Buffer Zone
Devils Swamp
Stennis International Airport
Hancock County High School
Hancock County Middle School
Pinnacle Comm Towers (E911)
Area 6
Hunting Camps
Jackson Marsh
Area 5
West Hancock VFD Station 2
Lower Devils Swamp
Sprotsmen Lakes
Mid River
Port Bienville Industrial Park
El Paso Gas Pumping Station Tennessee Gas Co
Railroad Throughout County
Hancock Industies Annex
Gas/Oil Pipeline Throughout County
Transmission Station Tennessee Gas Co
Areas of Heavy Fuel Load Throughout County

Lee Lake
Long Bay

the District
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
For Planning Use Only.

Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12

Wildfire Occurrences

- 2001 (23)
- 2002 (97)
- 2003 (88)
- 2004 (107)
- 2005 (102)
- 2006 (320)
- 2007 (104)

—— Electric Transmission Line
—— Gas/Oil Pipeline
—— Road/Highway
—— Named Stream
High Fire Occurence
Stennis Buffer
Wildland-Urban Interface

Area 1

Area 2

Area 3

Area 4

Area 5

Area 6

53

603

43

607

604

10

90

Hancock County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan
High Occurrence Wildfire Areas
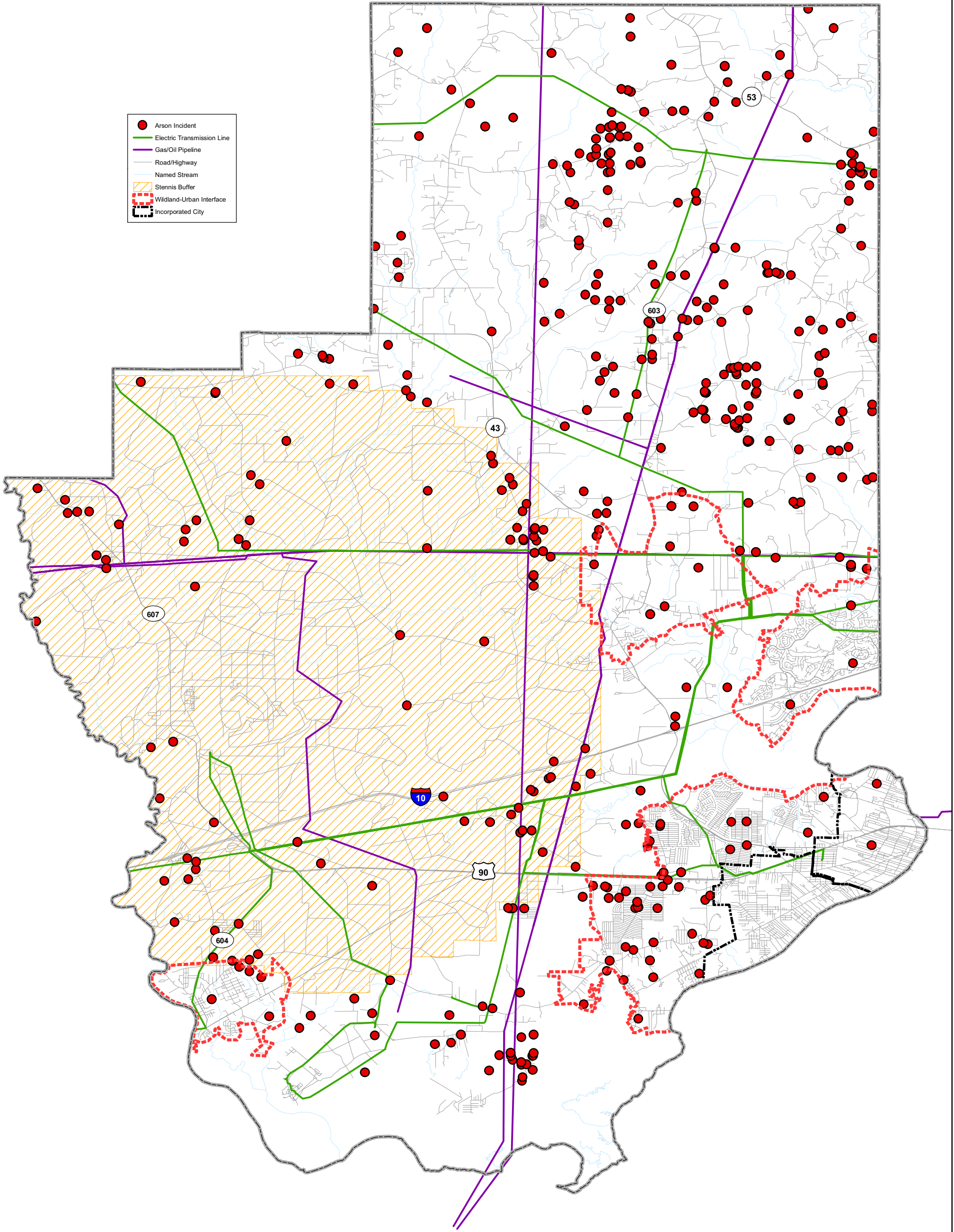
Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12

N
W   E
S

Wildfire Occurences

- 2001 (23)
- 2002 (97)
- 2003 (88)
- 2004 (107)
- 2005 (102)
- 2006 (320)
- 2007 (104)

— Electric Transmission Line
— Gas/Oil Pipeline
— Road/Highway
+ Railroad
— Named Stream
Stennis Buffer
Wildland-Urban Interface
Incorporated City

53

603

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604

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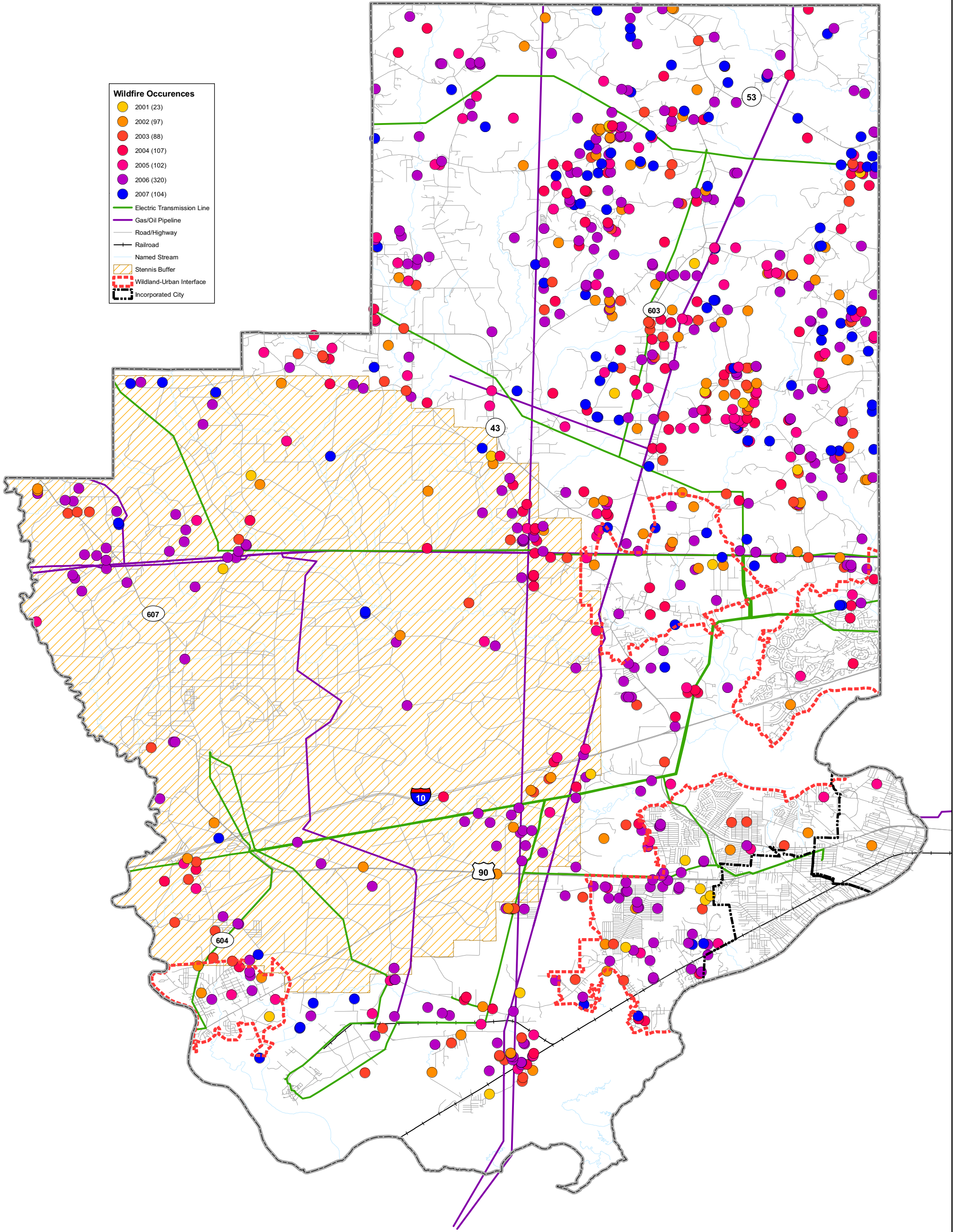
Hancock County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan
Fire Data 2001 - 2007

the District
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
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Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12

N
W   E
S

Hancock County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan
Arson Fires 2001 - 2007

Legend:
- Arson Incident
- Electric Transmission Line
- Gas/Oil Pipeline
- Road/Highway
- Named Stream
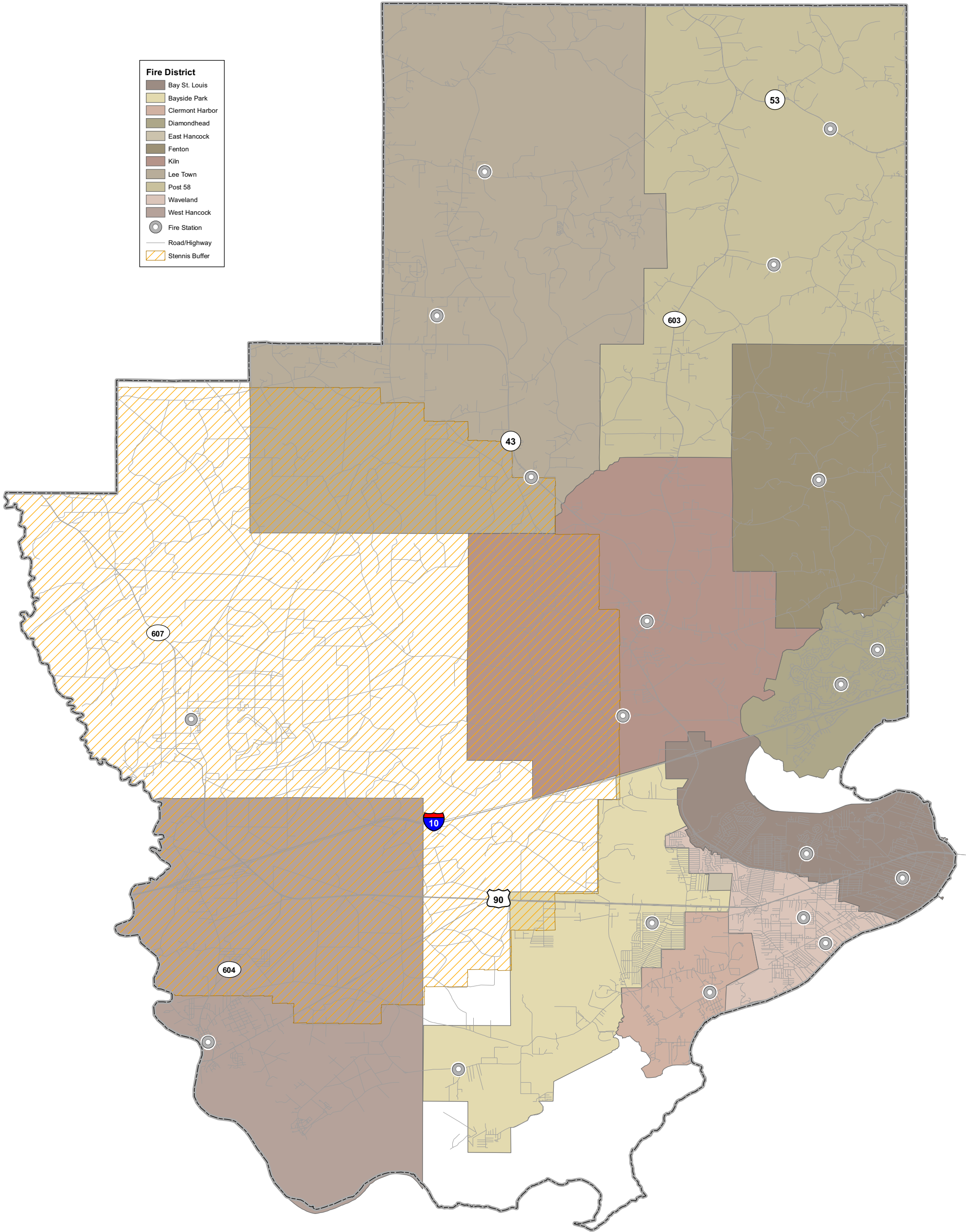- Stennis Buffer
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Incorporated City

the District
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
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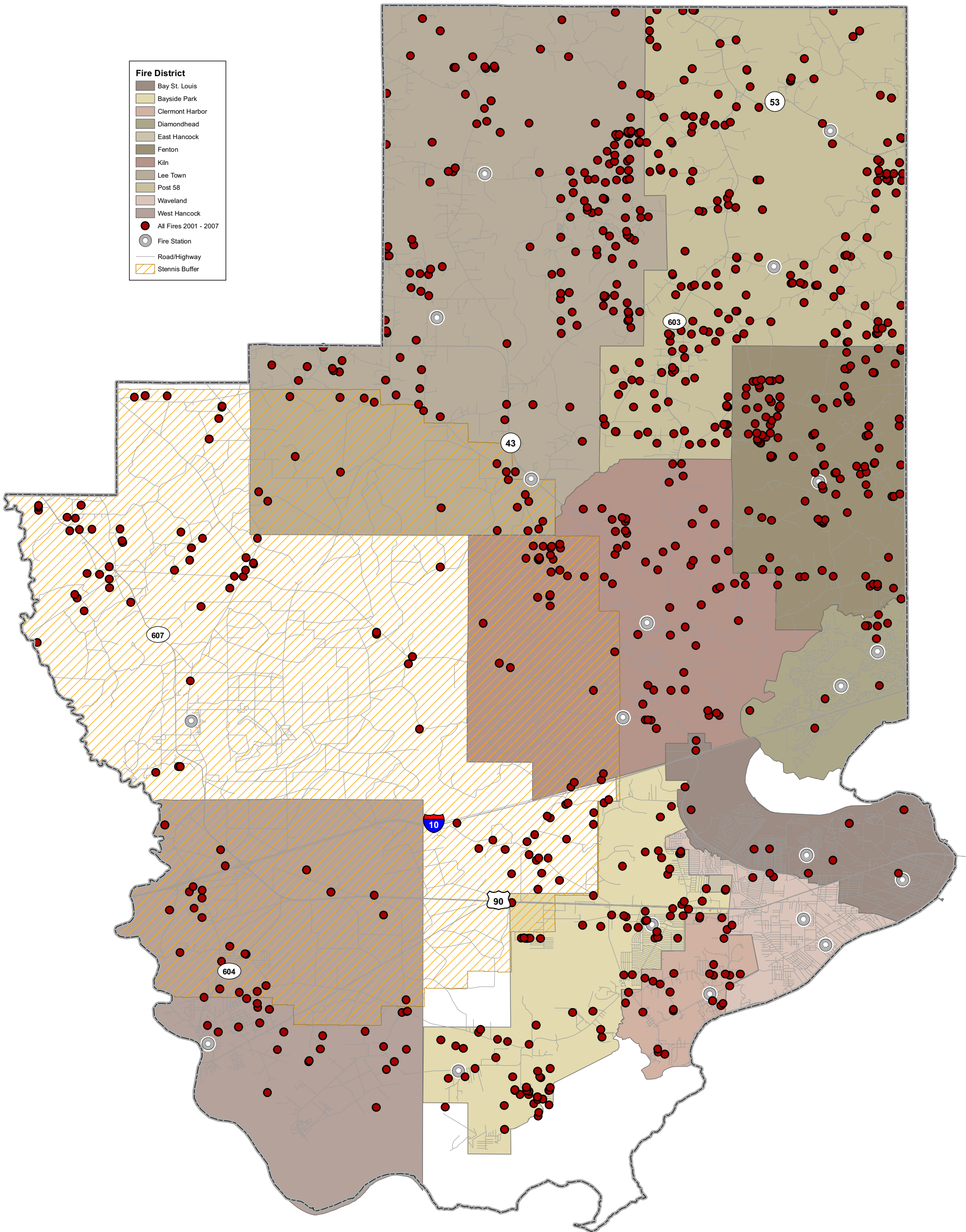
Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12

Fire District
- Bay St. Louis
- Bayside Park
- Clermont Harbor
- Diamondhead
- East Hancock
- Fenton
- Kiln
- Lee Town
- Post 58
- Waveland
- West Hancock
- ⊚ Fire Station
- —— Road/Highway
- ⧄ Stennis Buffer

Hancock County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan
Fire Response Areas

the District
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
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Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12

Hancock County, Mississippi

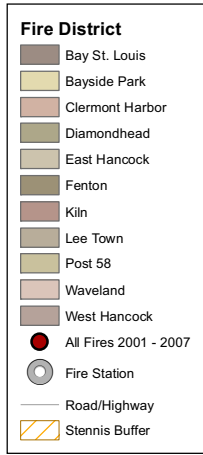## Wildfire Protection Plan
Wildfires by Response Area

Fire District

- Bay St. Louis
- Bayside Park
- Clermont Harbor
- Diamondhead
- East Hancock
- Fenton
- Kiln
- Lee Town
- Post 58
- Waveland
- West Hancock

● All Fires 2001 - 2007
◎ Fire Station
— Road/Highway
▨ Stennis Buffer

the District
SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
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Miles
0   1.5   3   6   9   12