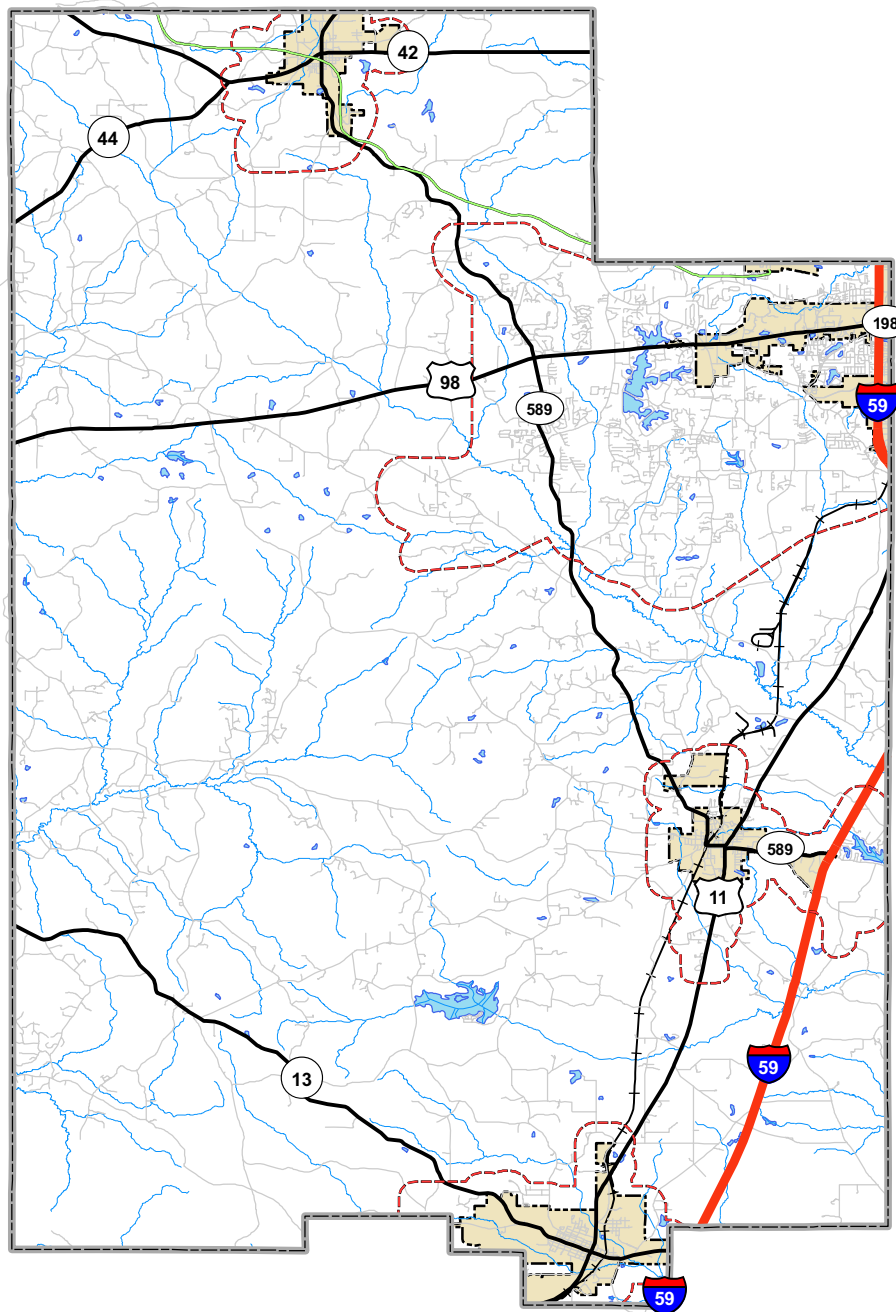


LAMAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI COUNTY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN ASSESSMENT AND REVISIONS



OCTOBER 2008

PREPARED BY SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
WITH FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE MISSISSIPPI FORESTRY COMMISSION

Introduction

The Lamar County Wildfire Protection Plan was conceived in late 2004 in an effort to address changes to the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) brought about by increased development throughout the County in recent years. 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, Lamar County published a County Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in August of 2005.

The CWPP was developed with the goal of reducing 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. The plan was prepared with an effort toward consistency with the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003, the Lamar County Hazard Mitigation Plan, September 2004 and the Lamar County Emergency Operations Plan, February 2000.

In late 2006, the Mississippi Forestry Commission commissioned the preparation of wildfire protection plans for fourteen other south Mississippi counties and an update for Lamar County. In recent months SMPDD has met with the Fire Coordinator in Lamar County to assess the original 2005 plan, make action plan revisions and mapping revisions, and provide an updated resource list for potential funding organizations.

Overall, the 2005 Lamar County CWPP has proven to be very beneficial to Lamar County. The County has used the plan as a guide book to improve fire protection and reduce the risk of wildfire. Specific successes relative to the 2005 Action Plan are listed in the following section. New maps depicting wildfire occurrence are also included along with updated grant opportunities. A copy of the original plan can be found in the back section of this document.

Action Plan Assessment and Revisions

The 2005 Action Plan of the Lamar County CWPP has been reviewed and the successes are reported below. New actions have also been added. The assessment is evidence of the plan's effectiveness and the revisions outline initial actions to still be implemented, new actions, responsible parties, funding needs and timetables for implementation.

Assessment

1. Improved mapping of roadways in southwest section of the County involving updated satellite imagery every year.

According to the Fire Coordinator, mapping has improved in the County. Volunteer Fire Departments have the location information they need that allows them better access to and quicker response to fires.

2. Purchase of smaller fire fighting equipment that will enable access to difficult areas (petroleum properties).

A small rescue truck has been purchased by Lamar County with the Jaws of Life equipment included.

3. Suggestions for changes/additions to Subdivision Regulations (increase width of roads and driveways) and/or Building Code (increase distance between structures) for presentation to County Board of Supervisors.

According to the fire coordinator, the property regulations are in place as recommended by the National Fire Protection Association.

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

Lamar County has been very successful in maximizing its grant opportunities. Much of this can be attributed to the hiring of a full-time fire coordinator in March 2006, whom can devote the necessary time and attention to funding issues.

5. Maintain, update and redistribute the CWPP maps to all County Departments, volunteer fire departments and other organizations utilizing the document.

Included with the 2008 CWPP Update for Lamar County are new maps that can be distributed to county departments and volunteer fire departments by the Fire Coordinator. The maps will not be made public for security reasons.

6. Several fire departments have made rating classification improvements. The Hickory Grove VFD went from a 10C to an 8 as did Southwest Lamar VFD. By the end of 2009 the Rock Hill VFD will be operational with its charter paperwork now in process.
7. There are 13 new stations being built and 6 new areas of service.
8. The County hired a full-time fire coordinator in March 2006.

Revisions

1. Outreach education program for residents living near petroleum facilities and pipelines.

Expected Outcome: Increased awareness of fire safety and benefits of enabling the local volunteer firefighters through the Firewise program

Responsibility: Volunteer Fire Departments in partnership with Mississippi Forestry Commission through Firewise Workshop

Funding: Private Oil Companies, County Forestry Association, private timber owners

Timetable for Completion: August-September 2009 in coordination with Fall Field Day(s)

Assessment Timetable: December 2009

2. Purchase of smaller fire fighting equipment. This is an ongoing need. More vehicles such as 4-wheelers are needed. Both fire and EMS have continuous equipment needs including brush trucks and rescue trucks. A fire boat is also an option where no fire truck can get through, such as the Big Bay area.

Expected Outcome: Better access and firefighting capability for rural areas

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management

Funding: \$200,000+ from grants and County

Timetable for Completion: January 2009, review as needed for preparation of grants packages

Assessment Timetable: Annually

3. Establish biannual meetings between the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments.

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

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management and the Mississippi Forestry Commission

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Implement Immediately

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years

4. A coordinated education program involving Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments and the Pat Harrison Waterway District that identifies a regular maintenance schedule for the Little Black Creek Water Park.

Expected Outcome: Decrease in wildfires and implementation of Firewise recommendations in the Park to provide a safer camping environment

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

Funding: Pat Harrison Waterway District and Mississippi Forestry Commission for publication of brochures or other materials

Timetable for Completion: Spring 2009 in preparation for period of high park use

Assessment Timetable: Winter 2010 as park use declines and assessment can be made if implementation has occurred and has been successful in reducing wildfire incidents

5. Community outreach and education program involving the identification and prosecution of arsonists through a reward program. Funds for a reward will be collected through the participation of local businesses and the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

Expected Outcome: Reduction in arson fires

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

Funding: Collection of funds for printed materials and reward from local businesses, private timber owners, individual donors and the Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: April 2009

Assessment Timetable: April 2010 for assessment of fire incidents, tips and reward collection

6. 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, proper addressing, County burn procedures and concerns for Longleaf Trace residents, utilizing information produced for the State of Mississippi.

Expected Outcome: Implementation of Firewise safety measures by residential property owners. Including an increase in properly assigned and visible residential addressing as well as a decrease in non-compliant residential burns

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management/Planning Department 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 existing mail out

Timetable for Completion: April 2009

Assessment Timetable: January 2010 in preparation of program duplication

7. Compensation and incentives for volunteer fire fighters.

Expected Outcome: Creation of incentives and compensation for volunteer fire fighters leading to increased retention and recruitment

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management in Coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Federal and State Grants, County, Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: 1-2 years in coordination with County Budget preparation and approval

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years depending on type of compensation/incentive and funding availability

8. Community outreach program to educate communities, specifically young adults, about the volunteer fire fighter 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. Also to include National Fire Protection Association public service announcements. A junior firefighting program could be developed with help from the National Volunteer Fire Council.

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

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management in coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Volunteer Fire Departments, grants (Dunkin Donuts), Mississippi Forestry Commission, National Volunteer Fire Council

Timetable for Completion: 1-2 times per year in coordination with Fire Prevention Week

Assessment Timetable: 1-2 years for assessment of recruitment numbers

9. Re-visit Longleaf Trace development fuel load, and commercial timber ignitability potential, for the purpose of identifying needed mitigation projects.

Expected Outcome: County staff and volunteer firefighter awareness of development status in Longleaf area leading to identification of mitigation projects

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management working with local volunteer fire departments in the area

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Between 2-5 years

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years

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

Expected Outcome: Increased application for grants leading to increased funding

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management working with the Lamar County Planning Department

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: January of each year

Assessment Timetable: Annually

11. Expand the training of the fire departments to include emergency response.

Expected Outcome: Better emergency response capabilities of the volunteers/personnel

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management

Funding: Dependent on courses; seek grant funding

Timetable for Completion: Add additional training each year as funding become available

Assessment Timetable: Annually

12. Seek to man each station with at least one paid firefighter 24 hours per day.

Expected Outcome: Better response to fight fires

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management

Funding: Possible scholarship funding through Homeland Security Safer Grant

Timetable for Completion: At least 2 per year

Assessment Timetable: Annually

13. Remove downed timber and ground fuel in the high risk area of Old Highway 24 near the convergence of WPA Road and Highway 589. Firefighters vehicles cannot access it.

Expected Outcome: Better access and decrease in fire occurrence.

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management and Mississippi Forestry Commission

Funding: Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: Pursue immediately

Assessment Timetable: Summer 2009

14. Establish heliports in outlying areas for emergency air service providers to land. Parts of Lamar County are in a low altitude flyover zone with a military presence. There is a need for fire and rescue workers to be able to respond quickly in the event of a crash.

Expected Outcome: Improved emergency response and preparedness

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management and Camp Shelby

Funding: Homeland Security

Timetable for Completion: 3-5 years

Assessment Timetable: Review progress annually

15. Remove downed trees and fuel on ground from Hurricane Katrina.

Expected Outcome: Decrease in fuel load and likelihood of wildfire. Better access with tree removal also.

Responsibility: Lamar County and Mississippi Forestry Commission

Funding: Limited from MFC but still should pursue along with other grant sources

Timetable for Completion: 1 year

Assessment Timetable: Review progress 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

Mapping Update October 2008

The Lamar 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 aide in the assessment of county wildfire occurrence and emergency preparedness. The maps include: the Lamar County Base Map, Lamar County Risk Assessment Ratings, Lamar County Fire Data 2001-2007, High Occurrence Wildfire Areas, Arson Fires 2001-2007, Lamar 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 in 2005 that the county has many areas where wildland meets development. For this reason, the Lamar County WUI will identify areas where the highest amount of development occurs and aide 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 E-911 communication tower. The Base Map has become a visual representation of the core elements of County protection as identified for the CWPP.

The Risk Assessment Map 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. No changes to the assessment have been made since the original 2005 plan.

Several fire occurrence maps were created from data collected from the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC). The data reflects 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 Lamar County shows a total of 24 fires in 2001, 114 fires in 2002, 74 fires in 2003, 106 fires in 2004, 167 fires in 2005,

226 fires in 2006, and 64 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 any new 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 Lamar 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 five 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 Northeast portion of the County in the Hattiesburg area. Area 2 is geographically located in the middle portion of the county. Area 3 is geographically located in the middle East portion of the County in the Highway 11 vicinity. Area 4 is geographically located in the Southwest portion of the County where a high percentage of petroleum facilities are located. Area 5 is geographically located in the Northwest section of Lumberton in the vicinity of Highway 13.

A majority of the fires within Lamar County, approximately 55%, are attributed to arson. According to Forestry Commission wildfire data, 430 out of 775 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 Lamar County Fire Response Area map reflects the county fire station response areas with respective boundaries, as well as each volunteer fire station location. Also included is a map reflecting all wildfires from 2001-2007. Wildfires 2001-2007 by Fire Response Area will aid in the assessment of numbers of fires and their general location within each district.

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I. Introduction

The Lamar County Wildfire Protection Plan was conceived in late 2004 in an effort to address changes to the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) brought about by increased development throughout the County in recent years.

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, Lamar County has identified the need 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.

In January 2005, a Steering Committee was formed through cooperation of local, state and federal agencies, and other interested parties. The Steering Committee included representatives from the Lamar County Board of Supervisors, Lamar County Emergency Management Office, Lamar County Planning Department, the Mississippi Forestry Commission, and Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments.

Over the next several months the Steering Committee, with public input, produced a County Wildfire Protection Plan. The Plan includes several components: Seven Geographic Information System produced maps, a county Risk Assessment, a Mitigation Projects List, Structure Ignitability Recommendations, an Action Plan, and an Assessment Strategy. It is the intent of the Steering Committee that this plan will be utilized to guide development, 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 Lamar County Hazard Mitigation Plan, September 2004 and the Lamar County Emergency Operations Plan, February 2000.

II. Area Description

Lamar County is located in the southwest portion of the State of Mississippi and is rural in character. Incorporated areas include Purvis, Lumberton and Sumrall. The City of Hattiesburg is located on the eastern border and has developed into Lamar County. The population of Lamar County in 2000 was 39,070; the U.S. Census Bureau estimates a 2003 population of 41,957, reflecting a 7.4% increase.

Lamar County contains 499 square miles with land largely held by private landowners. Approximately 70% of County land area is contained within commercial forests. There are no National Parks, State Parks, identified historic landmarks, Bureau of Land Management or U.S. Forest Service administered lands. Public lands include a portion of the Wolf River Wildlife Management Area and the Little Black Creek Water Park.

The last four years have seen tremendous growth in Lamar County. Approved subdivision lots in the last four years number approximately 1,840. From 2003-2010 the County as a whole is expecting an average increase of total public school enrollment of approximately 18.8%. Due to this growth, there has been an increase in the development that the Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments protect. As development increases in the future so will the demands placed on the volunteer fire departments.

Lamar County is divided into eight rural fire response areas covering the unincorporated portions of the County. Three districts cover the incorporated towns of Purvis, Sumrall and Lumberton. The 11 fire districts/response areas (covering incorporated and unincorporated), are manned by volunteers who act as first responders to the fires within the County. The eight rural fire response areas are: Central Lamar, Oloh, Hickory Grove, Northeast Lamar, Oak Grove, Progress, Southwest Lamar and Southeast Lamar. In addition to serving the incorporated areas, the Sumrall Volunteer Fire Department (V.F.D) covers a portion of the Oloh Fire District. All Fire Response Areas within the County, including Station Location(s), and Number of Volunteers, are listed below. The total volunteers at each station is a current number and may change in the future as personnel fluctuations occur.

Fire Response Area	Fire Department	Station Location(s)	Total Number of Volunteers
Central Lamar	Central Lamar V.F.D	Station 1: 3049 Hwy 589; Hattiesburg Station 2: 711 WPA Rd.; Hattiesburg	17
Oloh	Oloh V.F.D	2841 Purvis Oloh Rd.; Sumrall	18
Hickory Grove	Hickory Grove V.F.D	16 Newman Camp Rd.; Sumrall	18
Northeast Lamar	Northeast Lamar	Station 1: 5502 West 4 th St.;	25

	V.F.D	Hattiesburg Station 2: 660 Weathersby Rd.; Hattiesburg	
Oak Grove	Oak Grove V.F.D	Station 1: 2536 Old Hwy 24; Hattiesburg Station 2: 236 Old Okahola School Rd.; Purvis	25
Progress	Pine Ridge V.F.D	Station 1: 1464 Hwy. 589; Purvis Station 2: 630 Purvis Oloh Rd.; Purvis Station 3: 363 Purvis Oloh Rd.; Purvis*	15
Southwest Lamar	Southwest V.F.D	Station 1: 5621 Hwy 13; Lumberton Station 2: 10 Bay Creek Rd.; Lumberton	15
Southeast Lamar	Southeast Lamar V.F.D	Station 1: 6893 US Hwy 11; Lumberton Station 2: 2394 Little Black Cr. Rd; Lumberton	15
City of Purvis	Purvis V.F.D	805 Main Street; Purvis	25
City of Lumberton	Lumberton V.F.D	706 9 th Ave.; Lumberton	15
Town of Sumrall	Sumrall V.F.D	12 Water Ave.; Sumrall	18

*Equipment Storage Only

The climate of Lamar County is mild with mean annual temperatures in the upper 60's. Average winter temperatures range from 50 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit with summer temperatures ranging from 85 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall averages approximately 62 inches annually with the majority of the accumulation from July to September. Because of high annual precipitation amounts, Lamar County is not usually 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. 1

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. The northern portion of the County is located in an area designated as a Class IV wind zone by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Category IV wind zones are considered to be at high risk for experiencing winds that can reach velocities as high as 200 miles per hour.

Several facilities located within Lamar County use, store or process flammable, toxic and/or explosive materials. In addition, there are several wells and pipelines traversing the County which contain crude oil, natural gas, and other substances.

III. Strategic Goals of the County Wildfire Protection Plan

At the beginning of the planning process, the Lamar 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 Lamar County Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)
2. Conduct a Risk Assessment to identify and prioritize at-risk areas within the WUI
3. Identify mitigation projects for prioritized at-risk areas
4. Create Recommendations to Reduce Structure Ignitability
 - a. Recommendations to improve access for fire fighting equipment to subdivisions and individual homes
 - Increase width of roads and driveways
 - Possible change to subdivision regulations
 - b. Address concerns regarding minimum distance between residences to reduce the possibility of fire spreading from one structure to another
 - Building code
5. Identify needs of volunteer fire departments, specifically equipment
6. Identify street address problems for emergency response
 - a. Public awareness campaign to educate public on importance of having a correct address and its visibility
7. Homeowner education on wildfire protection
 - a. Landscaping
 - b. Home design and materials
 - c. Enabling the local fire department
 - d. Burn procedures

IV. Mapping

The Lamar 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 Lamar County Base Map, Lamar County Risk Assessment Ratings, Lamar County Fire Data 2000-2004, High Occurrence Wildfire Areas, Arson Fires 2000-2004, Lamar County Fire Response Area, 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 is highly vegetated with many areas where wildland meets development. For this reason, the Lamar 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 E-911 communication tower. The Base Map has become a visual representation of the core elements of County protection as identified for the CWPP.

The Risk Assessment Map reflects graphically, 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 State Forestry Commission (SFC) and Lamar County Emergency Management (LCEM). The data reflects both wildfires and controlled burns, and several different causes of fires. Fire causes include lightning, campfire, smoking, debris burning, arson, and equipment use. State Forestry data for Lamar County shows a total of 251 fires in the year 2000, 98 fires in 2001, 114 fires in 2002, 74 fires in 2003, and 88 fires in 2004. Lamar County Emergency Management fire data reflects 203 fires in 2004. 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 2000-2004, by both the SFC and the LCEM, are reflected on the Lamar County Wildfires 2000-2004 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 five classes to isolate areas with higher density. The lowest three classes were eliminated and the remaining two classes were converted to single polygons to represent the three 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 Southwest portion of the County where a high percentage of petroleum facilities are located. Area 2 is geographically located near Old Highway 24. Area 3 is located near Highway 11.

A majority of the fires within Lamar County, approximately 61%, are attributed to arson. According to State Forestry wildfire data, 383 out of 625 fires tracked from 2000-2004 were attributed to arson. The map of Arson Fires by Year, reflects the geographic distribution of these fires throughout the County.

The Lamar County Fire Response Area map reflects the County fire station response areas with respective boundaries, as well as each volunteer fire station location. In addition, a map reflecting all wildfires 2000-2004 as well as fire district boundaries and department locations has been included. Wildfires 2000-2004 by Fire Response Area will aide in the assessment of numbers of fires and their general location within each district.

V. The 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 to wildfire.

The Steering Committee attempted to identify large facilities that may be at risk to wildfires 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 enable available financial and human resources to be concentrated on specific mitigation projects in the future.

For the purposes 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-Low
- Medium
- Medium-High
- High

Critical Infrastructure:

- Water towers

The various water towers located throughout the County, were rated as low. These structures have a low ignitability potential and are well maintained by the individual water associations.

- E-911 communication tower

The E-911 communication tower, located on 16 section public land, is well maintained as are adjacent lands. In addition, the Mississippi Forestry Commission conducts controlled burns on adjacent land which keeps these areas well maintained. It was determined that this site should be rated as low.

- South Mississippi Electric Power Association (SMEPA) Morrow power plant

This site is also well maintained, but has increased ignitability potential due to on-site coal use. There is somewhat limited access due to a control gate, but this has not been a problem in the past as local Volunteer Fire Departments maintain a good working relationship with SMEPA. The facility has high community importance due to the large impact that any wildfire damage or loss would cause. This site was rated medium-high.

Vulnerable Facilities:

- Amerada Hess facility at 380 Bounds Rd.; Sumrall

This pumping station has a higher ignitability potential due to spillage that may occur on-site. Recent residential development nearby increases the potential for loss of property or life as well as increased fire potential due to human activities. This site was rated medium.

- Transmontaigne facility at 5151 Highway 11; Purvis

This transfer station is well maintained, with no spillage expected. This site was rated low.

- Gas and oil field in the southwest section of the County

Several pipelines containing various forms of petroleum (including crude oil and natural gas), traverse the southwest section of the County. This area has been a high occurrence fire area in the past and has an increased ignitability potential. Many of the facilities are above ground and not well marked. The area and facilities are not easily accessed by current fire fighting equipment as most roads are very narrow, not well marked and change frequently. The area is interspersed with residences, and involves several property and/or facility owners. This area was rated high.

Areas of Community Importance

- Little Black Creek Water Park

The revenue, jobs and quality of life that the Water Park provide increases the community importance rating for this site. The water park is managed by the Pat Harrison Waterway District. The area has a fairly high fuel load with much vegetation and an increased potential for ignition due to multiple campsites. A 2-3 year controlled burn schedule is recommended, however, the Mississippi Forestry Commission is only able to conduct these burns when funding permits. For these reasons the site was rated medium-high.

■ Seventh-Day Adventist Nursing Home

This site and adjacent properties are well maintained with a low incidence of past fires in the area. In addition, the site and adjacent areas have low fuel ignitability potential. Concerns for full-time residents together with a high community importance designation led to a rating of medium.

■ Baxterville School

This site has been well maintained, has low fuel ignitability and low incidence of fire in the past. It received a low rating.

■ Bass Academy

This site is well maintained, however, several area fires have occurred in the past. This area contains a higher fuel load with homes located nearby. The site was rated medium.

High Occurrence Wildfire Areas

■ Area 1

This area is roughly 44,622 acres (181 square kilometers) and lies south of Purvis to Columbia Road west of Little Black Creek Road and north of Baxter Road. This area is traversed by several petroleum related facilities. Based on SFC and LCEM data, of the total fires within Lamar County from 2000-2004, 273 of them were located in Area 1.

This area includes the new development at Big Bay Lake. The increased development activity in this area has led to an increase in fire incidences. Area 1 as a whole is affected by the high number of petroleum facilities, residences interspersed throughout, and limitations presented by current available fire fighting equipment. For these reasons the area was rated medium-high.

■ Area 2 (Old Hwy 24)

Area 2 is roughly 19,395 acres (78 square kilometers), is centered near the convergence of WPA Road and Hwy 589 and lies northeast of Purvis-Oloh Road. From 2000-2004, 124 fires occurred within Area 2.

The Steering Committee specifically addressed the Tully-Davis Road area as a high occurrence site within Area 2. There are several residences in the area and there is concern with the high fuel load. As there have been many incidences in the past (mostly from arson), the committee offered the suggestion that the fuel be control burned as a precautionary treatment.

With the location of a petroleum facility, past incidents of arson, and residential development on the increase, the area was rated high.

■ Area 3

Area 3, centered along Highway 11 and Tatum Camp Road between Harold Tucker Road, on the south, and Sandy Run Road, on the north, is the smallest of the three high occurrence areas at 7,038 acres (28 square kilometers). Of the total fires within Lamar County from 2000-2004, 48 were located in Area 3.

This area is in flux with increased residential development and has seen problems in the past with fireworks during holiday celebrations. As this area is not completely developed there has been little clearing which results in increased fuel load. For these reasons the area was rated medium-high.

Fuel Hazards

■ Longleaf Trace

The Longleaf Trace is a 41 mile long, rails-to-trails conversion project that extends from the City of Hattiesburg through the towns of Sumrall, Bassfield, and Carson to Prentiss. The Trace is a linear, fairly-flat, multi-purpose trail that travels through rural wooded settings.

Areas adjacent to the Longleaf Trace in Lamar County have experienced recent development. There have been many new subdivisions built adjacent to the Trace. In addition, there are many open spaces in and around the Trace that contain a higher fuel load. An informal assessment conducted by the Mississippi Forestry Commission identified fire equipment access issues and an increased fuel load near homes adjacent to recently developed subdivisions. Many wooden fences stretched from wooded areas directly to houses, which could potentially lead a fire from these wooded areas to the structure.

Due to the proximity of residential development, controlled burns of the Trace would not be a likely mitigation option. Mechanical treatments may be an option but could be cost prohibitive. As the development of this area is fairly new, there is a high likelihood that the fuel load will increase within the next few years as re-vegetation occurs. The area was rated medium, but the Steering Committee agreed that this rating and the identified mitigation projects should be re-visited in the future.

■ Commercial timber not on a control burn schedule

Lamar County has experienced a change in the general management of commercial timber within its borders. In the last few years several commercial timber owners have decreased the use of controlled burning as a management tool due to liability issues mostly relating to the smoke that is created in the process. At the same time that controlled burning has decreased on these properties, it appears that fertilization is ongoing which has increased undergrowth and potential fuel hazards. In the future these properties will most likely be sold off and developed. As this occurs, the areas should be re-visited and mitigation projects identified and implemented as necessary.

The process of assessing the vulnerability of development and infrastructure, frequency of wildfire occurrence, and potential fuel hazards identified several areas where mitigation projects may be implemented. In addition to these factors, emergency preparedness plays a critical role in the ability of the local fire departments to address these potential hazards. The area was rated medium-low.

Emergency Preparedness

Emergency preparedness for each of the County volunteer fire departments is continually reviewed and assessed by the Lamar County Emergency Management Department. This assessment involves factors such as, equipment availability and age, public protection classification, and manpower. Mutual aid agreements exist between all of the fire departments within the County, and many grants have been utilized over the years to obtain needed equipment.

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 Lamar County are listed below, with the corresponding MSRB classification as of 2/17/2005.

Mississippi State Rating Bureau Public Protection Classification List

District	Class	Effective Date
Central Lamar V.F.P.D.	8*^	10/30/1996
Hickory Grove V.F.D.	10C	2/9/1998
Lumberton	8	9/11/1973
Northeast Lamar F.P.D.	8^	3/18/1992
Oak Grove C.F.P.D.	8*^	8/10/1999
Oloh F.P.G.D.	8*^	8/6/2003
Progress F.P.D #1	8*^	1/24/1996
Purvis	8	10/1/1981
Southwest Lamar V.F.D (Baxterville)	10/C	11/29/1990
Southwest Lamar V.F.D (Station #2)	10/C	7/21/1994
Southeast Lamar V.F.D	10/C	4/21/2005
Sumrall	8	12/4/1990

10C Indicates area with a Certified Class 10 Fire Dept.

*Indicates Alternate Water Supply therefore hydrant distance is waived

^Indicates Class 10 applies over 5 miles from fire station

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.

Although Lamar County has been growing tremendously in the last few years, most employment is located within the nearby cities. For this reason, many of the volunteer fire fighters find it necessary to find work in areas outside of their fire districts. This increases response time and decreases the number of fire fighters that are able to respond to a call.

In some cases, this has resulted in only one fire fighter being able to initially respond to a call. In addition, there are many cases when it is necessary for Lamar County volunteer firefighters to work side-by-side with the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

This has been a successful relationship resulting in improved protection of land area within Lamar County. In an attempt to better this relationship, and improve the firefighting efforts by both agencies, it is recommended that biannual meetings be established for information sharing purposes. These meetings would allow inter-agency concerns to be addressed as well as provide training opportunities and project coordination.

The Steering Committee also identified manpower concerns including recruitment and retention. Creation of full-time paid fire fighter positions, increased incentives and a community outreach awareness program were identified as objectives to address manpower issues. It is also possible that training needs will change in the future to include a need for increased wildfire fighting capabilities.

As part of this project, research was conducted to identify incentives and recruitment techniques used for other volunteer fire departments across the nation. Steering Committee members suggested that incentives be provided to volunteer firefighters in Lamar County in an effort to increase retention. At this time, the few incentives that exist are dependent on annual budgets and differ from department to department. A specific identified area of concern is the lack of disability insurance coverage.

In Iowa volunteer firefighters are provided coverage under the Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System (IPERS). A minimum payment is made in two consecutive quarters in a calendar year and then some amount of compensation paid in subsequent years to continue coverage under IPERS. Retirees are guaranteed a minimum benefit of \$50 per month if certain qualifying conditions are met. It is also possible for some jurisdictions to add volunteer firefighters to their insurance plan or allow them to buy into the plan. This incentive could produce large cost savings to fire fighters that are self employed, in college or otherwise in need of insurance.

In New York state volunteer firefighters are offered the opportunity to join a federally insured, member-owned credit union. Also in New York, a legislative bill is currently under review that would add volunteer fire fighters to the group of persons allowed free use of campsites, parks and other public places of recreation.

Other incentives include a "pay per call" program or "length of service program". The "pay per call" program is based on providing a fixed amount for each call that a member responds to. The "length of service program" is usually a retirement plan based on points. The points are awarded for responses, meeting attendance, drills, fundraisers or any other set category. These accumulated points then correspond with a cash retirement disbursement. Incentives can be as simple as mileage reimbursement, an annual awards dinner, membership to City sponsored/owned amenities (parks, pools, concerts), discounts at local businesses or as involved as a retirement plan.

Research on community outreach/recruitment efforts provided many options as well. Several volunteer fire departments were 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 than normal youth under 18.

An apprentice fire fighter 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, and after a set period of probation, may be able to ride-along on service calls in a support function. The youth would act in support by providing drinks, supplies or other equipment that is needed on-site. This program could also act as a probation period leading to a career as a volunteer firefighter.

Another recruitment suggestion is for the creation and maintenance of an on-going recruitment program which identifies the current manpower needs as well as those over the next five years. Creating and having recruitment kits on-hand for prospective candidates and enlisting the local community through newspaper inserts, recruitment flyers placed at local restaurants and other businesses may be successful.

Adding recruitment information to the County website, local cable service announcements and any community mail-out or newsletter as well as coordinating recruitment efforts with other County recruitment efforts (i.e. Public Works) will save on cost and reach potential recruits that would otherwise be missed.

In addition to the MSRB Rating and manpower issues, equipment status is tracked and assessed. A listing of current available information on large equipment with description, age and location is provided below. Currently, the departments utilize a variety of large fire fighting equipment with no immediate needs identified. However, a concern may arise in the future as this equipment ages and funds are not available for replacement.

Lamar County Fire District Equipment List

Department	Year	Make/Model	Type	Owner	Grant	Station
Central Lamar	2001	Freightliner	Tanker	County	*	1
Central Lamar	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	1
Central Lamar	1996	International	Pumper	District	*	2
Central Lamar	1978	Dodge	Rescue	District	*	2
Central Lamar	1976	Dodge	Support Truck	Forestry	*	2
Central Lamar	2000	International	Tanker	District	*	1
Hickory Grove	2001	Freightliner	Tanker	County	*	1
Hickory Grove	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	1
Hickory Grove	*	International	Pumper Backup	District	*	1
Hickory Grove	2001	Ford F350	Rescue	County	*	1
Lumberton	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	*
Lumberton	1986	Chevy	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	*
Lumberton	1985	Ford FMC	Pumper	City	*	*
Lumberton	1985	Ford	Rescue	City	*	*

Northeast Lamar	1999	Spartan	Pumper	County	*	2
Northeast Lamar	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	1
Northeast Lamar	1978	GMC	Pumper/Tanker	District	*	1
Northeast Lamar	1982	GMC	Pumper/Rescue	District	*	2
Northeast Lamar	1985	Chevy	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	2
Oak Grove	2001	Freightliner	Tanker	County	*	1
Oak Grove	1999	Spartan	Pumper	County	RFTAAP	1
Oak Grove	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	2
Oak Grove	1986	Chevy	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	1
Oak Grove	1987	International	Tanker	District	*	2
Oak Grove	2003	Ford	Rescue	District	*	1
Oloh	2001	Freightliner	Tanker	County	*	*
Oloh	1995	International	Pumper	County	RFTAAP	*
Oloh	1986	Chevy	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	*
Oloh	*	*	Rescue	District	*	*
Pine Ridge	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	1
Pine Ridge	2001	Freightliner	Pumper	County	RFTAAP	2
Pine Ridge	1963	International	Tanker	Forestry	*	2
Pine Ridge	1976	Dodge	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	3
Pine Ridge	2001	Ford F350	Rescue	County	*	1
Pine Ridge	1987	Kenworth	Tanker	District	*	1
Purvis	1985	Ford FMC	Pumper	City	*	*
Purvis	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	*
Purvis	2001	Ford F350	Rescue	County	*	*
Purvis	1976	Dodge	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	*
Purvis	2004	International	Tanker	Depart.	FEMA Fire Act	*
Southeast Lamar	2001	Freightliner	Pumper	County	*	2
Southeast Lamar	1987	International	Tanker	Forestry	*	2
Southeast Lamar	1980	GMC	Quick Attack	Dept.	*	1
Southeast Lamar	1977	Dodge	Grass Truck	Forestry	*	2
Southeast Lamar	2001	Freightliner	Pumper	County	FEMA Fire Act	1
Southeast Lamar	1972	Am Gen Military	Tanker	Forestry	*	2
Southeast Lamar	2001	Freightliner	Pumper	County	RFTAAP	2
Southeast Lamar	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	1
Southeast Lamar	1987	Ford	Rescue	District	*	2
Southeast Lamar	1968	Military	Support Truck	Forestry	Turin	2
Southeast Lamar	1975	International	Tanker	Forestry	Turin	2
Southeast Lamar	2004	Sterling	Tanker	County	FEMA Fire Act	1
Southeast Lamar	2004	Sterling	Tanker	District	RFTAAP	2
Southeast Lamar	2004	International	Tanker	Dept.	*	1
Sumrall	1995	International	Pumper	County	*	*
Sumrall	1987	GMC	Pumper	City	*	*
Sumrall	1987	Ford	Rescue	City	*	*

* Intentionally left blank

VI. 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 treatment projects for Critical Infrastructure sites were identified or found to be necessary at this time. These sites are generally well maintained and have moderate to low ignitability potential.

The sites identified as Vulnerable Facilities, involve the use or transport of petroleum. There is an increased potential for wildfire at or near these sites due to the natural characteristics of these operations. However, there is potential to improve the status of these facilities as they relate to recent nearby residential development as well as access.

Mitigation projects for sites identified as Areas of Community Importance are limited to the Little Black Creek Water Park. This area has a high fuel load and an irregular maintenance schedule. Areas of improvement include camper education and a regular maintenance schedule.

High Occurrence wildfire areas and Fuel Hazard area mitigation projects were limited to a community outreach and education program involving the identification and prosecution of arsonists. The Steering Committee also identified the need for these areas to be re-visited in the future for creation and implementation of other mitigation projects.

Mitigation Projects

1. Outreach program involving education of residents living near petroleum facilities
2. Improved mapping of roadways in southwest section of the County involving updated satellite imagery every year
3. Purchase of smaller fire fighting equipment that will enable access to and within petroleum areas
4. A coordinated education program for Little Black Creek Water Park involving Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments and the Pat Harrison Waterway District that identifies a regular maintenance schedule for the Park, as well as an outreach component to educate campers on fire safety. Implement Firewise practices including:
 - creation of designated fire areas
 - construction of fire pits

- designation of grill dumping areas
- installation of screening to cabin sub-floor, porches and steps
- installation of spark arrestor to fireplace chimneys

5. Community outreach and education program involving identification and prosecution of arsonists

In addition to mitigation projects, structure ignitability recommendations can be formulated and then 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

Homeowners

1. Provide a clearing of at least 30 feet around structure for fire fighting equipment access
2. Provide a driveway at least 12 feet wide with 13 feet of vertical clearance
3. If your 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 your 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 your 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 subdivisions 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.

VII. Action Plan and Assessment Strategy

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

Action Plan

1. Outreach education program for residents living near petroleum facilities.

Responsibility: Volunteer Fire Departments in partnership with Mississippi Forestry Commission through Firewise Workshop

Funding: Private Oil Companies, County Forestry Association, private timber owners

Timetable for Completion: August-September 2005 in coordination with Fall Field Day(s)
2. Improved mapping of roadways in southwest section of the County involving updated satellite imagery every year.

Responsibility: Lamar County Planning Department GIS in coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: County Planning Budget

Timetable for Completion: 2-5 years
3. Purchase of smaller fire fighting equipment that will enable access to difficult areas (petroleum properties).

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management and Planning Department in coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: approximately \$100,000 through Homeland Security or other grant funds

Timetable for Completion: April 2006 or as grants become available
4. Establish biannual meetings between the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments.

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management and the Mississippi Forestry Commission

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Implement Immediately

5. A coordinated education program involving Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments and the Pat Harrison Waterway District that identifies a regular maintenance schedule for the Little Black Creek Water Park, as well as an outreach component to educate campers on fire safety.

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

Funding: Pat Harrison Waterway District and Mississippi Forestry Commission for publication of brochures or other materials

Timetable for Completion: Spring 2006 in preparation for period of high park use

6. Community Outreach and education program involving the identification and prosecution of arsonists through a reward program. Funds for a reward will be collected through the participation of local businesses and the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

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

Funding: Collection of funds for printed materials and reward from local businesses, private timber owners, individual donors and the Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: December 2005

7. 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, proper addressing, County burn procedures and concerns for Longleaf Trace residents, utilizing information produced for the State of Mississippi.

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management/Planning Department 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 established mail out

Timetable for Completion: Within 6 months to coordinate with Fire Prevention Week (1st week of October) leading into winter

8. Suggestions for changes/additions to Subdivision Regulations (increase width of roads and driveways) and/or Building Code (increase distance between structures) for presentation to County Board of Supervisors.

Responsibility: Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments/ Emergency Management in coordination with Planning Department

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Immediately

9. Compensation and incentives for volunteer fire fighters.

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management in Coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Federal and State Grants, County, Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: 1-2 years in coordination with County Budget preparation and approval

10. Community outreach program to educate citizens, specifically young adults, about the volunteer fire fighter 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. Also to include National Fire Protection Association public service announcements.

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management in coordination with local Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: Volunteer Fire Departments, grants, Mississippi Forestry Commission

Timetable for Completion: 1-2 times per year in coordination with Fire Prevention Week

11. Re-visit Longleaf Trace development fuel load, and commercial timber ignitability potential, for the purpose of identifying needed mitigation projects.

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management working with local volunteer fire departments in the area

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Between 2-5 years

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

Responsibility: Lamar County Emergency Management working with the Lamar County Planning Department

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Yearly

13. Maintain, update and redistribute the CWPP maps to all County Departments, volunteer fire departments and other organizations utilizing the document.

Responsibility: Lamar County Planning Department GIS

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Yearly

Assessment Strategy

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 projects success.

1. Outreach education program for residents living near petroleum facilities.

Expected Outcome: Increased awareness of fire safety and benefits of enabling the local volunteer firefighters through the Firewise program

Assessment Timetable: January 2006 in preparation for program duplication in fall of 2006

2. Improved mapping of roadways in southwest section of the County.

Expected Outcome: Enable firefighters to better access, preparation and quicker response to fires

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years depending on the utilization of satellite imagery by the County

3. Purchase of smaller fire fighting equipment.

Expected Outcome: Better access and firefighting capability for rural areas, specifically in the southwest section of the county near petroleum facilities

Assessment Timetable: January 2007 review as needed for preparation of grants packages for April Homeland Security deadline

4. Establish biannual meetings between the Mississippi Forestry Commission and the Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments.

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

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years

5. A coordinated education program involving Lamar County Volunteer Fire Departments and the Pat Harrison Waterway District that identifies a regular maintenance schedule for the Little Black Creek Water Park.

Expected Outcome: Decrease in wildfires and implementation of Firewise recommendations in the Park to provide a safer recreational environment

Assessment Timetable: Winter 2006 as park use declines and assessment can be made if implementation has occurred and has been successful in reducing wildfire incidents

6. Community Outreach and education program involving the identification and prosecution of arsonists through a reward program. Funds for a reward will be collected through the participation of local businesses and the Mississippi Forestry Commission.

Expected Outcome: Reduction in arson fires

Assessment Timetable: January 2006 for assessment of fire incidents, tips and reward collection

7. 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, proper addressing, County burn procedures and concerns for Longleaf Trace residents, utilizing information produced for the State of Mississippi.

Expected Outcome: Implementation of Firewise safety measures by residential property owners. Including an increase in properly assigned and visible residential addressing as well as a decrease in non-compliant residential burns

Assessment Timetable: January 2006 in preparation of program duplication

8. Suggestions for changes/additions to Subdivision Regulations (increase width of roads and driveways) and/or Building Code (increase distance between structures).

Expected Outcome: Better access, improved safety and decrease in response time for local volunteer fire fighters

Assessment Timetable: Winter of 2005 for assessment for ordinance process completion and implementation

9. Compensation and incentives for volunteer fire fighters.

Expected Outcome: Creation of incentives and compensation for volunteer fire fighters leading to increased retention and recruitment

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years depending on type of compensation/incentive and funding availability

10. Community outreach program to educate communities, specifically young adults, about the volunteer fire fighter program and its importance.

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

Assessment Timetable: 1-2 years for assessment of recruitment numbers

11. Re-visit Longleaf Trace development fuel load, and commercial timber ignitability potential, for the purpose of identifying needed mitigation projects.

Expected Outcome: County staff and volunteer firefighter awareness of development status in Longleaf area leading to identification of mitigation projects

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years

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

Expected Outcome: Increased application for grants leading to increased funding

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years

13. Maintain, update and redistribute the CWPP maps to all County Departments, volunteer fire departments and other organizations utilizing the document.

Expected Outcome: Awareness of fire activity leading to implementation to action items in an effort toward reduction of fire incidents

Assessment Timetable: 2-5 years to assess effectiveness of maps and any necessary changes or additions

Potential Funding Sources

1. Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program
Website: www.firegrantsupport.com
Application Deadline: April 8, 2005
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 Deadline: September, 2005
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 Deadline: June 28, 2005
Program Description: Funding for the hiring of fire personnel and incentives for volunteer recruitment and retention

4. Tums Firefighter Grant-in-Aid Program
Website: www.firstresponder.org
Application Deadline: Processed quarterly (March 31, June 30, September 30 & December 31)
Program Description: Firefighting equipment

5. 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.

6. U.S. Smokeless Tobacco Company Polaris Ranger Donation Program
Website: www.ustinc.com
Application Deadline: January 7, 2005
Program Description: Donation of Polaris Ranger 6X6 utility vehicles for firefighting, rescue, police, emergency medical service, and wildlife law enforcement organizations.

7. First Responder Institute Website
Website: www.firstresponder.org
Program Description: Provide support to local U.S. fire departments and emergency service personnel.

8. Responder Knowledge Base Website
Website: www1.rkb.mipt.org
Program Description: Website contains information on currently available products, standards, training and grants

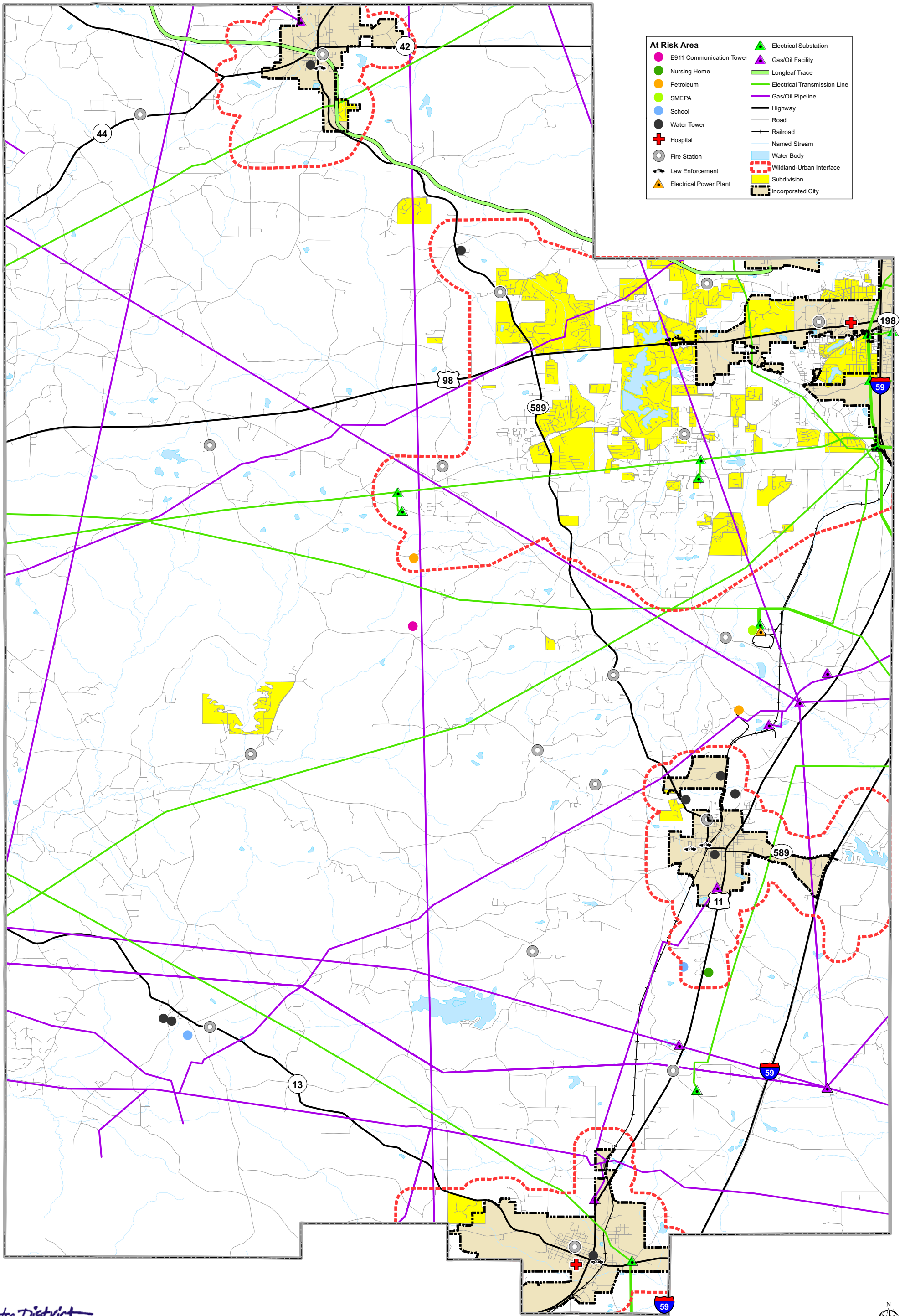
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September 2004
2. Lamar County
Emergency Operations Plan
February 2000
3. Firewise
Around Your Home brochure
www.firewise.org
4. USDA Forest Service
Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan
March 2004

Project Contact Information

1. Lamar County Planning Department
P.O. Box 1240
Purvis, MS 39475
Phone: (601) 794-1024
Fax: (601) 794-3900
www.lamarcounty.com
2. Lamar County Emergency Management
630 Purvis-Oloh Road
Purvis, MS 39475
Phone: (601) 794-5378
Fax: (601) 794-2623
www.lamarcounty.com
3. Mississippi Coastal Plains Resource Conservation and Development Council
P.O. Box 506
Huff Hall Annex, MGCCC
Perkinston, MS
Phone: (601) 528-8903
Fax: (601) 528-5183
www.msrgcd.org
4. Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District
9229 Highway 49
Gulfport, MS 39503
Phone: (228) 868-2311
Fax: (228) 868-7094
www.smpdd.com

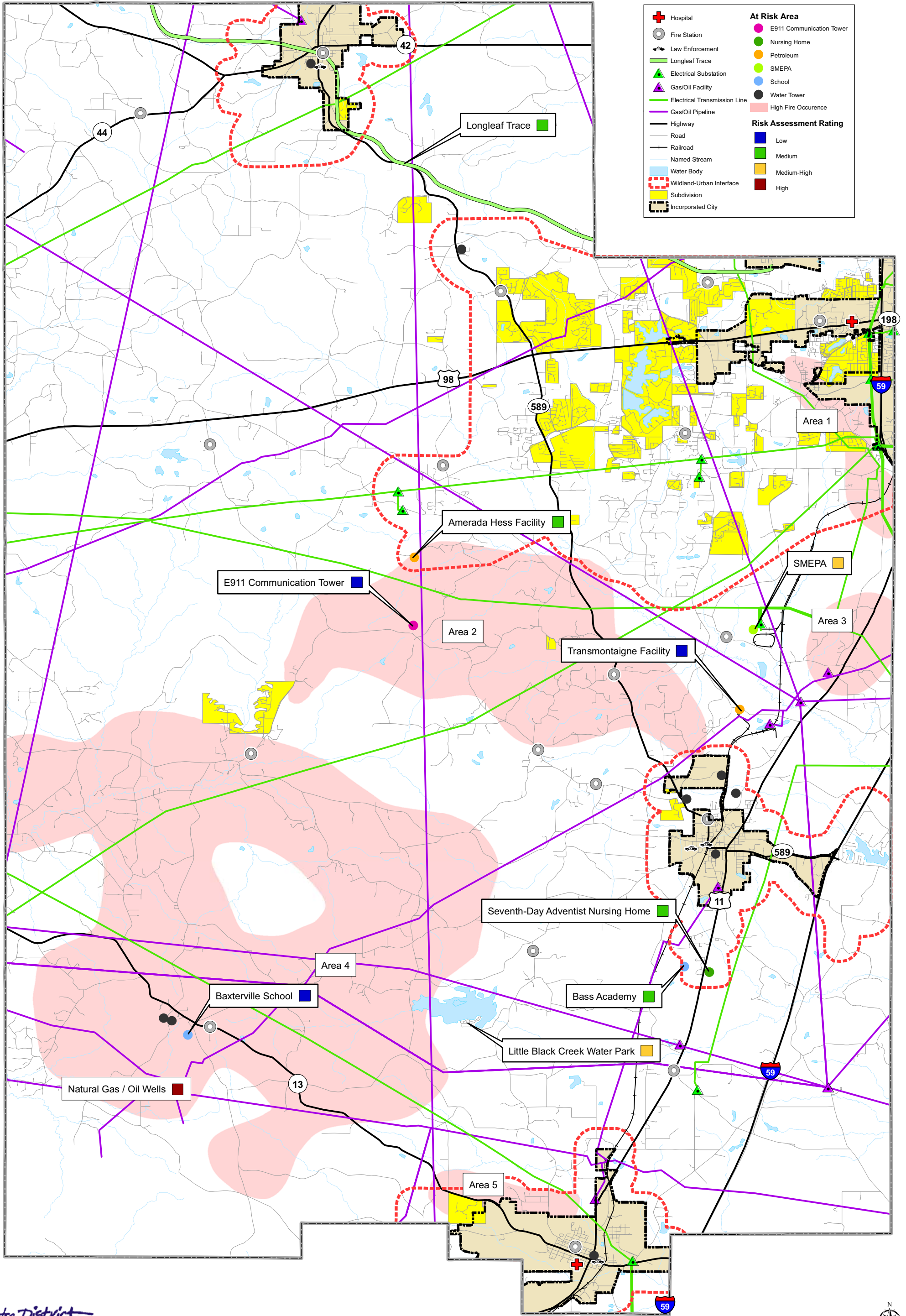
Lamar County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan Base Map



At Risk Area

● E911 Communication Tower	▲ Electrical Substation
● Nursing Home	▲ Gas/Oil Facility
● Petroleum	— Longleaf Trace
● SMEPA	— Electrical Transmission Line
● School	— Gas/Oil Pipeline
● Water Tower	— Highway
● Hospital	— Road
● Fire Station	— Railroad
● Law Enforcement	— Named Stream
▲ Electrical Power Plant	— Water Body
	— Wildland-Urban Interface
	— Subdivision
	— Incorporated City

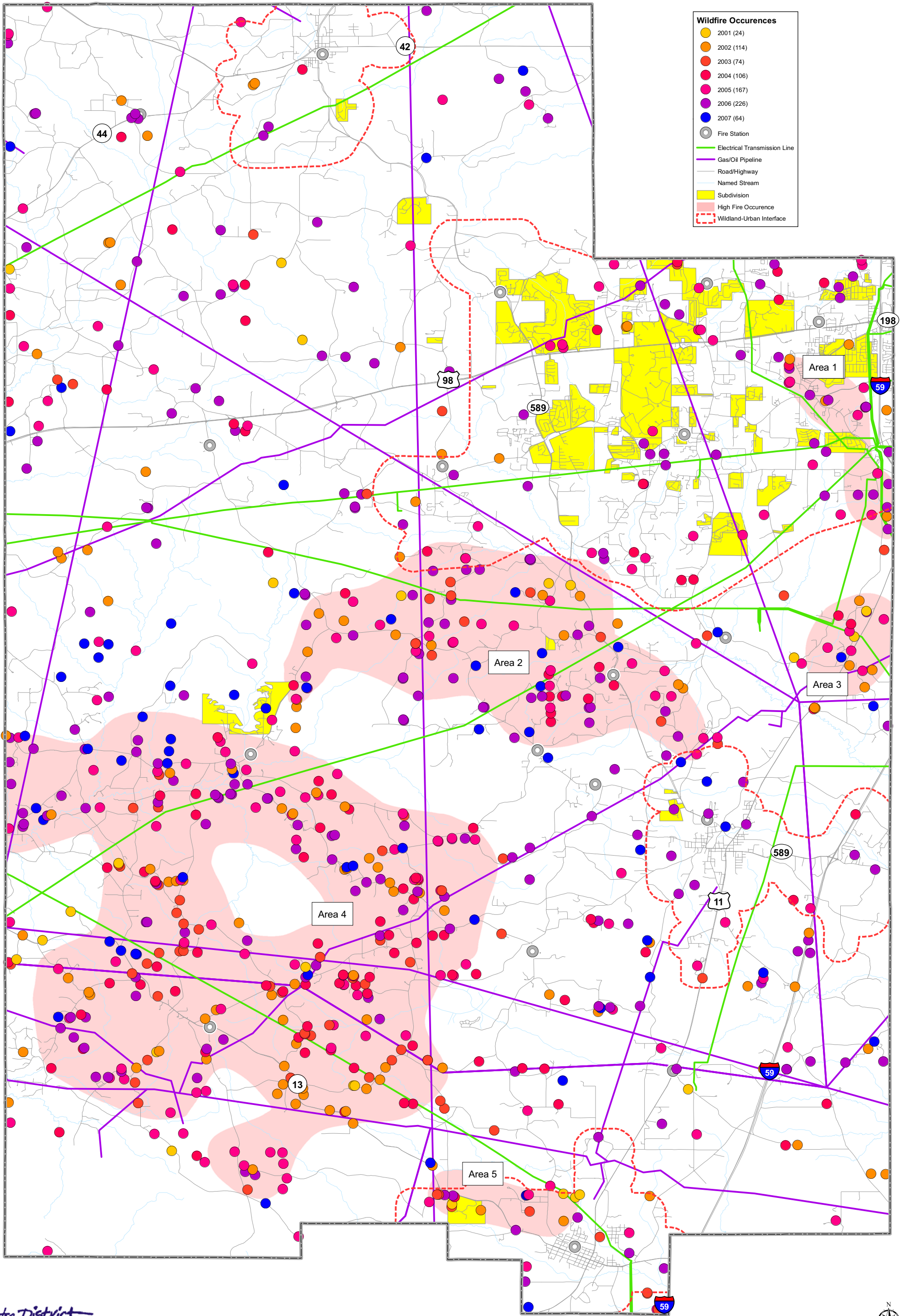
Lamar County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan Risk Assessment Ratings



At Risk Area	
+	Hospital
●	Fire Station
⚓	Law Enforcement
—	Longleaf Trace
▲	Electrical Substation
▲	Gas/Oil Facility
—	Electrical Transmission Line
—	Gas/Oil Pipeline
—	Highway
—	Road
—	Railroad
—	Named Stream
—	Water Body
—	Wildland-Urban Interface
—	Subdivision
—	Incorporated City
●	E911 Communication Tower
●	Nursing Home
●	Petroleum
●	SMEPA
●	School
●	Water Tower
■	High Fire Occurrence

Risk Assessment Rating	
■	Low
■	Medium
■	Medium-High
■	High

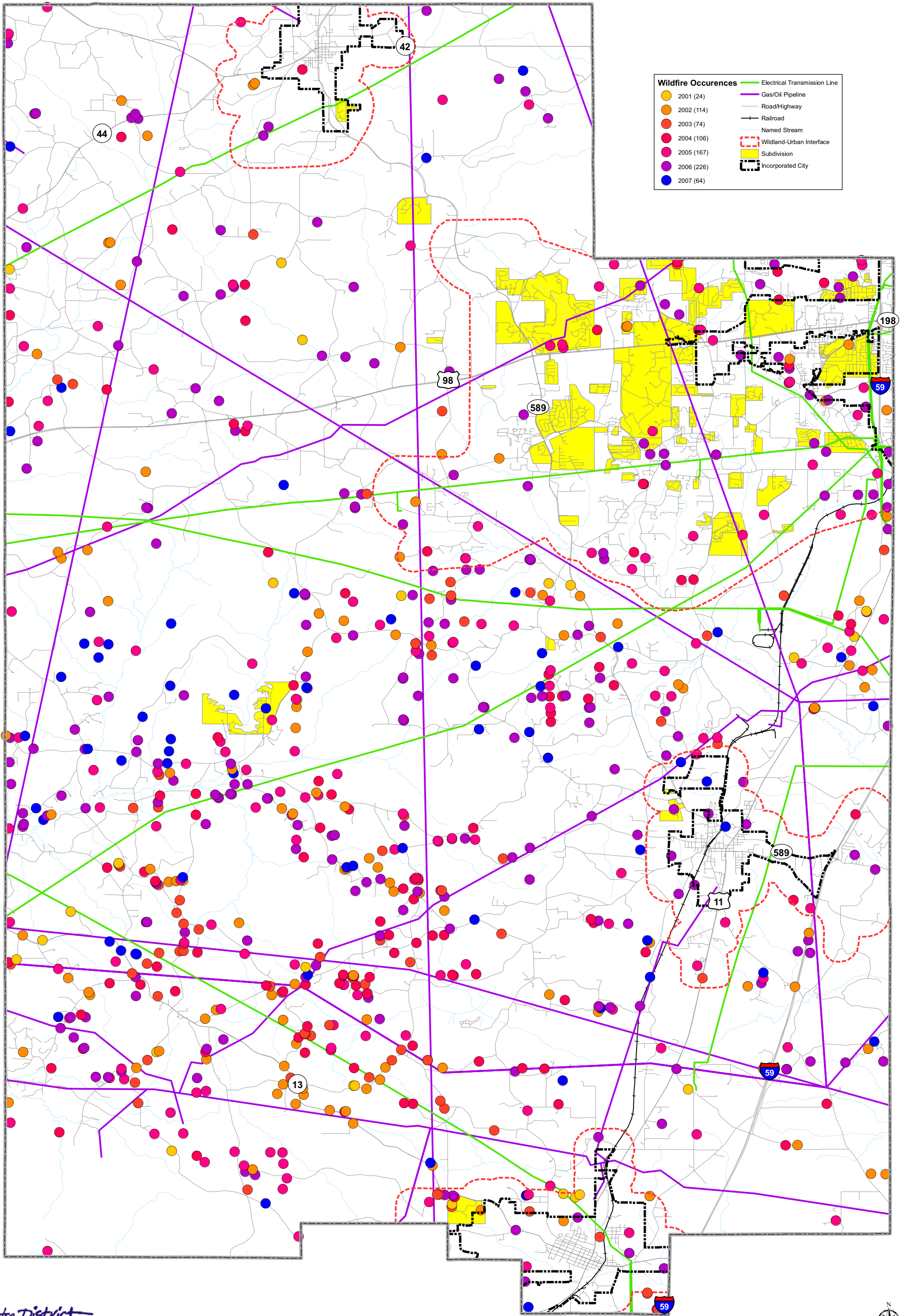
Lamar County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan High Occurrence Wildfire Areas



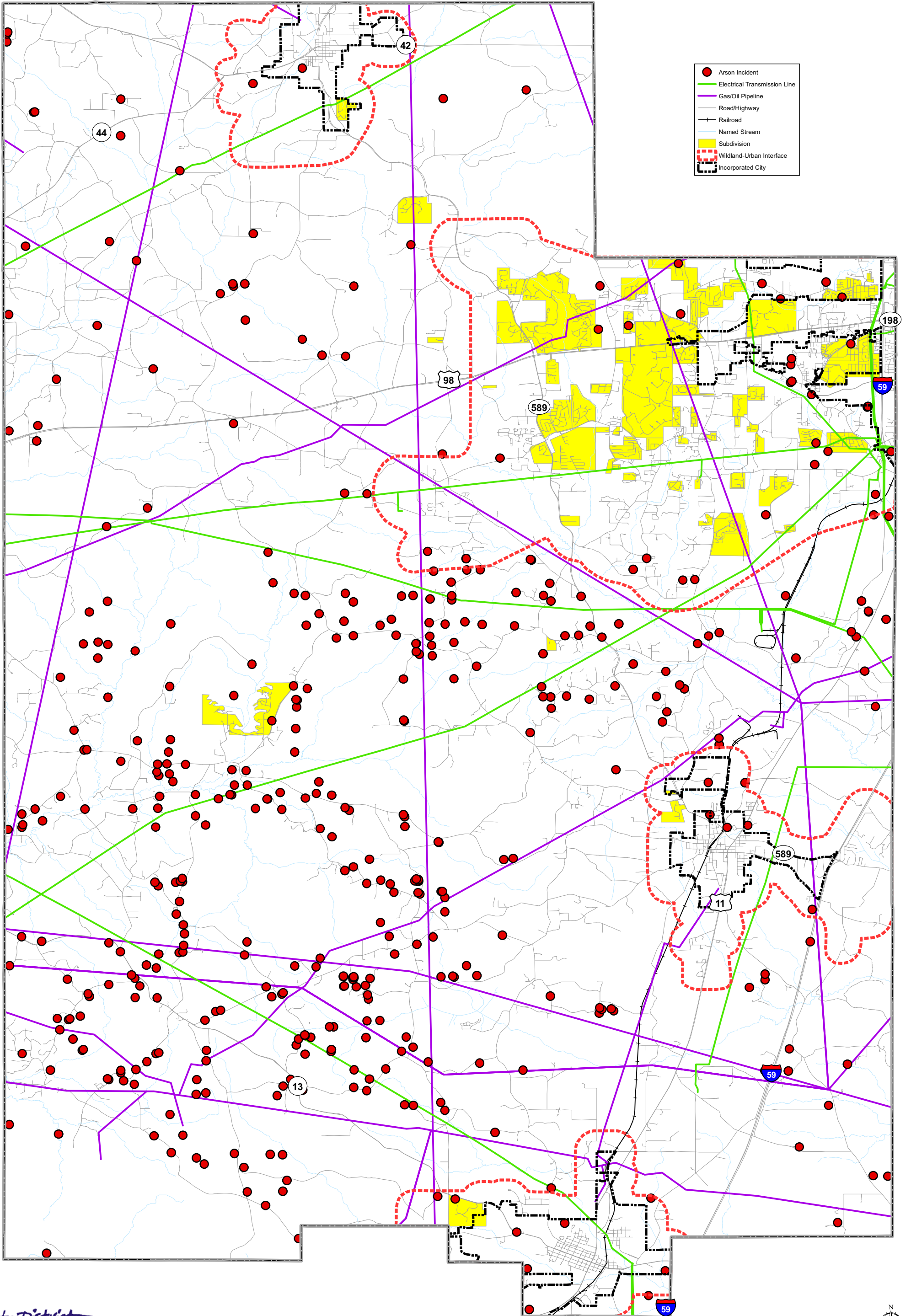
Lamar County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan

Fire Data 2001 - 2007



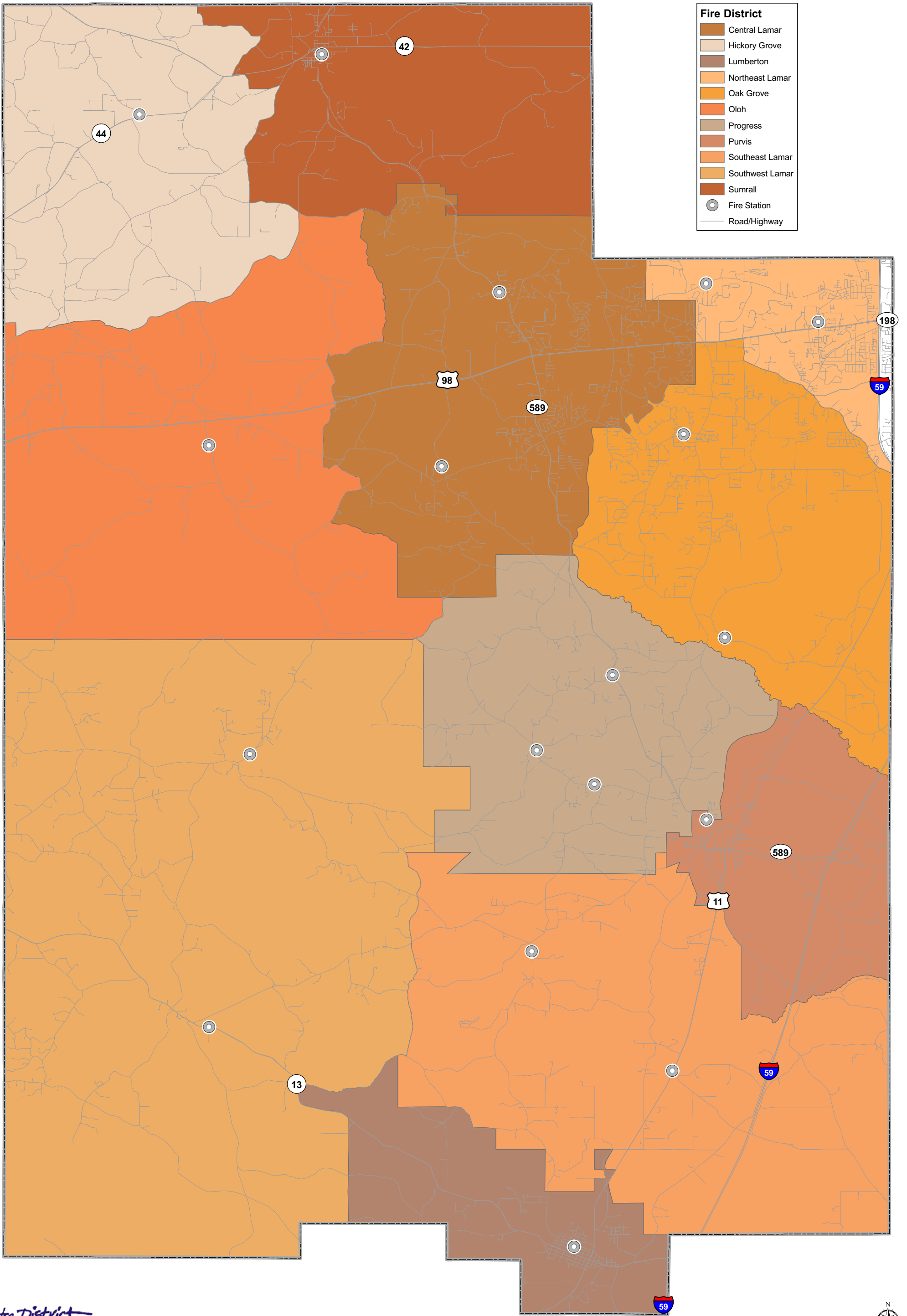
Lamar County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan Arson Fires 2001 - 2007



Lamar County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan

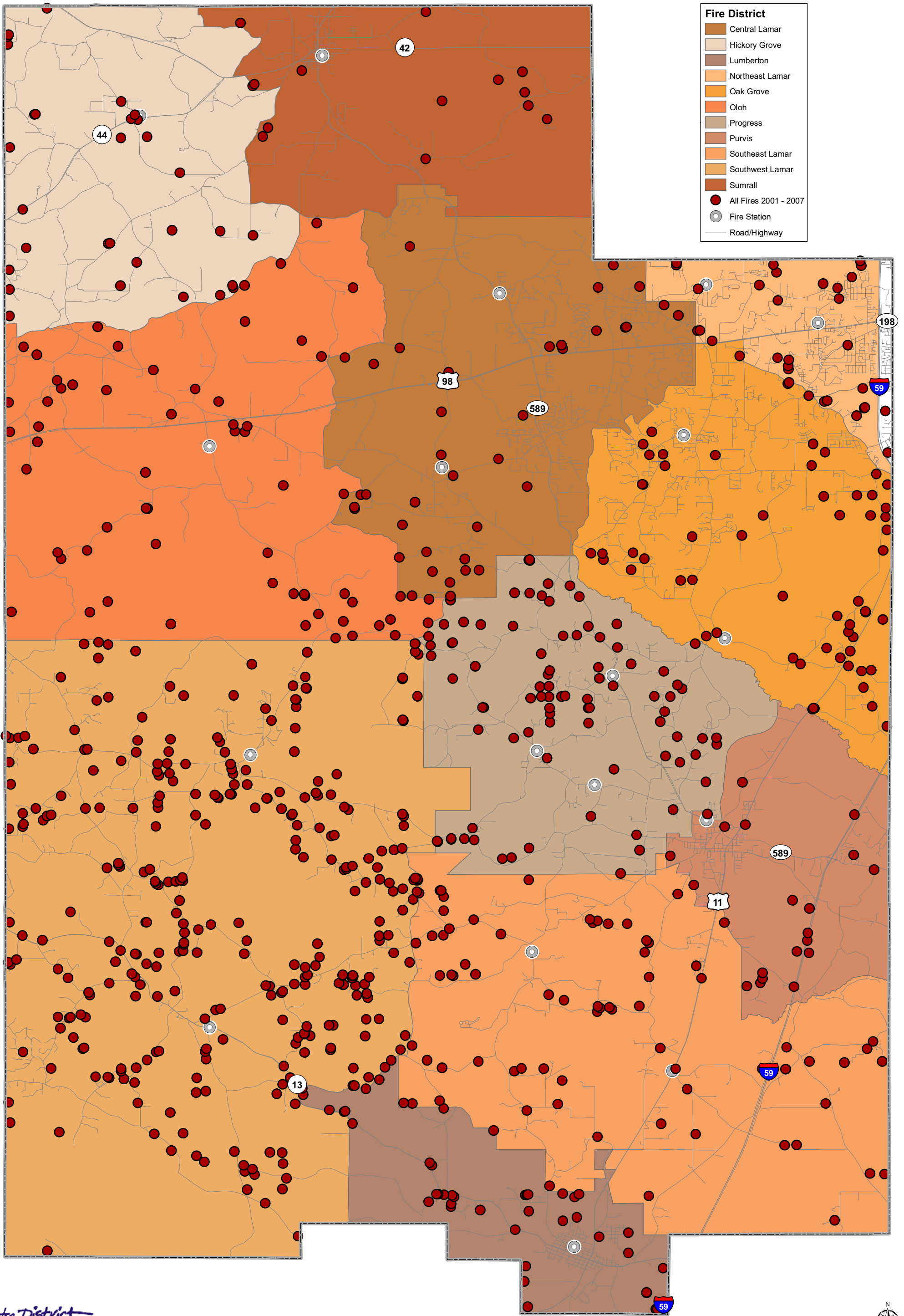
Fire Response Areas



Lamar County, Mississippi

Wildfire Protection Plan

Wildfire by Response Area



Fire District

- Central Lamar
- Hickory Grove
- Lumberton
- Northeast Lamar
- Oak Grove
- Oloh
- Progress
- Purvis
- Southeast Lamar
- Southwest Lamar
- Sumrall
- All Fires 2001 - 2007
- Fire Station
- Road/Highway

