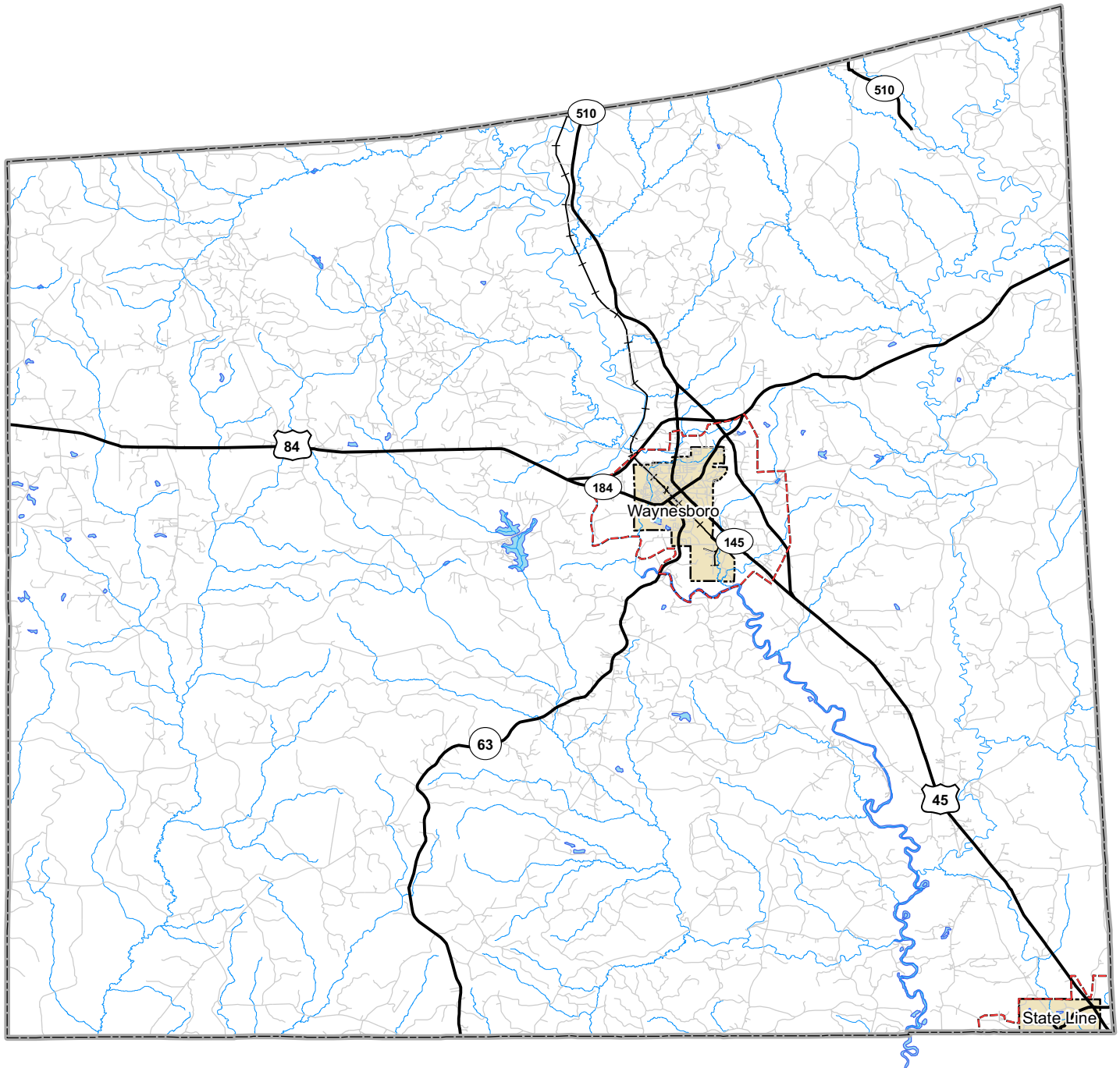


# WAYNE COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

## COUNTY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN



**OCTOBER 2008**

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

## Table of Contents

- I. Introduction
- II. Area Description
- III. Strategic Goals of the County Wildfire Protection Plan
- IV. Mapping
- V. The County Risk Assessment
  - Critical Infrastructure
  - Vulnerable Facilities
  - Areas of Community Importance
  - High Occurrence Wildfire Areas
  - Fuel Hazards
- VI. Emergency Preparedness
- VII. Mitigation Projects and Structure Ignitability Recommendations
- VIII. Action Plan and Assessment Strategy
- IX. Potential Funding Sources
- X. References
- XI. Project Contact Information
- XII. CWPP Maps

## 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, Wayne 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 Wayne 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 Wayne 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 (currently under final review by MEMA/FEMA) and the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

## Area Description

Wayne County is located in the northeast corner of the Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District. It is rural in context, with the City of Waynesboro being the largest incorporated municipality. With boundaries extending into Greene County, the Town of Stateline is the only other municipality in Wayne County. U.S. Highway 84 runs East and West through the entire county. U.S. Highway 45 extends North and South, intersecting Highway 84 in Waynesboro. State Highway 63, which terminates in Waynesboro, is the only other major highway route in the county. U.S. Highway 45 provides direct access to the City of Mobile, Alabama to the southeast.

The population of Wayne County in 2000 was 21,216, evidencing an 8.7% growth in residency since 1990. The U. S. Census Bureau estimates a 2007 population of 21,096, a slight decrease since 2000.

Wayne County contains 813 square miles, with land largely held by private landowners. Approximately 82% of the county land area is contained within commercial forests. Recreational activities in the area are served by two major recreational facilities. Maynor Creek Water Park is operated by the Pat Harrison Waterway District and provides picnicking, playgrounds, hiking, swimming, boating, camping, natural trails, canoeing, and fishing. Hogan Park is a 22-acre site operated by the City primarily as a sports complex (four ball fields), but also offering picnicking and playgrounds. Other recreational facilities include Dixie Park, a sports complex with six ball fields adapted for and used as soccer fields. This facility adjoins Wayne County High School and is used for the high school athletic program, as well as for community sports programs. Parks in Wayne County include the Chickasawhay State Wildlife Management Area, Thompson Creek Park, Maynor Creek Water Park, and Busby Game Refuge. There are three sites in Wayne County that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are The Waynesboro Bridge, The Yellow Creek Bridge, and Patton's Fort.

The climate of Wayne County is mild with the mean annual temperature in the mid 60's. Average winter temperatures range from 34 to 58 degrees Fahrenheit with summer temperatures ranging from 69 to 92 degrees Fahrenheit. Rainfall averages approximately 58 inches annually with the majority of accumulation from November to July. Because of high annual precipitation amounts, Wayne 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. 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.

About 82 percent of the land in Wayne County is use-classified as timber, open, or agriculture, creating an enhanced risk to the county of wildfires. Streams and drainage basins create natural barriers that help reduce this risk. Woodlands fires are controlled by rural 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 threat of fire. Major transportation arteries through Wayne County such as U. S. Highways 45 and 84, and MS Highway 63 are used daily to transport flammable, toxic and/or explosive materials, thus exposing the county to potential transportation incidents involving hazardous materials. Several facilities located within Wayne County use, store, or process flammable, toxic, and/or explosive materials. In addition, there are several wells and pipelines spanning the County which contain crude oil, natural gas, carbon dioxide, propane, and other substances. Volunteer fire departments within the county serve as first responders if an incident involving hazardous materials occurs.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau info, Wayne County has a total area of 813 square miles of land area and 3 square miles of water area making it the third largest county in Mississippi. As of the census of 2000, there were 21,216 people, 7,857 households, and 5,853 families in the county. There were 9,049 housing units at an average density of 11 per square mile. The County currently has 17 active stations with the new station at Battles now in service. There are two city fire departments (Waynesboro and Stateline) in the county, for a total of 19 stations. From the facts above if all were divided equal that amounts to about 43 square miles and 473 houses per station. All fire departments are manned by volunteers who receive no compensation for fire protection services. Total number of volunteers is based on current staffing level and is reported to be roughly 250.

Fire Department	Station Location(s)
Battles VFD	675 State Line Battles Rd.
Beat Four VFD	5109 Hwy 84
Buckatunna VFD	1678 Hwy 45 S
Central VFD	
Clara VFD	2575 Hwy 63
Coyt VFD	981 Coyt Rd.
Cross Roads VFD	716 Chicora Greene Rd.
Denham VFD	698 County Lake Denham Rd.
Eucatta VFD	398 Eucatta Rd.
Hiwanee VFD	5834 Hwy 45 N
Mathersville VFD	83 Mathersville Frost Bridge Rd.
Maynor Creek VFD	Reservoir Rd.
Mulberry VFD	W A Pitts Rd.

Fire Department	Station Location(s)
Pleasant Grove VFD	157 Old Hwy 84 Loop Rd.
Progress VFD	743 Denham Progress Rd.
Strengthford VFD	4 Strength Cooley Rd.
Stateline VFD	5117 Ballpark Road
Yellow Creek VFD	3 Old River Rd.

## **Strategic Goals of the County Wildfire Protection Plan**

At the beginning of the planning process, the Wayne 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 Wayne 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 staggered process for county to purchase brush trucks and strategically place them at stations for use by multiple stations (ideally want 16).
6. Improve water/sewer/hydrant infrastructure in newly annexed area of the county. (rural but not in WUI)
7. Identify water resource on private property to be accessed if necessary in NE and SW portions of the county.
8. Implement Firewise educational program for homeowners and a program for developers.
9. Improve house number markings, signage and access to locked gates at private residences. All slow response time to structures in the event of wildfire.
10. Purchase and install GPS units in all fire trucks.
11. Develop new volunteer firefighter recruitment program.
12. Execute a mutual aid agreement between local governments and neighboring counties (MS and AL).
13. Ensure that the proper infrastructure is in place at new industrial property for firefighting.

## Mapping

The Wayne 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 Wayne County Base Map, Wayne County Risk Assessment Ratings, Wayne County Fire Data 2001-2007, High Occurrence Wildfire Areas, Arson Fires 2001-2007, Wayne 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 Wayne 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 Wayne County shows a total of 19 fires in the year 2001, 58 fires in 2002, 36 fires in 2003, 79 fires in 2004, 74 fires in 2005, 132 fires in 2006, and 50 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 Wayne 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 eight 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 north-central portion of the county in the Hiwannee community area of Highway 45. Area 2 is geographically located in the northwest area of the county. Area 3 is an elongated area running northwest to southeast with Highway 84 transecting its mid-section and its southeast end skirting the west fringes of Waynesboro. Area 4 is located midway between the western county boundary and Waynesboro just south of Highway 84. Area 5 is an elliptical area running northwest from Waynesboro's eastern incorporated limits southeast towards the Denham community area. Area 6 is located in the west-central portion of the county south of Highway 84 and north of the Strengthford community area. Area 7 is located centrally in the county in the Clara community area. Area 8 is located in the south east corner of the county along Highway 45 north of State Line in the Battles community area..

A majority of the fires within Wayne County, approximately 42%, are attributed to arson. According to Forestry Commission wildfire data, 188 out of 448 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 Wayne County Fire Response Area map reflects one response area for the county and each volunteer fire station location. There are plans to develop 4 response areas in the near future. Also included is a map reflecting all wildfires from 2001-2007, as well as a map depicting 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
- Medium-High
- High

### Critical Infrastructure:

- Yellow Creek Volunteer Fire Station
- Mulberry Volunteer Fire Station
- Eucutta Volunteer Fire Station
- Pleasant Grove Volunteer Fire Station
- Beat Four Volunteer Fire Station
- Maynor Creek Volunteer Fire Station
- Dixie Electric Power Association Substation
- Strengthford Volunteer Fire Station
- Whistler Water Association Water Well

- Dixie Electric Power Association Substation
- South Mississippi Power Substation
- South Mississippi Power Electric Power Association Substation
- Buckatunna Water Association Water Well, Chicora Greene Co. Rd.
- Buckatunna Water Association Water Well, Highway 45 South
- Buckatunna Water Association Water Tank, Chson Eret Rd.
- Battles Volunteer Fire Station
- Crossroads Volunteer Fire Station
- Clara Volunteer Fire Station
- Electrical Substation
- Clara Water Well & Tank
- Buckatunna Water Association Storage Tank, Denham Progress Rd.
- Progress Volunteer Fire Station
- Denham Volunteer Fire Station
- Buckatunna Water Association 2 Wells & Storage Tank, Buckatunna-Mt. Zion
- Buckatunna Water Association Well, Buckatunna-Mt. Zion
- Buckatunna Water Association Well & Booster Tank, Jordan-Sumrall Rd.
- Buckatunna Volunteer Fire Station
- Hiwannee Volunteer Fire Station
- Waynesboro Water Well
- Matherville Volunteer Fire Station
- Coyt Volunteer Fire Station
- Whistler Water Association Water Tank, Highway 84

- Whistler Water Association Water Well #5 & Tank, N. Maynor Creek Rd.
- Whistler Water Association Water Well, Sommer Dr.
- Beat Four School
- Hiwannee Water Association Water Tank
- Chickasawhay River Bridge
- Buckatunna Water Association Water Well & Storage Tank, Buckatunna Chicora Clara Rd.
- Beat Four Attendance Center  
This school is not a shelter.
- Clara Attendance Center  
This school is not a shelter.
- Buckatunna Attendance Center
- River Bridge Highway 63 South
- Old Highway 84 River Bridge  
Unlike some of the Bridges in the county, this one is new and constructed of concrete.
- Hiwannee Water Association Water Well #1
- Hiwannee Water Association Water Well #2
- Hiwannee Water Association Water Well #3
- Hiwannee Water Association Booster Station
- Whistler Water Association Water Well #1
- Clara Water Association Water Well #2
- Clara water Association Water Well #3
- Clara Water Association Water Well #4
- South West Wayne Water Association Water Tank
- Electrical Substation, Eucutta Sandersville Rd.

- South West Wayne Water Association Water Well, Salem Rd.
- Communication Towers  
There are three towers that are located in areas with grassy, woodlands surrounding to it.

### Vulnerable Facilities

- Oil wells on 16<sup>th</sup> Section Land throughout the county.  
They are all rated high because of no defensible space.
- New Industrial Park  
Consisting of 240 acres where there is only a 2" water main.
- Enbridge Processing LLC  
This facility is rated high because it is located near forestland and gasoline is on site.
- Odom Industries  
This is a chemical plant located in a heavily wooded area and is rated medium-high. There is a substantial risk but the company takes the proper precautions.
- Railroad  
The railroad is old and dilapidated in many parts. It is considered a hazard to wooded areas. There are at least 60 wooden railroad trestles all surrounded by grassy, woodland areas.

### Areas of Community Importance

- Maynor Creek Water Park – Operated by Pat Harrison Waterway District and located in a heavily wooded area. In some places the litter depth is knee-deep creating a heavy fuel load. The park is rated high.
- South Mississippi Youth Camp – Located in heavily wooded area of the DeSoto National Forest.
- Frost Bridge Campground  
Located on Coyt Road in a heavily wooded area, this is an historic campground. The risk is high because there are woods on three sides and people reside there for weeks at a time.
- Hebron Church
- Gray Cemetery

## Areas of Concern

- New subdivisions and mobile home parks on Reservoir Road.
- Newly city-annexed area  
There is no water infrastructure in place.

## Emergency Preparedness

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

There are no formal mutual aid agreements outside of the county but it is recommended that one be established with Greene County at a minimum. Firefighters report that there are some parts of the county that you don't know when you have crossed the county or even state line (into Alabama). It is important to note that the City of Waynesboro and Wayne County do monitor each other's fire channels.

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. Currently there are two fire grading districts in Wayne County, Northwest Fire District and Southeast Fire District. Two more are being developed. Others are not recognized as grading districts because of the excessive distance to fire stations. There is still fire protection in these areas; insurance rates are just higher. Any station may be required to respond to any area in the county at any time.

### Mississippi State Rating Bureau Public Protection Classification List

District	Class
Northwest	8
Southeast	8
All Other Areas	10

In general, the departments are well-equipped and able to respond to the needs of the area. 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.

Wayne County is generally rural and many residents commute to work in nearby cities in Mississippi and Alabama. 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. Currently, there are approximately 250 volunteer firefighters countywide.

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/](http://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. As mentioned earlier, the county is need of brush trucks. Ideally, the county would like to have a GPS unit in each pumper truck. More equipment needs are expected to arise as the existing equipment ages.

### **Wayne County Volunteer Fire Department Equipment List**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Type of Equipment</b>
Station 11 Buckatunna	Pumper, Tanker
Station 13 Crossroads	Pumper, Tanker
Station 14 Battles	Pumper
Station 21 Progress	Pumper, Tanker
Station 22 Denham	Pumper, Tanker
Station 32 Coyt	Pumper, Tanker
Station 33 Hiwannee	Pumper, Tanker
Station 34 Yellow Creek	Pumper, Tanker
Station 41 Beat Four	Pumper, Tanker
Station 42 Eucutta	Pumper, Tanker
Station 43 Pleasant Grove	Pumper, Tanker, Rescue Truck
Station 44 Maynor Creek	Pumper, Tanker
Station 51 Clara	Pumper, Tanker, Rescue Truck
Station 52 Mulberry-Corinth	Pumper, Tanker



Station 53 Strengthford	Pumper, Tanker
Station 61 Central	Pumper, Rescue Truck

Water sources are a concern in Wayne County. The city recently annexed a portion of the county that is largely rural. There is no water or hydrants in the area. Additionally, water resources on private property should be identified throughout the county, especially in the Northeast and Southwest portions.

## **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](http://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. Encourage new, large residential developments to become Firewise USA Communities
3. Home assessments to help residents identify ways to create defensible space
4. 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
5. Encourage the Board of Supervisors to adopt subdivision regulations and to replace all plastic culverts in subdivisions.
6. Replace low-weight bridges in the county that limit access for firefighters.

#### 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: Wayne 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 Wayne 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: Wayne 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: Wayne 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: Wayne 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: Wayne 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: Wayne 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 water resources on private property to be accessed to fill up pumpers throughout the county.

Responsibility: Wayne 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: Wayne 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. Secure funding to build the proper water infrastructure at the new industrial property. (more than a 2" line)

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency, Board of Supervisors, Wayne County Economic Development, Southern Mississippi Planning and Development District, EDA, and USDA Rural Development.

Funding: \$2,500,000 (estimated)

Timetable for Completion: Summer 2009

Expected Outcome: Appropriate water capacity to support fighting woodland fires and industrial fires. Better infrastructure will increase new tenant interest in locating at the park.

Assessment Timetable: Review progress in Summer 2009

10. Improve water/hydrant infrastructure in newly (6 years ago) annexed portion of the City of Waynesboro (city limits, but rural and not in WUI).

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency, City of Waynesboro

Funding: Unknown

Timetable for Completion: Summer 2010

Expected Outcome: Appropriate water capacity and infrastructure to support fighting fires.

Assessment Timetable: Review progress Summer 2010

11. Draft and execute a mutual aid agreement between Wayne County and its neighboring counties in Mississippi and the City of Waynesboro to include equipment use and manpower.

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency, Board of Supervisors



Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Winter 2008

Expected Outcome: Increased ability to fight fires.

Assessment Timetable: Review progress in January 2009

12. Purchase and install GPS units in all pumper and rescue trucks.

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

Funding: \$3,000

Timetable for Completion: Purchase 5 each year

Expected Outcome: Better response time for firefighters.

Assessment Timetable: Review progress annually

13. Develop a coordinated education program with Pat Harrison Waterway District that identifies a regular maintenance schedule for the Maynor Creek Water Park, as well as an outreach component to educate campers on fire safety. Also, when necessary, place signage throughout the park to indicate the following: *Burn Ban in Effect or No Camp Fires*.

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency, Board of Supervisors, Volunteer Fire Departments, Mississippi Forestry Commission, Pat Harrison Waterway District

Funding: Possibly PHWW and MFC for publication of brochures or other materials

Timetable for Completion: Spring 2009

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

Assessment Timetable: Winter 2010 as Park use declines and assessment can be made on decrease in fire incidents at the Park.

14. Encourage replacement of all wooden bridges in the county. They are a fire risk and also hinder access to some woods fires.

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency, Board of Supervisors

Funding: Unknown, possibly MS legislature or federal earmark

Timetable for Completion: Address immediately

Expected Outcome: Decrease fire risk and improve access

Assessment Timetable: Every summer after state legislative session

15. Develop Subdivision Regulations and/or Building Codes for presentation to County Board of Supervisors.

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency and Wayne County Volunteer Fire Departments

Funding: \$0

Timetable for Completion: Present in 2009

Expected Outcome: Will help with accessibility by increasing the width of roads and driveways and increasing the distance between structures.

Assessment Timetable: Review progress toward adoption annually

16. Place generators at all fire stations.

Responsibility: Wayne County Emergency Management Agency

Funding: MEMA – hazard mitigation grant program

Timetable for Completion: 3 per year

Expected Outcome: Ability to operate during major power outages

Assessment Timetable: Annually after funding awards are announced.

## Potential Funding Sources

1. Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program  
Website: [www.firegrantsupport.com](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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/](http://www.rkb.us/)  
Program Description: Website contains information on currently available products, standards, training and grants
7. Firegrantshelp.com Website  
Website: [www.firegrantshelp.com](http://www.firegrantshelp.com)  
Program Description: Website contains information on resources for Fire and EMS assistance

## References

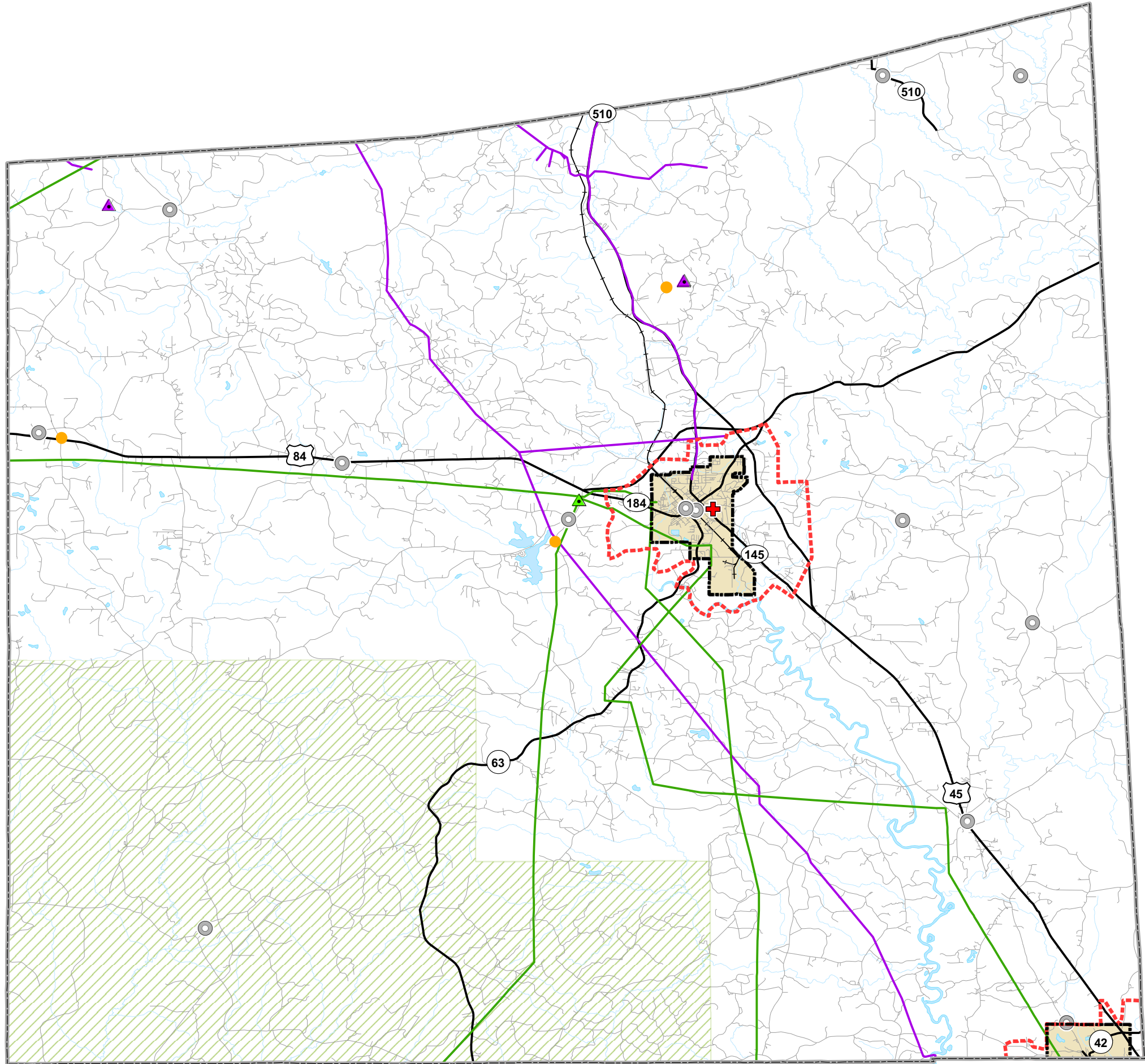
1. Wayne County Hazard Mitigation Plan (under review)
2. Wayne County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
3. Firewise  
Around Your Home brochure  
[www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)
4. USDA Forest Service  
Preparing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan  
March 2004

## **Project Contact Information**

1. Wayne County Emergency Management Agency  
1110 Spring Street  
Waynesboro, MS 39367  
Phone: (601) 735-2184  
Fax: (601) 735-6248  
[www.co.jackson.ms.us](http://www.co.jackson.ms.us)
  
2. Mississippi Forestry Commission  
477 South Gate Road  
Hattiesburg, MS 39401  
Phone: (601) 583-4240  
Fax: (601) 583-2500  
[www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://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](http://www.smpdd.com)

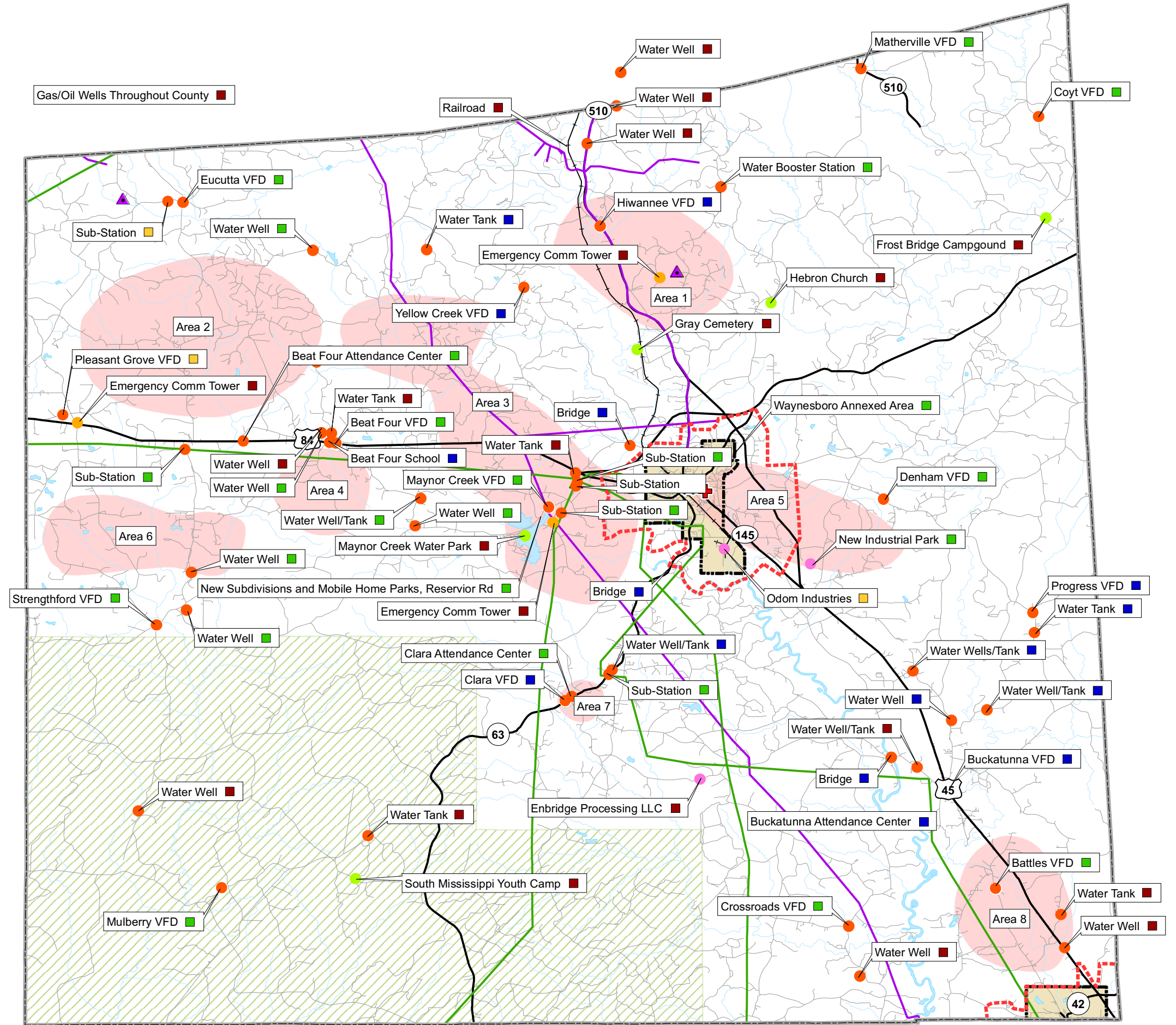
# Wayne County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan Base Map

- Emergency Comm Tower
- + Hospital
- Fire Station
- Law Enforcement
- ▲ Electric Substation
- ▲ Gas/Oil Facility
- Transmission Line
- Gas/Oil Pipeline
- Highway
- Road
- Railroad
- Named Stream
- Water Body
- National Forest
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Incorporated City

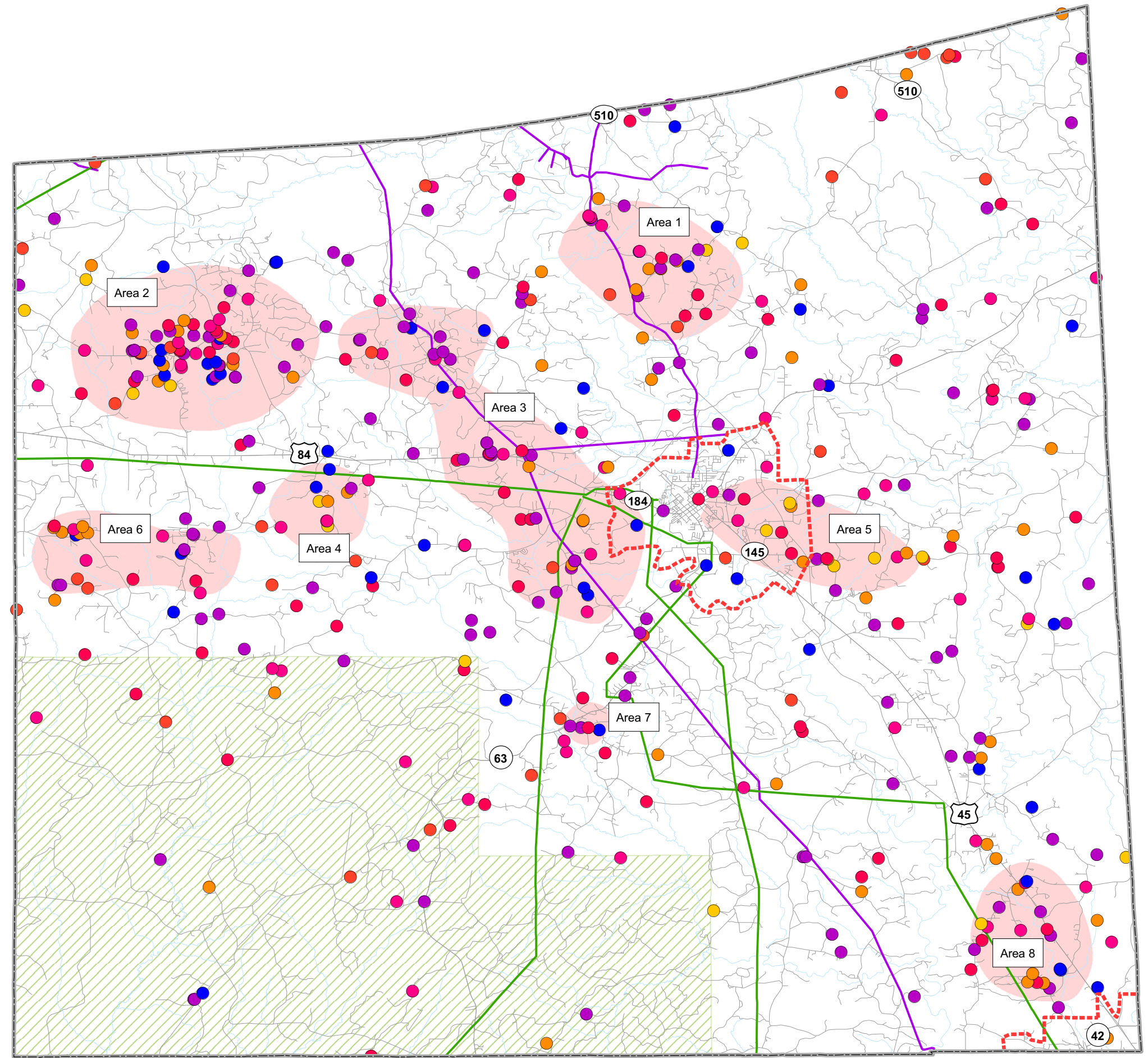
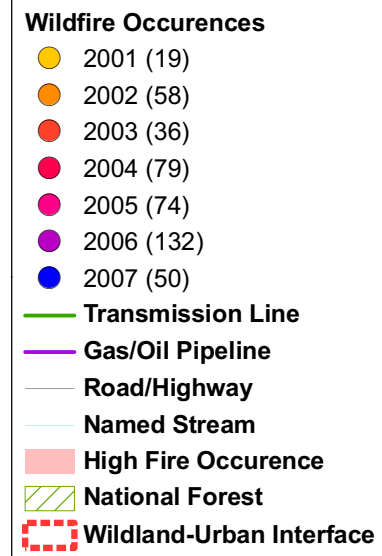


# Wayne County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan Risk Assessment Ratings

- At Risk Areas**
- Critical Infrastructure
  - Area of Community Importance
  - Emergency Comm Tower
  - Vulnerable Facility
  - Fire Station
  - ⊕ Hospital
  - ⚔ Law Enforcement
  - ⚡ Electric Substation
  - ⚡ Gas/Oil Facility
  - Transmission Line
  - Gas/Oil Pipeline
  - Highway
  - Road
  - Railroad
  - Named Stream
  - Water Body
  - High Fire Occurrence
  - National Forest
  - Wildland-Urban Interface
  - Incorporated City
- Risk Assessment Rating**
- Low
  - Medium
  - Medium-High
  - High



# Wayne County, Mississippi Wildfire Protection Plan High Occurrence Wildfire Areas

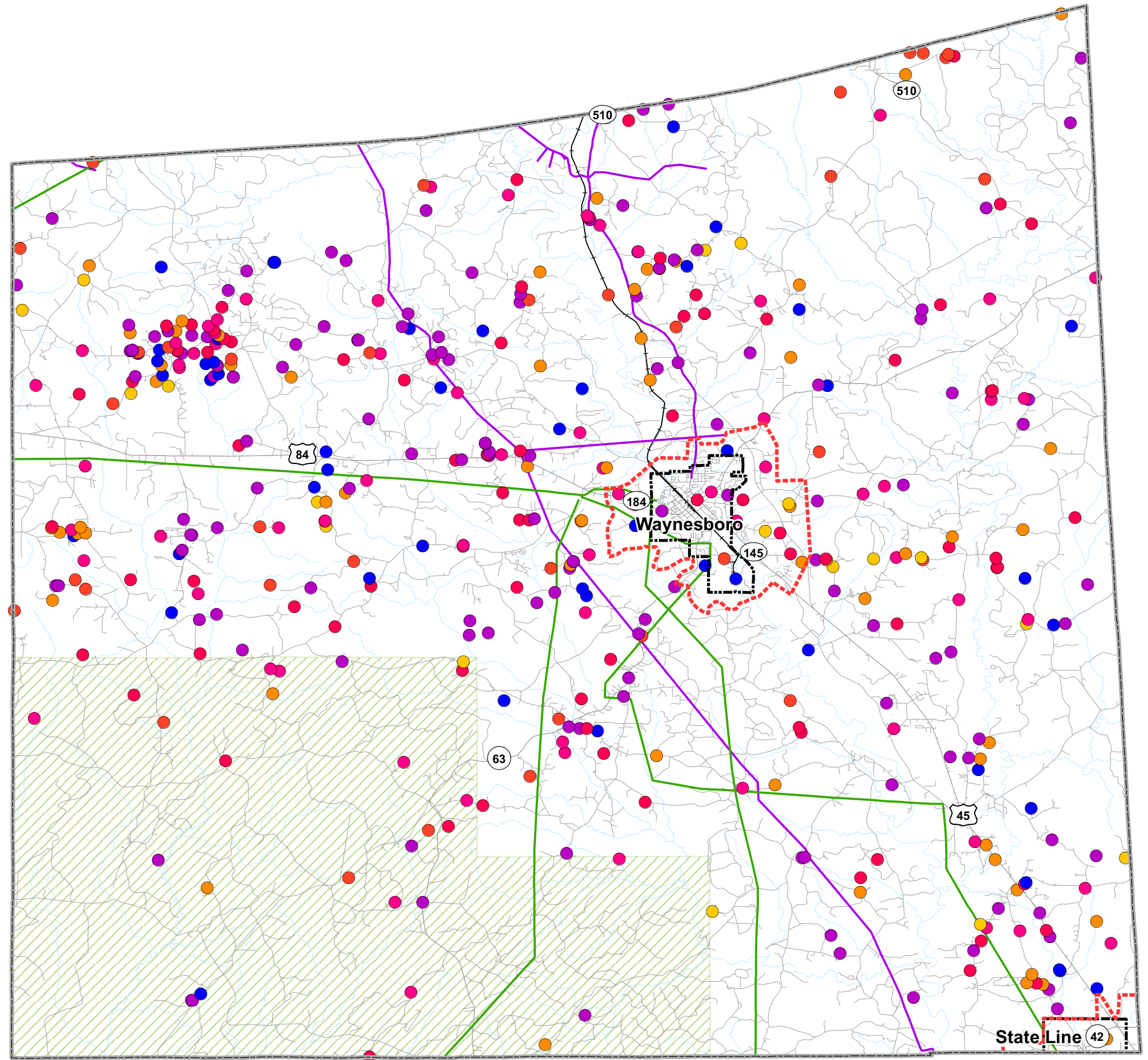
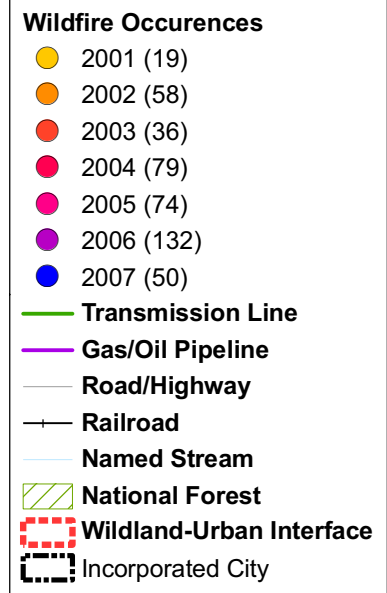




# Wayne County, Mississippi

## Wildfire Protection Plan

### Fire Data 2001 - 2007

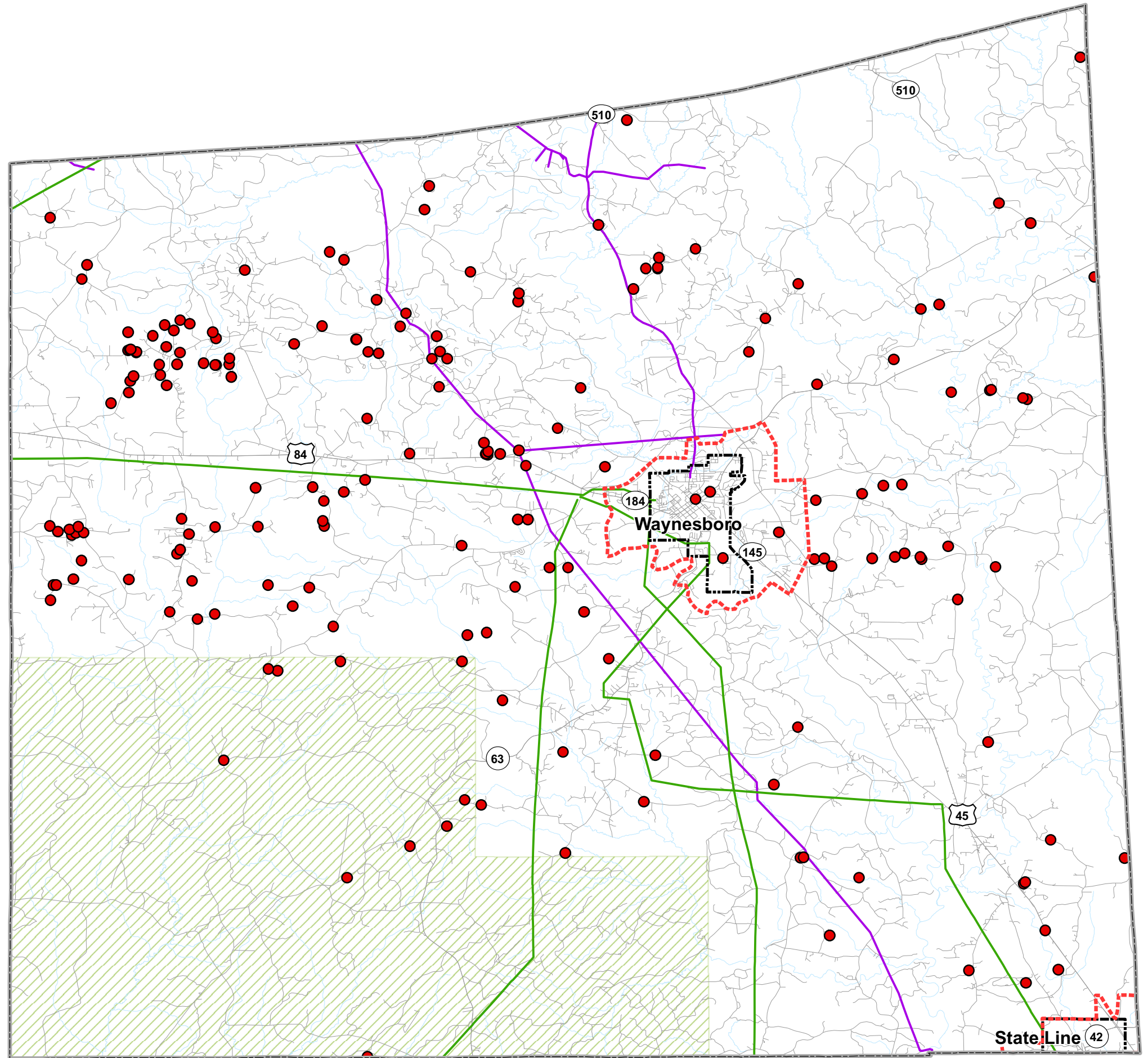


# Wayne County, Mississippi

## Wildfire Protection Plan

### Arson Fires 2001- 2007





- Arson Incident
- Transmission Line
- Gas/Oil Pipeline
- Road/Highway
- Named Stream
- National Forest
- Wildland-Urban Interface
- Incorporated City

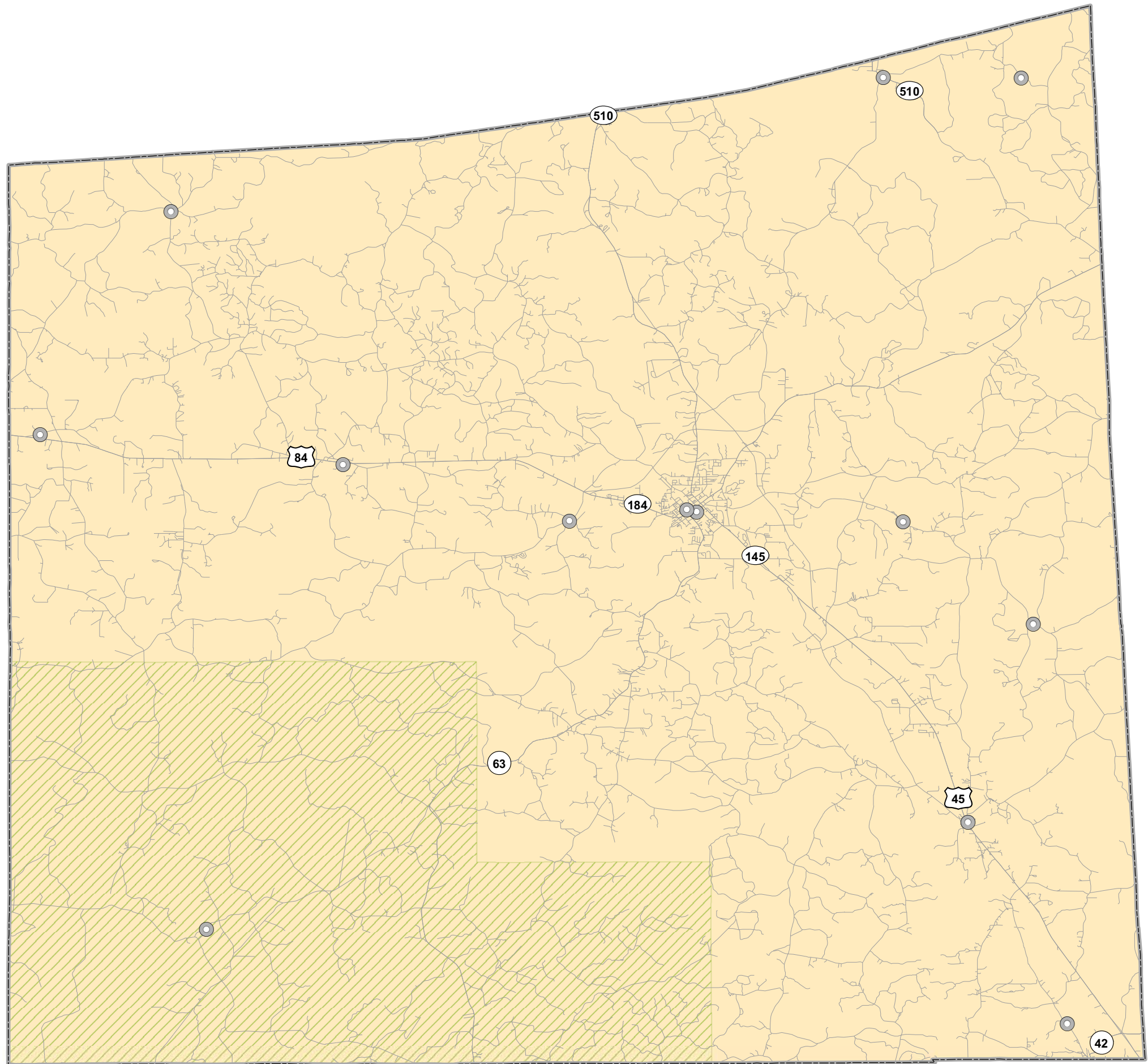


# Wayne County, Mississippi

## Wildfire Protection Plan

### Fire Response Area

-  Fire Response Area
-  Fire Station
-  Road/Highway
-  National Forest



Wayne County, Mississippi  
Wildfire Protection Plan  
Wildfires by Response Area

- Fire Response Area
- All Fires 2001-2007
- Fire Station
- Road/Highway
- National Forest

