

BURNING NEWS

2015 | Riverview & Stephenson Community Wildfire Protection Plans CWPP

WHEN IT COMES TO PROTECTING YOUR HOME...

The most important firefighter is

YOU

THIS HOME SURVIVED A WILDFIRE BY THE HOMEOWNER DOING SIMPLE THINGS AROUND THEIR PROPERTY IN THE HOME IGNITION ZONE.



As a homeowner, you are the only one that can make the changes around your home to ensure it can survive a wildfire with little or no assistance from firefighters. Research has shown that it is the characteristics of the home and outbuildings and their immediate surroundings, also known as the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ), that often determine which homes burn and which survive.

Most homes that burn during a wildfire are ignited by embers/firebrands landing on the roof, in rain gutters, on or under decks and porches, or in vents or other openings. Other homes burn from small surface fires such as dry grass that can allow a fire to run right up to touch the home's exterior. Preparing your property for wildfire, or being "Firewise," will start to reduce your likelihood of damage and loss.

A Firewise home has:

- 1. Fire resistant construction:** eaves/vents are enclosed with wire mesh, fire-resistant materials for roof, deck and siding
- 2. Lean, green and clean landscaping:** well-spaced vegetation within 30 feet of buildings, grass kept short
- 3. Regular maintenance:** fallen debris is removed from roof, gutters, window wells and underneath decks, evergreen tree branches pruned 6 feet up from ground
- 4. Safe distance to flammables:** firewood and any stacked lumber is kept 30 feet away from buildings

What is a CWPP?

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) takes fire-prone communities to the next step in wildfire preparedness. It establishes recommendations and priorities to protect citizens, homes, infrastructure and resources within that community from the destruction of catastrophic wildfire.

A CWPP is the collaboration between local government, local fire departments and the DNR, in partnership with federal agencies and community stakeholders like county forests, emergency management and homeowner associations. These people create the CWPP working group that develops a comprehensive plan to reduce wildfire risk based on the needs of the community. It addresses issues such as fire response, forest management, community preparedness and structure protection. The process involves a community risk assessment and the creation of an Action Plan.

Towns with Community Wildfire Protection Plans receive priority consideration for Forest Service grants to fund risk reduction projects listed in their Action Plan. Types of projects include the creation of brush collection sites, fire breaks and wildfire awareness signs. CWPPs should be "refreshed" or re-evaluated every five years to ensure they remain current to the issues of the ever-changing wildfire environment. Both the Town of Riverview in Oconto County and the Town of Stephenson in Marinette County have had CWPPs in place for over 5 years.

A Home Ignition Zone self-assessment for homeowners is available to download at dnr.wi.gov, search FR0474



Town of Riverview NEWS

CWPP Continues to Produce Results

In June 2008, Riverview adopted its Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that was the result of a collaboration of people from the Town of Riverview, local fire chiefs, and representatives from the Department of Natural Resources and United States Forest Service. A comprehensive risk assessment was completed that formed the basis for creating specific projects that would be carried out in the Town. The CWPP work group meets quarterly at the Riverview Town Hall and have expanded over time to include Oconto County Emergency Planning personnel and the adjacent towns of Doty and Townsend. Meetings are also open to other interested parties.

The Riverview CWPP work group has been very active in implementing the plan's mitigation strategies that have included:

- **Brush collection sites** behind the Riverview town hall, in Townsend and Crooked Lake



- **Curbside chipping days** and storm debris pickup
- **Fuels reduction** on National Forest lands including timber sales and pine plantation thinning
- **Creation and distribution** of wildfire prevention materials and new fire danger awareness signage throughout the community
- **Fire department training** and support

October 2014 marked the adoption of a "refreshed" CWPP that proves Riverview is committed to continuing efforts into 2018 to protect the community from a catastrophic wildfire. **Copies of the CWPP plan can be viewed and downloaded at townofriverview.com/links.**



Fire Departments Unite for a Common Goal

BY MIKE RZEPKA, TOWN OF RIVERVIEW SUPERVISOR AND VOLUNTEER FIRE FIGHTER

Rural fire departments in our area and all across Wisconsin are facing a dilemma - personnel. These departments are made up of volunteers and their firefighters don't get paid. Many of them have full-time jobs or are close to retiring and recruiting younger volunteers is becoming increasingly difficult. To tackle the issue of dwindling personnel, the Doty and Mountain fire chiefs met with the two fire departments within Riverview and Crooked Lake.

The decision was made to conduct mutual training to be able to utilize members from other departments on a fire scene. Each month, the fire departments meet at one

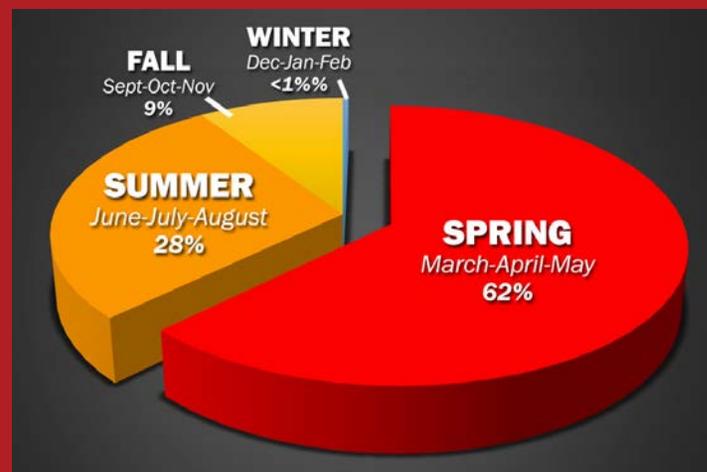
of the stations for training on ladder work, compatibility of hose connections between different engines and other equipment, water hose relay at long distances between engines in a series, and radio communications.

The training has gone on for a year and has promoted teamwork between the departments that provided much-needed mutual aid support in recent fires. It has also demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses of each department. This continued mutual training will build relationships within the fire departments for a common goal and that goal is to provide the best possible fire protection in our area.

Fast Fact: When do wildfires occur?

Though wildfires can occur anytime the ground is not snow-covered, in Wisconsin, most wildfires start in April and May. That's when fallen branches, leaves and other materials dry out and become highly flammable.

And it's also when people start their spring yard work contributing to the #1 cause of wildfires - debris burning.



Fire occurrences in Oconto and Marinette counties from 2005 - 2014

Prescribed Burning Means Reduced Wildfire Risk for Riverview

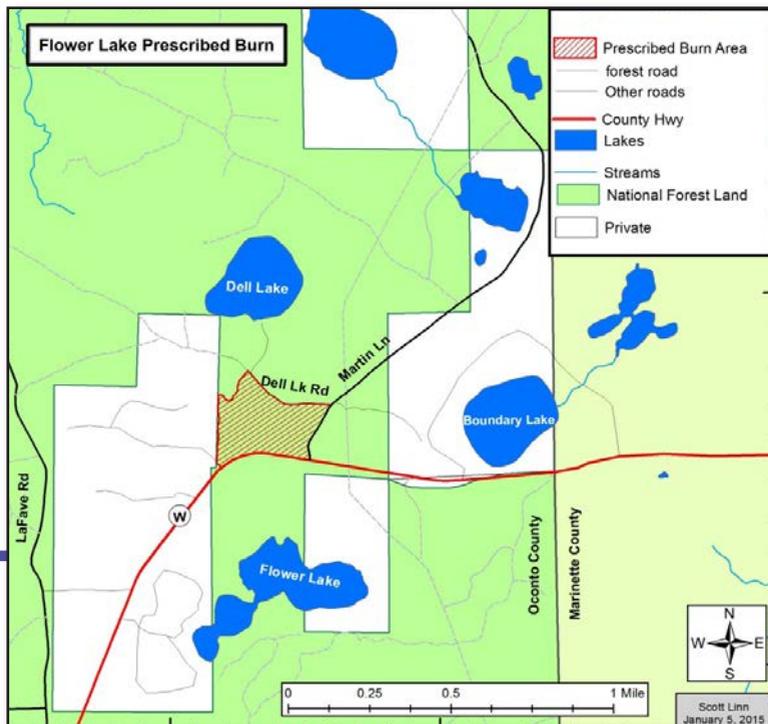
Prescribed burning reduces the potential for wildfires in an area by burning that area in a controlled environment on set terms. This spring, the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest plans to conduct a prescribed burn in order to reduce the potential for wildfire within the Town of Riverview.

This 37-acre prescribed burn is planned to take place north of County Highway W, south of Dell Lake Rd. and west of Martin Land (see map below). As fuel and weather conditions change quickly, it's not possible to say exactly when the burn will take place although it's likely to happen sometime between April and June 2015.

Anytime fire is used as a management tool there are justifiable concerns. Special care is taken to address those issues with a carefully designed plan. This plan includes the objectives of the burn, amount of brush and leaf litter, weather, and other factors such as wind direction, adjacent properties, and equipment and personnel necessary to manage the burn.

If you have any questions or concerns about this prescribed burn, please call the Lakewood/Laona Ranger District. Scott Linn, Assistant Fire Management Officer, is most knowledgeable about the burn plan and can answer your questions.

Finally, if you have health concerns (such as respiratory problems) and would like us to notify you up to two days prior to the burn, please let us know as soon as possible at Slinn@fs.fed.us or 715-674-4481.



This publication is a product of the Riverview and Stephenson CWPP Working Groups:

- Town of Riverview
- Town of Riverview Fire Department
- Town of Stephenson
- Town of Stephenson Fire Department
- T.I.E. Area Lakes Association
- Marinette County Forestry
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- United States Forest Service



Burning Alternatives

Because outdoor burning is the #1 cause of wildfires, people are encouraged to first consider alternatives through brush collection, composting and recycling sites.

Oconto County

RECYCLING & BRUSH COLLECTION TOWNSEND

16230 Village View Rd.
Monday, Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 9am-3pm

RECYCLING ONLY

CROOKED LAKE SITE on County W at LaFave Rd
TAR DAM SITE at corner of Tar Dam Rd. and Old 32

Memorial Day - Labor Day:
Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 1pm-5pm

Labor Day - Memorial Day:
Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday 1pm-4pm

BRUSH ONLY

One block west of State Highway 32 on
Island Lake Rd. – follow signs past salt shed
May 1 – November 15: Saturday 11am-3pm

Accepted items: mulch and brush under 6"
No stumps allowed

CROOKED LAKE BRUSH SITE

Brush may be accepted at the
Crooked Lake Recycle Center only on the
2nd Saturday of the month, May - November

Marinette County

RECYCLING & BRUSH COLLECTION

TWIN BRIDGE SITE, COUNTY X
(next to Stephenson Town Hall)
Tuesday, Saturday 9am-4pm;
Sunday 9am-1pm

RECYCLING ONLY

CRIVITZ SITE
August Street
Wednesday, Saturday 9am-4pm

BRUSH ONLY

GENE STREET LOCATION
Wednesday, Saturday 9am-4pm
(when the ground is not
snow-covered)

Renewed CWPP Commitment

In anticipation of the Town of Stephenson's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) five-year mark, surveys were sent to 2,000 property owners last fall. Over 65% of the surveys were returned, the results of which will help determine wildfire education, planning, and vegetation management activities that will be conducted in the town over the next five years. The findings along with a project summary were presented to the town board in November and representatives enthusiastically supported a continued involvement in the CWPP.

The CWPP working group will begin the process to update the plan this spring by reviewing the plan's goals and objectives and deciding which wildfire education, vegetation management, and wildfire preparedness activities will be conducted over the next five years. The positive impact of the CWPP is evident by the community's increased awareness of wildfire as well as the number of projects that have been completed. Here is just a sampling:

- **85 miles of roadside firebreaks** next to state and county forest pine plantations
- **Curbside chipping days** in the Thunder-Eagle-Island lakes area
- **Fire prevention billboards**, newspaper ads and television coverage

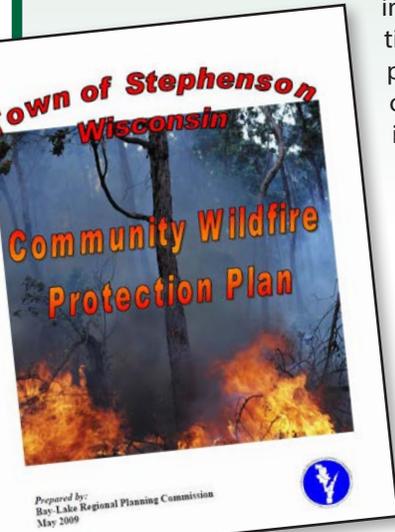
- **New Smokey fire danger signs**

- **Brochures, information packets** and canvas tote bags distributed at community events and meetings

A copy of the CWPP can be viewed and downloaded at stephensonwisc.com. Property owners in the Town of Stephenson are welcome to attend meetings and volunteer for hazard mitigation projects.



Convenient curb-side chipping makes properties safer from wildfire



Improving lake habitat using brush to line fish cribs

A Lake Association That Really Cleans Up

BY LARRY ENGBOS, THUNDER EAGLE ISLAND (T.I.E) LAKES ASSOCIATION

In an effort to make the T.I.E. Lake Association properties more Firewise, we initiated our first brush chipping project 5 years ago. We designated a local site for collecting and chipping our members' brush. This was offered during the summer on several Saturdays and unfortunately we found that this was not a good time of year. We determined that most people do yard work, trim trees and clear brush from around their home in the fall, so we began curb-side brush chipping in early November. We asked that brush be piled close to the road with the ends facing outward, not be piled higher than 4 ft., or that brush exceed 4" in diameter or 10 ft. in length.

The number of participants and the volume of chipped brush

have continued to grow each year since we began curb-side chipping 3 years ago. We found chipping to be more Firewise, eliminating a significant amount of brush that would have either remained scattered around homes or been burned by landowners, increasing the risk of wildfire in our area.

Being a lake association, we are in the process of building fish cribs to improve habitat in our lakes and have put to use some of the green hardwood brush we collected to fill the cribs.

If you are a member of a lake or homeowner association and are interested in coordinating a brush chipping day in your neighborhood, contact Diane Anderson to find out about cost share opportunities: diane.anderson@wisconsin.gov or call 1-715-356-5211 ext. 237.



Free Walk in the Woods

We all have our reasons for owning land. Maybe it's your place to hunt deer, turkeys or grouse. Perhaps it's your getaway to hike and enjoy the scenery - or just relax. Whatever your reason, if you have 10 acres or more, your local forester can help you get more out of your woods.

Foresters have the training, experience and knowledge to help you achieve your woodland goals and vision, and it all starts with a free walk in your woods with your local forester.

The topics discussed and the advice given during woodland visits are tailored to

your interests and needs. You are under no obligation to follow through on any of the recommendations. Common subjects include improving wildlife habitat, tree and plant identification, woodland health, recreation, tree planting, timber harvesting and firewood cutting. There are also forest tax incentives and cost-share programs that may be available to assist you. It all hinges on what you want.

To schedule an appointment in Riverview and adjacent towns, please contact Richard Lietz at 715-276-1582 or richard.lietz@wisconsin.gov; Town of Stephenson and neighboring communities can contact Joe Schmaedick at 715-856-9157 or joseph.schmaedick@wisconsin.gov.

Help shape the Burning News. We welcome your comments, ideas and suggestions for future issues of the Burning News. Please email them to diane.anderson@wisconsin.gov or mail to Diane Anderson, Division of Forestry, 8831 Hatchery Road, Woodruff, WI 54568.

Snowfalls Fire

BY SCOTT LINN, USFS ASSISTANT FIRE MANAGEMENT OFFICER, LAKEWOOD/LAONA

For most people, holiday weekends are an extra chance to get yard work done or get outside and enjoy the great outdoors. This isn't the case for everyone. For the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest (CNNF) fire-fighting personnel it means a heightened awareness especially when conditions are ripe for wildfires.

Last year it was a wet spring leading up to Memorial Day weekend with only a few wildfires. However, the holiday weekend was dry and several small fires were extinguished in the Town of Riverview. Around noon on Monday, May 27, 2014, the WDNR fire patrol airplane reported seeing a medium white smoke plume near Riverview and requested ground resources to help locate the fire. The WDNR Lakewood Ranger responded to Tar Dam Road and Sullivan Springs Road. Upon arrival, the ranger realized the fire was larger than he could handle and requested assistance from three area volunteer fire departments, the Forest Service, as well as other area WDNR equipment and personnel.

In total, it took three bulldozers, one airplane, 10 fire engines, and more than 40 people four days to fully extinguish the 100+ acre Snowfalls Fire. Both fire managers from the WDNR and CNNF say that the town of Riverview was lucky because no structures were lost or even threatened despite the large fire. With the population increasing as more and more people build in the woods, the next time a fire like this happens, homes may be lost despite the best efforts of firefighters.



Aerial view of the Snowfalls Fire on May 27, 2014



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Outdoor Burning Guidelines

- 1 Burning permits are required when burning on the ground and in barrels when the ground is not completely snow-covered. This applies to areas outside incorporated cities and villages. For burning restrictions within city and village limits, contact local officials.
- 2 Burning permits can be obtained online at dnr.wi.gov (keyword "fire"), by calling 1-888-WIS-BURN (947-2876), at DNR offices or from Emergency Fire Wardens.
- 3 A special permit is needed from a DNR office if your brush pile exceeds 6'x6'x6' and for broadcast burns greater than 1-acre in size.
- 4 Check daily before burning. Verify the restrictions and fire danger after 11 a.m. on the day that you want to burn online at dnr.wi.gov (keyword "fire") or by calling 1-888-WIS-BURN (947-2876).
- 5 Burning is restricted to brush, leaves, pine needles, grass, clean unfinished woods and confidential papers. These restrictions apply all year long.
- 6 Your fire must be attended at all times until it is completely extinguished. If your fire escapes, you can be held responsible for all suppression costs and damages.
- 7 Campfires for warming or cooking purposes do not require a burning permit and are allowed anytime except during Emergency Burning Restrictions.

