



# East Bay Hills Wildfire Prevention & Coordination

*A grassroots advocacy effort to create a formalized agreement to reduce wildfire threat throughout the East Bay*

Photo credit: Julia Sumangil Photography

# Guiding Principles for a Regional Approach to Wildfire Prevention

## Increasing Threats

In the face of increasing threats from wildfire, it is time for a new, more effective, regional approach to keep residents safe.

## Regional Issue

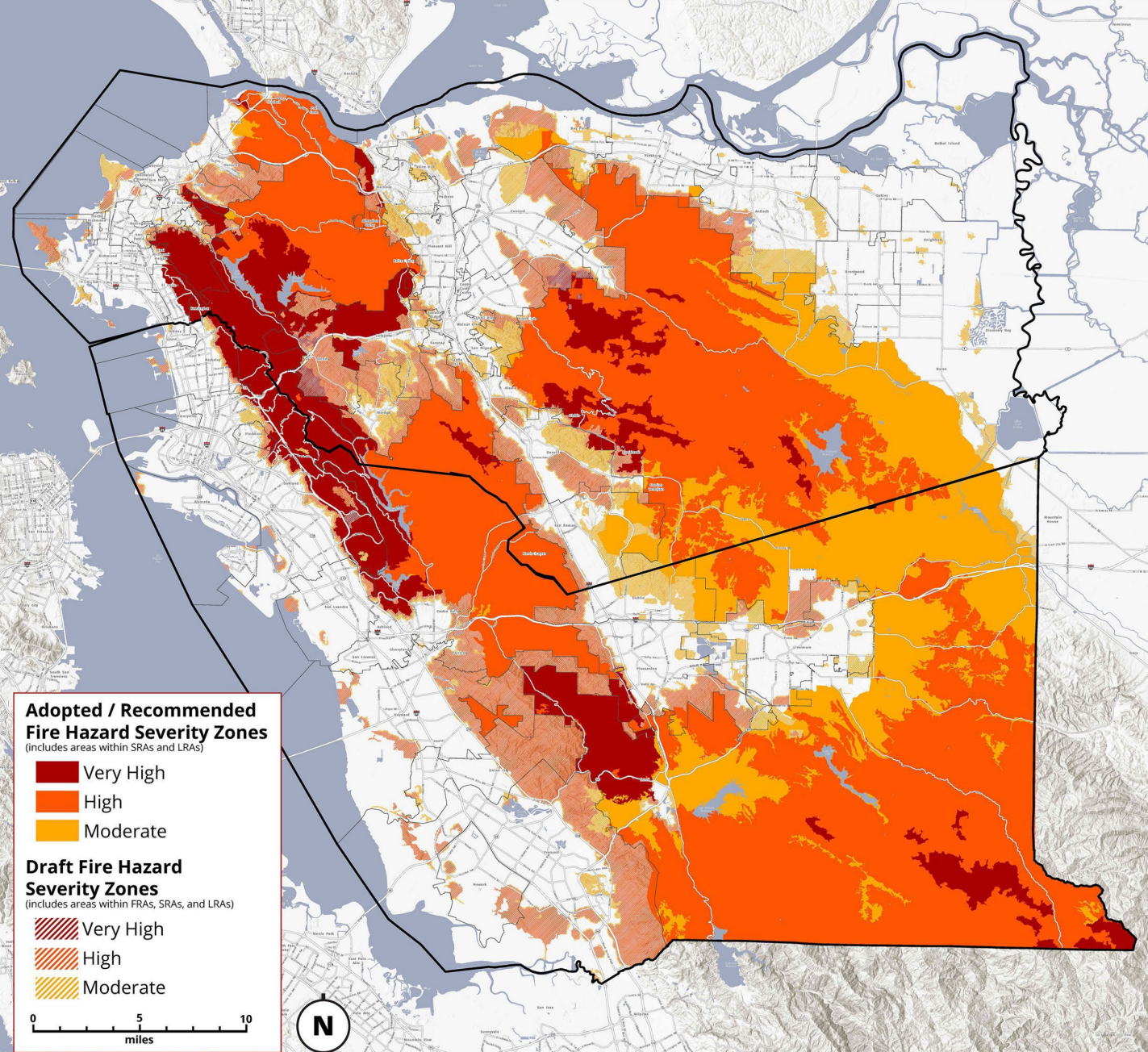
Wildfires do not respect political boundaries so fire prevention and vegetation management should be regional efforts.

## Difficult to Coordinate

Coordinating among the many jurisdictions is a challenge without a specialized mechanism

### CONTRA COSTA AND ALAMEDA COUNTIES Composite Fire Hazard Severity Zones\*

\*The fire hazard severity zones shown here are a COMPOSITE of three CAL FIRE datasets:  
1) **ADOPTED** (Nov 2007) State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) with Very High, High, and Moderate fire hazard severity designations.  
2) **RECOMMENDED** (Sep 2008, Jan 2009) Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs) with Very High fire hazard severity designation.  
3) **DRAFT** (Sep 2007) fire hazard severity zones in Federal (FRA), State (SRA), or Local (LRA) Responsibility Areas.



# Opportunities for Wildfire Prevention Coordination

- » **Established coordination exists amongst fire officials**
- » **East Bay WUI areas with highly local needs and requirements (non-native species, high density)**
- » **No dedicated staff for regional wildfire prevention coordination**
- » **No interjurisdictional framework for policy making**
- » **Uneven enforcement of vegetation management regulations and state fire code**
- » **Regional coordination increasingly prioritized in State and Federal programs**

# Existing Wildfire Prevention Coordination Efforts

- » **Chiefs' Associations (Alameda & Contra Costa Counties)**
- » **Hills Emergency Forum (HEF)**
- » **East Bay Regional Communication System Authority (EBRCSA)**
- » **Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP)**
- » **Regional Priority Plan (RPP)**
- » **EBRPD Wildfire Risk and Fine Scale Vegetation Mapping**

# Our Work to Date

- » **2019-2021:** Oakland Firesafe Council (OFSC) members began fundraising and speaking with local jurisdictions about wildfire prevention coordination; engaged Placeworks Consulting
- » **Dec 2021-Jun 2022:** OFSC facilitated five meetings amongst 25+ local agency and elected officials to explore collaboration options--from existing mechanisms to a JPA
- » **Summer 2022:** Stakeholders agreed to work towards an MOU structure and delegated drafting to subset of stakeholders (working group)
- » **Dec 2022:** Hanson-Bridgett law firm presents draft MOU to working group
- » **Spring 2023:** MOU finalized with input from working group
- » **June 2023:** Stakeholders meet, agree to present MOU to jurisdictions

# Working Group Members

## **Alameda County**

Office of Supervisor **Keith Carson**, Fire Chief **William McDonald**

## **Contra Costa County**

Office of Supervisor **John Gioia**, Fire Chief **Lewis Broschard**

## **City of Berkeley**

Councilmember **Susan Wengraf**, Assistant Fire Chief **Dan Green**

## **City of Oakland**

Deputy City Administrator **Joe DeVries**,

Deputy Fire Chief **Damon Covington**/Fire Chief **Reginald Freeman**

## **City of Pinole**

Mayor Pro Tem **Maureen Toms**

## **City of Richmond**

Councilmember **Gayle McLaughlin**, Fire Chief **Angel Montoya**

## **Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District**

Fire Chief **Dave Winnacker**

# Funding Partners Supporting MOU Development\*

- » Bay Area Air Quality Management District
- » Donner Family Fund
- » California Coastal Conservancy grant via Bay Area Council
- » CSAA Insurance Group
- » PG&E
- » Numerous community members and neighborhood groups in the East Bay Hills
- » Alameda County
- » Contra Costa County
- » City of Berkeley
- » City of Oakland
- » City of Pinole
- » City of Richmond
- » Moraga-Orinda Fire Protection District

\* Through donations to 501(c)(3) sponsor Oakland Firesafe Council (OFSC)



# Memorandum of Understanding

*for coordination of wildfire prevention activities to protect the  
East Bay Hills in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties*

Photo credit: Julia Sumangil Photography



# MOU: A Simple Platform

- » **Explanation of wildfire risks in East Bay Hills**
- » **Description of wildfire prevention activities performed by Participating Agencies and current collaboration efforts within counties**
- » **Desire to improve coordination, enhance efficacy & efficiency**
- » **Goal of increasing each Participating Agency's level of service to residents and property owners**
- » **No alteration of jurisdictional boundaries, cooperative efforts, or individual jurisdiction authority**

# Shared Intent / Potential Activities

**Once formed, Participating Agencies will jointly decide on activities. The following have been discussed:**

- » **Collaboration on strategies and policies to minimize wildfire hazards in the East Bay Hills including vegetation management**
- » **Assist in adoption of consistent codes for fire prevention**
- » **Partner to apply for state, federal, and other grant funds**
- » **Plan for wildfire response including evacuations across jurisdictions**

# East Bay Hills Regional Wildfire Prevention Coordinating Group -- Structure



- » **Each Participating Agency appoints: Member and alternate from governing body (council, board)**
- » **Fire Officials to advise on strategies and policies**

# Principles and Duties

- » **Hold open and public meetings**
- » **Establish goals, procedures and programs**
- » **Designate a fiscal agent; develop plan for staff support**
- » **Institute a dues structure and/or apply for grants as needed**
- » **Adopt annual budget**

A photograph of a firefighting aircraft, likely a B-747, flying over a forested hillside. The aircraft is dropping a large volume of red fire retardant, which is visible as a bright red plume against the green and brown landscape. The sky is hazy and blue.

# NEXT STEPS

- » Presentations to potential Participating Agencies' governing bodies
- » Adjust MOU to incorporate feedback
- » Ratification/approval by City Councils, Boards of Supervisors, Fire District Boards
- » GOAL: Initial meeting in 2023

A firefighting aircraft is shown in flight, dropping a large volume of red fire retardant over a forested hillside. The scene is set against a backdrop of a wildfire, with thick smoke and fire visible in the background.

# Contact

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