

2015 Accomplishment Summary

National Community Wildfire Preparedness Day – May 2, 2105

On Saturday May 2, 2015, hundreds of residents in Southwest Colorado participated in over a dozen regional wildfire preparedness projects as part of National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day! Projects included door-to-door education, booths, Wildfire-Urban Interface (WUI) Checkpoints, fuel reduction, and address signage. FireWise of Southwest Colorado coordinated most of these activities in partnership with numerous Homeowner Associations, Pagosa Fire Department, Pagosa Lake Property Owners Association, and a private mitigation contractor, Fire Smart.

Ongoing Resident Education

FireWise continued to offer ongoing education efforts within more than 80 rural communities across southwest Colorado, including bi-monthly meetings in Montezuma and La Plata Counties and monthly meetings in Archuleta County. All meetings involve community partners as well as Neighborhood Ambassadors and include an educational component.

In Oct. 2015, we also once again offered a Mitigation 101 Workshop for residents, which was attended by 12 people. In this workshop, residents learn how to use a chipper, conduct small pile burns, and use other pieces of mitigation equipment like a brush hog, pole saw, and chainsaw. At this session they were also introduced to forest health issues and the basics of a home wildfire risk assessment.

Colorado Wildfire Conference and Backyards and Beyond Conference

FireWise Coordinators also participated in the Colorado Wildfire Conference in Snowmass, CO and the national Firewise Backyards and Beyond Conference in Myrtle Beach, SC.

FireWise Coordinators gave presentations at both conferences: Becca Samulski discussed “Moving Firewise Communities to Fire adapted Communities” and Pam Wilson was involved in a panel discussion on “Fire Adapted Colorado,” a new grassroots organization in Colorado dedicated to helping people learn to prepare for and live with wildfire.

In SC, Pam Wilson and Melody Walters partnered with Ed Keith of Project Wildfire (OR) on a “Best Practices for Growing and Maintaining a Fire Adapted Community Program.”