



**COUNTY OF
GRANDE PRAIRIE**

**WILDFIRE
MITIGATION
STRATEGY**

JUNE 2025

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Introduction

Wildfire continues to be a significant concern for the County of Grande Prairie, with evolving risks driven by population growth, increased development, and changing wildfire conditions. Recognizing the need to build upon the progress made over the past decade, the County has updated its Wildfire Mitigation Strategy to reflect new challenges, best practices, and lessons learned since the 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy¹ was developed.

Since 2015, the County has worked closely with Alberta Forestry and Parks (formerly Alberta Agriculture and Forestry), the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA), and local stakeholders to implement wildfire mitigation projects. These efforts have focused on high-risk areas, particularly in the Wapiti Sand Dunes region, through FireSmart fuel reduction, public education, and community engagement initiatives. While these projects have significantly improved wildfire resilience, the evolving landscape, and greater risk of wildfires necessitates a renewed and comprehensive approach.

The 2025 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy builds on the foundation established in 2015 and aligns with current FireSmart principles and provincial wildfire mitigation strategies. This update incorporates the latest wildfire risk assessments, advances in fire behaviour modeling, and new opportunities for collaboration with residents, businesses, and industry partners. The strategy continues to emphasize fuel management, community preparedness, and public education, while also identifying new priority areas and actionable recommendations to further reduce wildfire risk.

As with the 2015 strategy, implementation of the 2025 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy will rely on strong partnerships between the County, the province, and private landowners. All projects will be subject to funding availability and approvals from relevant authorities. Through this plan, the County remains committed to proactive wildfire mitigation, ensuring that those who live, work, and recreate in forested areas can do so safely for years to come.

Background

The County of Grande Prairie is characterized by a diverse landscape, with expansive prairie and farmland in the central and eastern regions and boreal forest to the north, west, and south. Within the County's boundaries, forested

¹ County of Grande Prairie. (2015). Wildfire Mitigation Strategy. County of Grande Prairie.

areas continue to play a critical role in the region's ecology, economy, and wildfire risk profile. The County's forests have been shaped by historical events such as settlement, homesteading, industrial development, and both natural and human-caused wildfires.

While large wildfires were common in the County's early history, fire suppression efforts since the mid-20th century have significantly reduced the frequency of large-scale burns. However, the accumulation of forest fuels, particularly in coniferous stands, combined with the effects of the Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) infestation, has led to an increased risk of high-intensity wildfires. These conditions are further exacerbated by rising temperatures, drier conditions, and more frequent extreme weather events linked to climate change.

Human activity in forested areas has also increased over the past decade. Expanded industrial development, recreational use, and residential growth near forested regions have contributed to a growing number of human-caused ignitions. Uncontrolled recreational fires, off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, and industrial operations all pose potential ignition sources that elevate wildfire risk.

While the deciduous forests in the northern and western portions of the County have a lower fire risk, the coniferous-dominated areas in the Wapiti Sand Dunes remain the highest priority for wildfire mitigation. This region, stretching from the Smoky River to Pipestone Creek, consists of mature pine forests with high fuel loads, making it particularly vulnerable to fast-moving wildfires. Recent FireSmart treatments have helped reduce risk, but continued maintenance and expansion of these efforts are essential.

The 2025 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy builds upon the previous plan by incorporating updated wildfire risk assessments, new FireSmart initiatives, and enhanced collaboration with stakeholders. While the Wapiti Sand Dunes remains the highest priority for fuel reduction, the strategy also emphasizes:

- Public education on wildfire prevention and home ignition risks.
- Identification and protection of critical values at risk throughout the County.
- Cooperation with municipalities, industry, and community groups to enhance wildfire resilience.

By taking a proactive and adaptive approach, the 2025 strategy ensures that wildfire mitigation efforts continue to protect residents, infrastructure, and natural resources while supporting the County's long-term sustainability and resiliency.

Planning Area

The County of Grande Prairie is located approximately 460 kilometers northwest of Edmonton in the Peace Country region of Alberta (Figure 1). It is bordered by the Wapiti River to the south, the Smoky River to the east, Saddle Hills to the north, and the British Columbia border to the west. The County covers a total area of 5,863 km² and includes several communities, such as the hamlets of Bezanson, Clairmont, Teepee Creek, and La Glace. The City of Grande Prairie and the towns of Beaverlodge, Sexsmith, and Wembley, are also part of the County, bringing the regional population to over 103,000 residents². Neighbouring municipalities include the M.D. of Greenview to the south and east, Saddle Hills County to the north, and Birch Hills County further northeast.

The County is located within the Great Plains Region of Canada, with approximately 40% of the land base classified as prime farmland, particularly in the central and eastern portions. The remaining lands—primarily along the southern, western, and northern borders—consist of farmland, grazing leases, and forested areas. Privately held land accounts for approximately 77% of the total land base, while 23% is public Crown land (Figure 2). The County itself owns a small portion of the total land base, including municipal reserves, parks, and gravel leases.

Although this strategy provides a comprehensive wildfire mitigation approach for the entire County, its primary focus is public Crown land, where wildfire risk is most significant. However, effective wildfire mitigation also requires coordination with private landowners, particularly in areas where private land is adjacent to or embedded within forested Crown land. In such cases, FireSmart initiatives may include fuel reduction treatments, community education, and FireSmart home assessments. Mitigation efforts on private land will be explored in collaboration with landowners and, if pursued, would be undertaken at their discretion and expense.

The 2025 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy recognizes that wildfire risk does not stop at jurisdictional boundaries. As such, the County will continue to work closely with neighbouring municipalities, Indigenous communities, industry, and provincial agencies to ensure a coordinated, landscape-level approach to wildfire risk reduction.

² Regional Dashboard, Grande Prairie County No. 1/City of Grande Prairie. 2025. <https://regionaldashboard.alberta.ca>

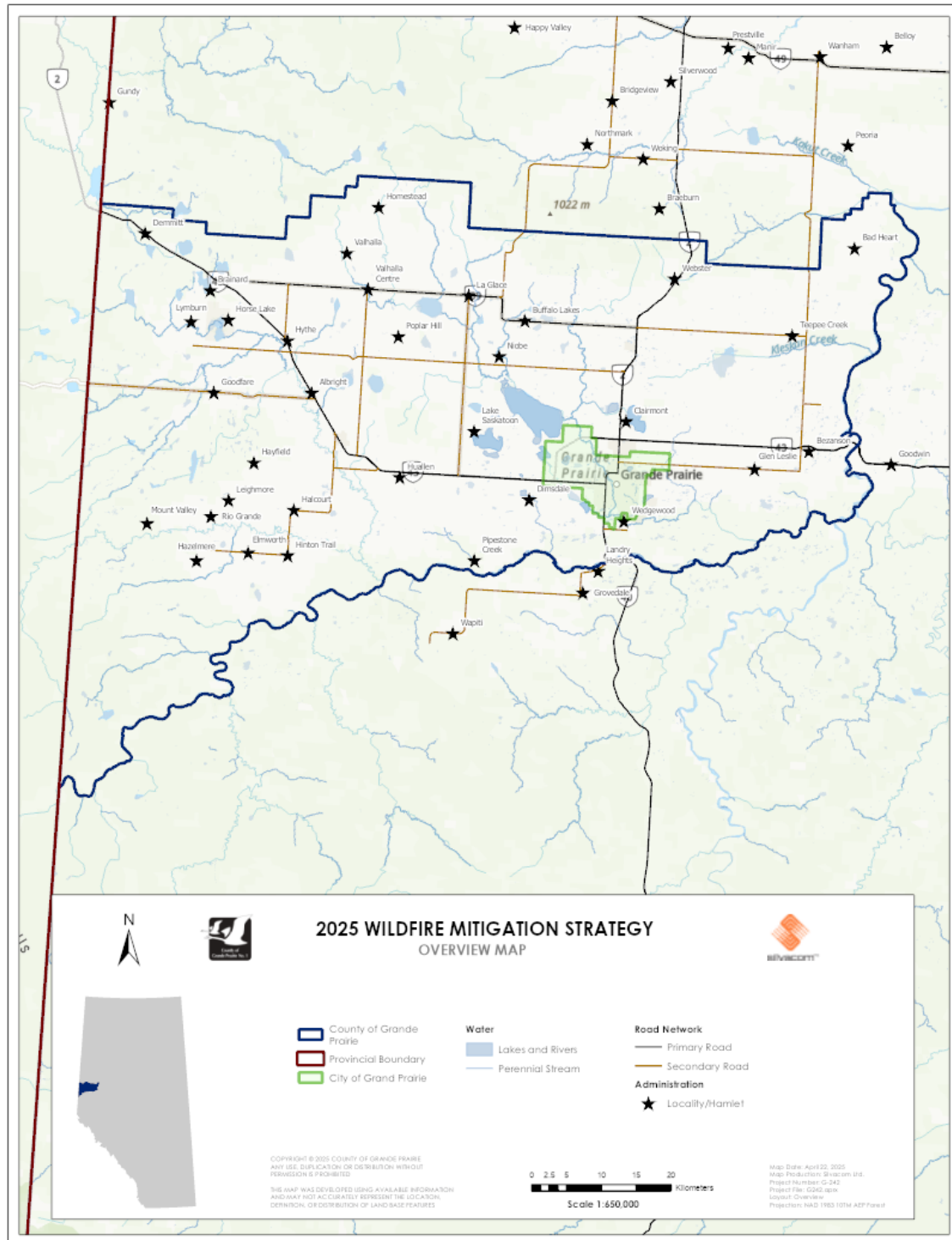


Figure 1 Overview Map, County of Grande Prairie

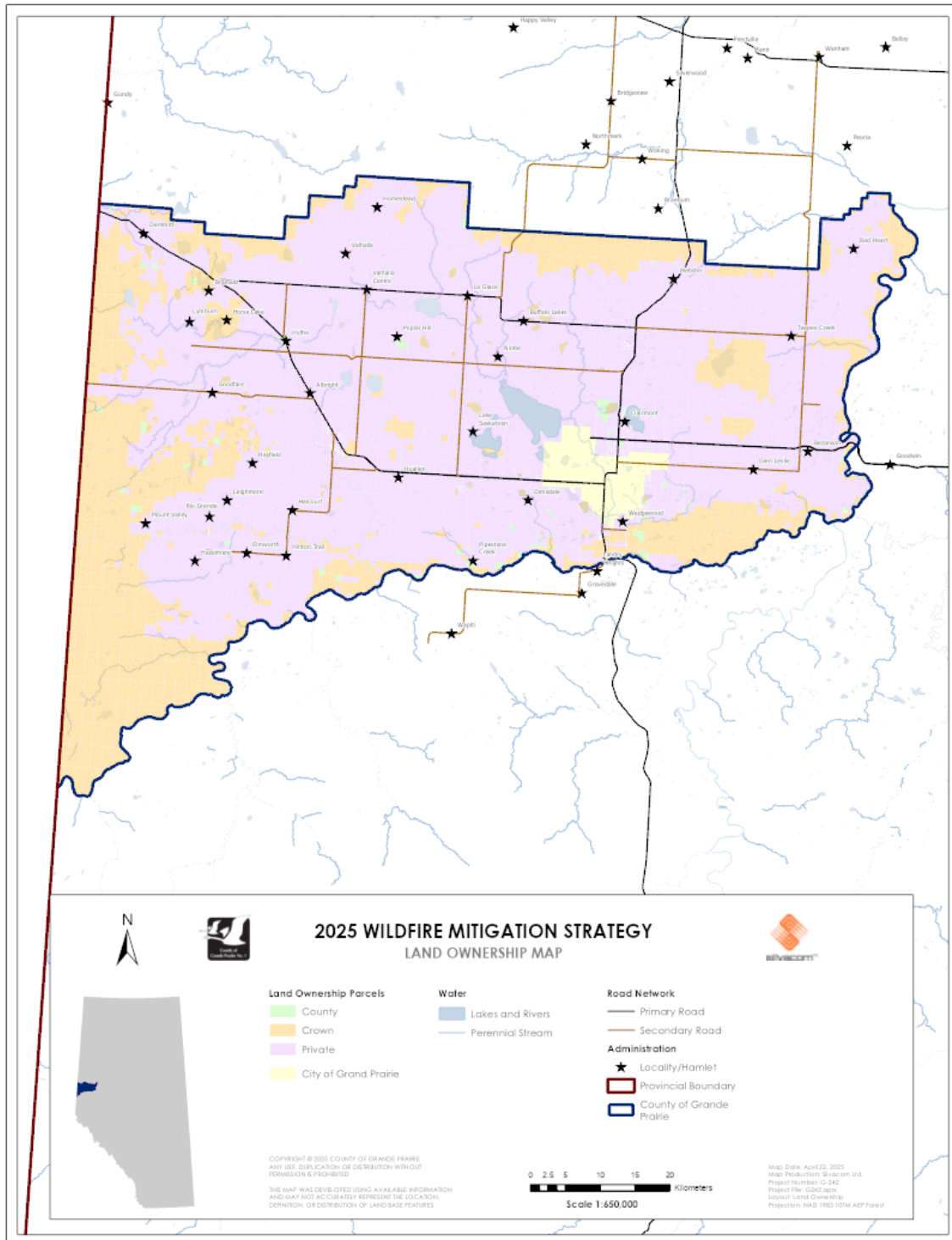


Figure 2 Land Ownership, County of Grande Prairie

Hazard & Risk Assessment

WILDFIRE HISTORY

Table 1 provides a summary of wildfires in the County of Grande Prairie, both within and outside the Forest Protection Area, that met the minimum size requirement for perimeter mapping by the Government of Alberta.

The 2023 fire season saw significant wildfire activity within the County of Grande Prairie. The Dunes West fire was a large fire event that threatened communities and required significant operations and evacuations. Operations on this wildfire included the construction of fireguards within the vicinity of the fire and in strategic locations south of the City of Grande Prairie.

Table 1 Historical Wildfires, County of Grande Prairie³

Period	Number of Wildfires	Median Fire Size (ha)	Average Fire Size (Ha)
1995-1999	3	0.9	9.5
2000-2004	1	2.2	2.2
2005-2009	1	11.6	11.6
2010-2014	2	1.7	1.7
2015-2019	3	2.5	12.4
2020-2024	12	19.5	231.5

³ Government of Alberta. (31 Jan 2025). Wildfire data. Open Government Portal. <https://open.alberta.ca/opendata/wildfire-data>

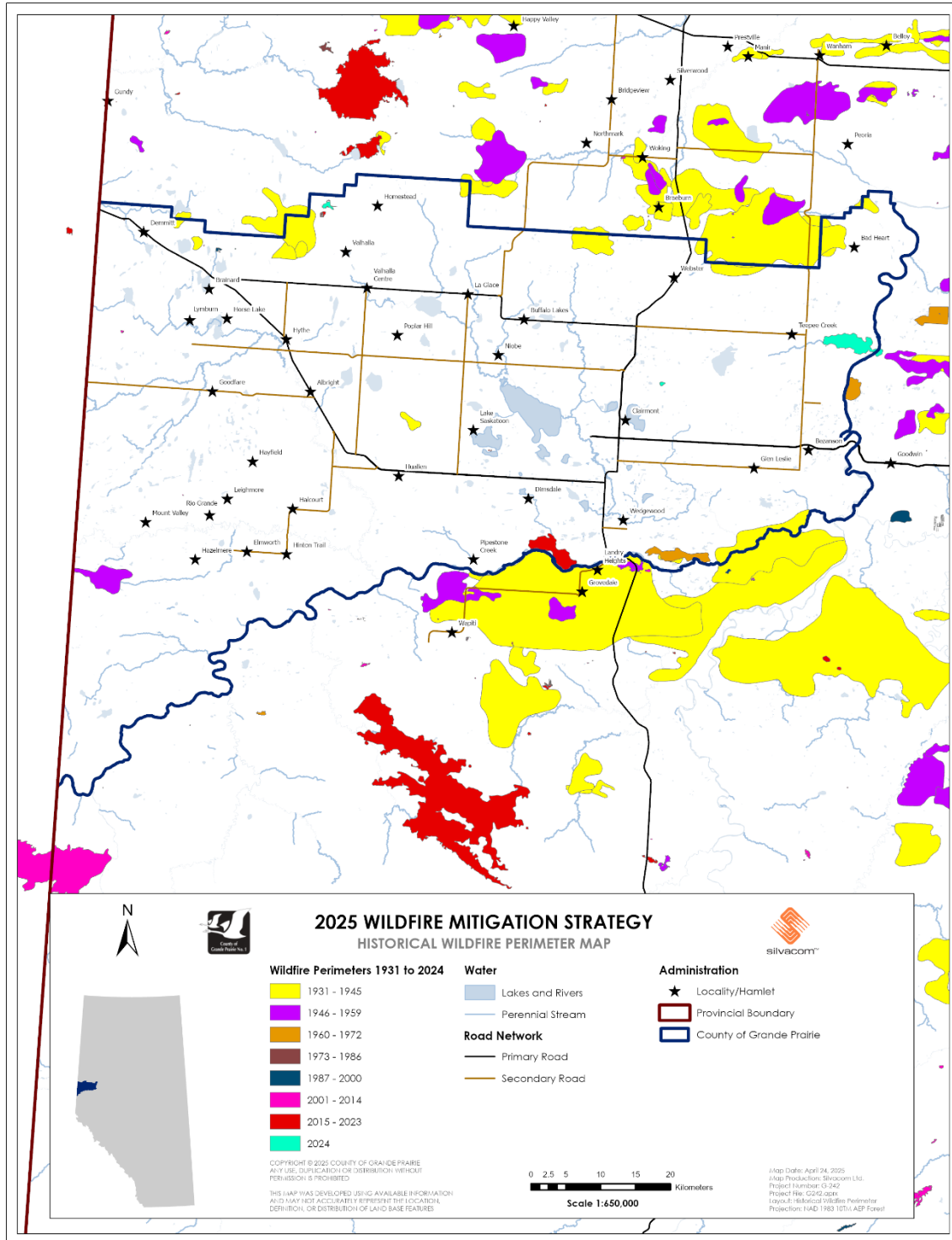


Figure 3 Historical Wildfire Perimeters, County of Grande Prairie

WILDFIRE THREAT ASSESSMENT

FIRE BEHAVIOUR POTENTIAL (FBP) FUEL TYPES

The County of Grande Prairie consists predominantly of grass (O1) fuel types. This fuel type is used to represent both natural grass fields, tame grass fields and some agricultural fields. The North, West and South boundary of the County have more forested fuel types including mature Lodgepole Pine (C3), Boreal Spruce (C2), Leafless (D1) and leaved (D2) deciduous fuels, and Mixedwood (M1 and M2) (Figure 4).

Grass fuels (O-1/O-2) are of greatest importance in the spring and fall. Cured grasses in the spring (prior to the emergence of green new growth) have dried out and carry wildfire quickly. Ignitions from holdover burn piles-burning of waste and agricultural practices-can ignite a wildfire, particularly when vegetation is dry and high winds are present. Management of grass fuels is an ongoing practice generally completed on private land.

Mature Pine (C3) - most of the mature pine stands have been treated since the 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy. These stands were fully or partially harvested depending on their location within the County to manage Mountain Pine Beetle outbreak effects. The management has changed the structure of these stands a thinned/ less dense pine stand. This is being represented in provincial fuel layers as a C5 fuel type. This fuel type reflects the reduced fuel load within the stand.

Boreal Spruce (C2) is the fuel type with the greatest risk of extreme wildfire activity. Within the County these stands exist in low lying areas and are pure stands of dense Black spruce. C2 fuels of concern are found in the Bear Creek Valley, the Wapiti Dunes, and Wapiti River Valley areas.

Deciduous (D1) fuels and Mixedwood fuels (M1) have become a concern within the County over the last 10 years. Extreme fire conditions early in the fire season and persistent dry conditions have increased the observed fire behaviour within these stands. Many of these stands are reaching maturity or have significant amounts of coarse woody debris, increasing the fuel load and fire intensity within the stand during the spring fire season.

The coniferous fuel types are of the highest concern, and those within the Wapiti Dunes area are the most prevalent.

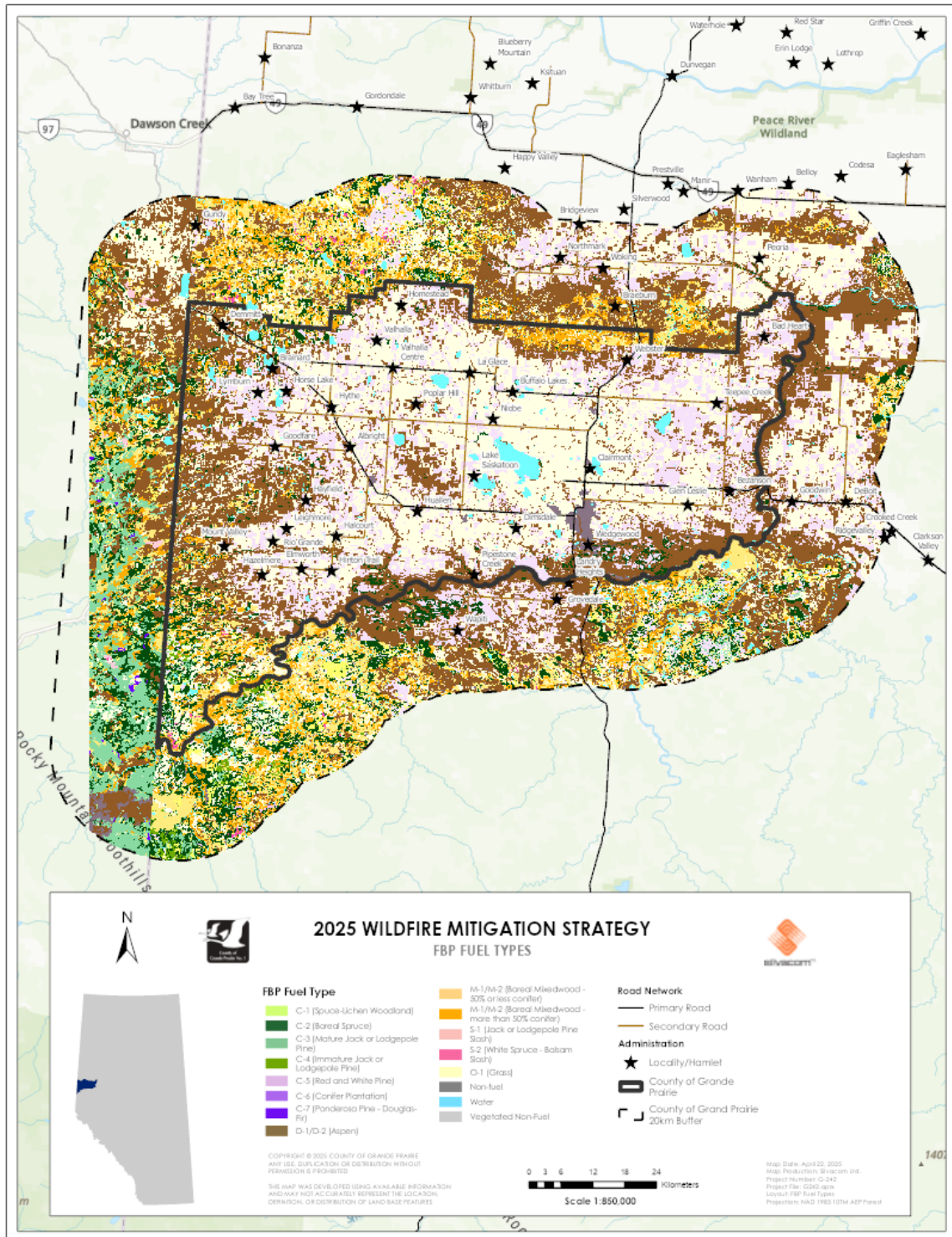


Figure 4 FBP Fuel Types, County of Grande Prairie

IGNITION EXPOSURE ASSESSMENT

The Wildfire Ignition Exposure Assessment⁴ is a planning tool used to identify areas where wildfires are most likely to spread. It takes a systematic approach to assess wildfire risk by analyzing surrounding vegetation (fuels) and potential ignition sources. This helps prioritize mitigation efforts in communities and landscapes that are vulnerable to wildfire.

The assessment evaluates risk through four key components:

1. Ignition Zones – Wildfires can ignite and spread through three primary mechanisms:
 - Radiant heat (0.1–30 meters): Direct heat transfer from flames.
 - Short-range embers (0.1–100 meters): Wind-driven burning debris that can ignite nearby fuels.
 - Long-range embers (100.1–500 meters): Embers carried over greater distances, potentially sparking new fires.
2. Hazard Fuel Analysis – Vegetation is categorized into two key groups:
 - Hazard fuels: Highly flammable vegetation such as coniferous trees, dense shrubs, and cured grasses.
 - Non-fuel areas: Natural and man-made firebreaks, including roads, water bodies, and rocky terrain.
3. Mapping Exposure Levels – The final step in the assessment process involves mapping wildfire ignition exposure across the landscape. This is done by overlaying fuel classifications with ignition zones to visualize areas most at risk of ignition. The resulting map provides a clear representation of how wildfire exposure varies across different regions. When combined with an analysis of values at risk, this helps determine which parts of a community or infrastructure are most vulnerable.

In Figure 5, wildfire ignition exposure closely follows the FBP Fuels Map (Figure 4). Since the assessment is fuel-based, areas with dense, flammable vegetation will show higher exposure, while open areas with minimal fuels, such as agricultural land or natural firebreaks, exhibit lower exposure. Exposure is lowest

⁴ Beverly et al. (2010). *Wildfire Exposure Assessment*. International Journal of Wildland Fire, 19: 299-313

in the central County, where agriculture and farmland dominate, and highest in the forested areas to the north and southwest.

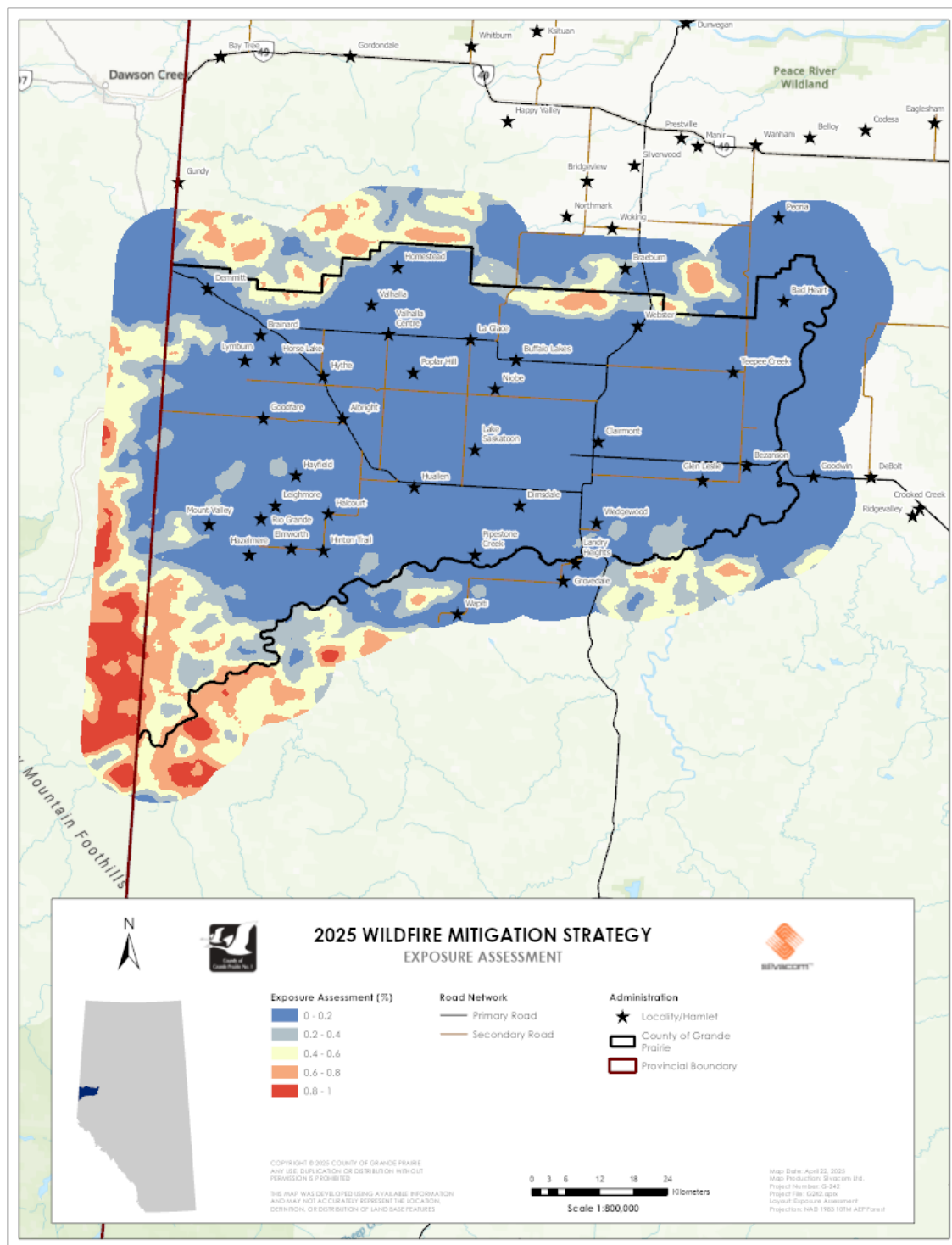


Figure 5 Ignition Exposure Assessment, County of Grande Prairie

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
1	Review Ignition Exposure layer every spring before Fire season	Q1, annually	Regional Fire Service, Community Services
2	Identify and map water sources (large dugouts, lakes, etc.) that could be available for fighting wildfires	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service

Forest Health Concerns

Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) surveys are conducted annually to assess the status of infestations within the Grande Prairie Forest Protection Area (Figure 6). Surveys from 2022 to 2024 have shown no detectable MPB presence, leading to the conclusion that the outbreak has subsided. Future projections do not anticipate a resurgence, and MPB is no longer considered a significant threat in the region.

The primary forest health concern in the County is aspen mortality, which peaked in 2016 and has been gradually declining⁵. The dieback is primarily attributed to a combination of defoliation and drought stress, affecting large areas north and east of Grande Prairie. Ongoing monitoring efforts aim to track recovery trends and assess the long-term impacts on forest regeneration and ecosystem health.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
3	Monitor Aspen mortality in areas with values at risk	Ongoing	Community Services, Forestry & Parks

⁵ Based on discussion with Forest Health Officer Devin Letourneau, Grande Prairie Forest Area.

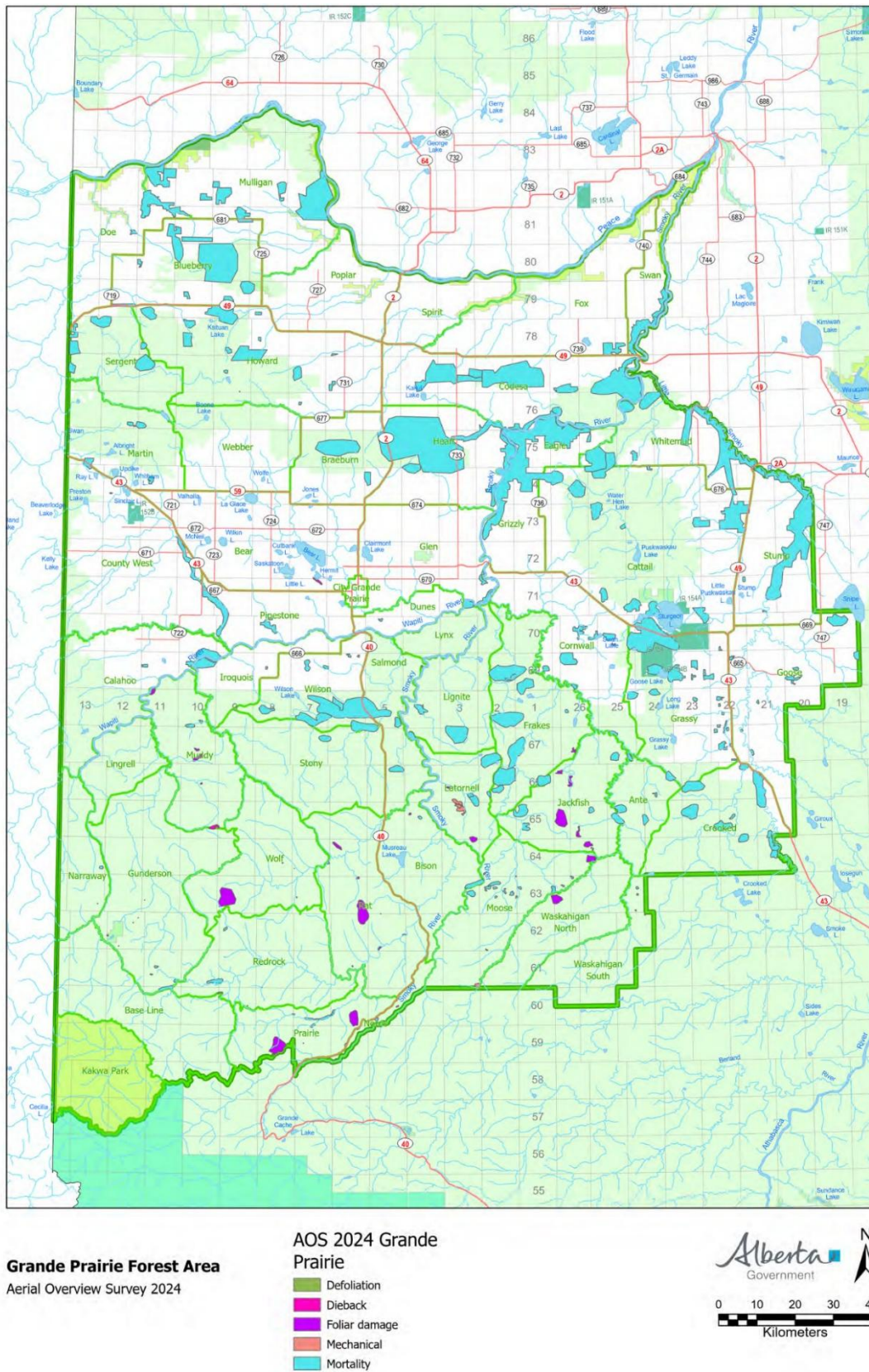


Figure 6 Aerial Overview Survey (AOS) within the County of Grande Prairie

Sub Area Evaluations

In 2015, six sub-areas were identified and analyzed for fire hazard and risk. They were evaluated based on timber type (age and species), topography, population (number and density of residents) and nearby industrial and infrastructure development. The assessment and risk rating were updated in 2025, and no major changes to fire risk were identified.

Webster. This sub-area is located along the northern border of the County at the foot of the Saddle Hills. The northern portion of this sub-area is Crown land and part of Weyerhaeuser's Forest Management Agreement Area (FMA), and private farm land make up the southern portion of this sub-area.

Weyerhaeuser participated in a Mountain Pine Beetle Mitigation Project in Saddle Hills where unmerchantable and infested pine stands are being harvested and piled and burned with the sites eventually being planted. Harvesting took place between 2016 and 2021.

Population in this sub-area is relatively low, and infrastructure consists mainly of roads and utilities serving the farms and residents in the area.

Fire risk for this area: Low

Homestead. This sub-area is located approximately 4km south of Saddle Hills County boundary, and is characterized by mature boreal spruce and pine to the north and private farm land to the south. A significant portion of the remaining mature pine stands in the area were harvested under Weyerhaeuser's MPB program between 2016-2021.

To the south is private farm land with a relatively low population density. Infrastructure primarily consists of roads and utilities serving the farms and residents in the area.

Fire risk for this area: Low

Udike Lake. This sub-area is mostly aspen with some boreal spruce and pine scattered throughout. The area is a mix of Crown land and private farms. The energy sector is a key feature on the landscape with many well sites, pipelines and compressor stations. The area borders Weyerhaeuser's FMA. The majority of the mature pine stands in this area were sequenced and harvested as part of Weyerhaeuser's MPB Mitigation Program, which has greatly reduced the fire hazard for the area by removing fuel and changing the age structure of the forest.

Other infrastructure includes roads and utilities to service the farms, industry and residents in the area. Population is relatively low.

Fire risk for this area: Low to Medium

Calahoo. This sub-area lies within Weyerhaeuser's FMA in the County's southwest corner, north of the Wapiti River and east of the BC border. Most mature pine stands were harvested through Weyerhaeuser's MPB Mitigation Program. To the north, the landscape consists of vacant Crown land with deciduous forest or private farmland.

Fire risk for this area: Low

Red Willow River. This sub-area is located west of the Beaverlodge River and north of the Wapiti River. There is a mixture of Crown land and private farming land. While most MPB infested stands were harvested, there remain scattered conifer stands in the area. Population is low in this sub-area and there is limited infrastructure.

Fire risk for this area: Low to Moderate

Wapiti Sand Dunes

This sub-area is characterized by a unique mix of sand dune ecosystems, wetlands and forested areas. The forest is generally classified as mature pine and boreal spruce (C-3 and C-2 fuel types). It is located in a long band just north of the Wapiti River from the Smoky River to Pipestone Creek.

The Dunes are covered with 80 to 100 year-old pine stands, which experienced significant Mountain Pine Beetle infestation in the past. The steep banks of the Wapiti River are intersected by smaller creeks and ravines, with aspen-dominated slopes transitioning into open grassy area. Salvage harvest of heavily infested pine stands was carried out in 2015, 2016 and 2019 to reduce the hazard in this area. FireSmart fuel management projects were completed from 2017-2018 and in 2024. There are 24 subdivisions adjacent to this area, up from 19 in 2015.

This area includes private recreational cabins on leased land and supports industrial operations, such as industrial parks, mills, and gravel pits. It is home to community groups like the Peace Area Riding for the Disabled Society (PARDS), church and scout camps, and Nordic ski clubs, along with a golf course, campgrounds, and Evergreen Park. Key infrastructure includes highways, a rail line, and utility corridors. Popular for ATV riding, horseback riding, hiking, and

dog walking, the sub-area borders the City of Grande Prairie and is one of the County's more densely populated regions.

Fire risk rating: High

Engagement

Wildfires pose significant risks to communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure in the County of Grande Prairie. As climate change intensifies fire hazards and alters wildfire patterns, local authorities must implement effective wildfire mitigation strategies. Achieving resilient and sustainable outcomes requires the collective efforts of diverse stakeholders, each contributing unique insights, resources, and responsibilities.

In January 2025, the project team identified key stakeholders essential to the wildfire mitigation strategy. Relevant organizations and individuals were contacted via email and online forms to inform them of updates and invite their input throughout the process. Stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback regarding the updates.

Once the document with updated recommendations is prepared, it will be shared with Indigenous communities and identified stakeholders for additional feedback.

The Grande Prairie Home and Garden Show occurred from April 11-13, 2025. The event served, in part, as the County's first public engagement outreach in 2025 on the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy. Representatives discussed the Mitigation Strategy while gathering public input on proposed initiatives. This event helped raise awareness, gathered input on proposed initiatives, and educated the public on the County's ongoing efforts to reduce wildfire risks. The event also provided an important platform to share practical ways residents can take action to help protect their properties and communities.

Here is a summary of the feedback County representatives heard at the event:

Overall Feedback

- Overall positive feedback from the community about being informed on wildfire mitigation.
- The wildfire mitigation plan was generally well-received, although some people did not fully understand how the mitigation plan directly benefited them or how they could get involved.
- Presenting historical context and maps helped community members better understand past challenges and current fire mitigation efforts.

- Some residents expressed dissatisfaction or had questions about how the Dunes West fire was managed.

Specific Actions or Requests

- Residents asked about mulching ditches and overgrowth in public areas.
 - Residents were encouraged to reach out to their councillors regarding these issues.
- Several inquiries were made about vegetation management in the area.
 - People asked about what was being done.
 - People asked what they could do and what they currently do

Appreciation and Recognition

- Many people appreciated the County's active work on wildfire mitigation.
- City of Grande Prairie residents recognized the County's efforts, acknowledging the benefits also extend to city residents.
- There was positive feedback on the Voyent Alert system, especially from residents involved in the Dunes wildfire evacuation.

Engagement and Support

- Successful distribution of Firesmart booklets to attendees.
- The use of maps and strategy discussions facilitated good conversations with the public.

Finally, the project team engaged with two experts on the stakeholder list to gather their insights on the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy report recommendations and plans. This collaborative approach ensures that a comprehensive understanding of local conditions, challenges, and opportunities for effective wildfire management informs the strategy.

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND STAKEHOLDERS

Community groups, experts, the forest industry, government agencies, Indigenous communities, major industrial stakeholders, NGOs, local entities, recreational clubs, and the general public are vital to enhancing the County's wildfire preparedness and response initiatives. By fostering collaboration among these groups, the County can develop comprehensive strategies that mitigate wildfire risks while promoting community engagement and stewardship. A detailed list of engaged groups for the Mitigation Strategy is available in *Appendix III Indigenous Communities and Stakeholders*.

The County of Grande Prairie is committed to fostering an inclusive and collaborative approach to wildfire mitigation. The County will conduct further engagement sessions focused on specific projects within the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy. Additionally, the County recognizes the importance of incorporating Indigenous perspectives and knowledge and will ensure meaningful consultation with Indigenous communities to enhance our wildfire management efforts collaboratively.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
4	Provide copies of the approved Wildfire Mitigation Strategy to all major industrial companies in the County and a letter from Council promoting a cooperative approach to reduce the risk of wildfire	Q3 2025	Community Services
5	Share final document with the City of Grande Prairie	Q2 2025	Community Services
6	Share final Wildfire Mitigation Strategy with all communities in the County, as well as neighbouring municipalities	Q3 2025	Community Services, Communications and Marketing
7	Share subsequent amendments and updates	Ongoing	Community Services
8	Identify stakeholders that are active or have facilities in the highest risk areas; share final document	Q3 2025	Community Services, Planning Services
9	Look for opportunities to encourage FireSmart practices and share information	Ongoing	Community Services, Other County Departments
10	Develop a survey to gather the public's wildfire concerns and knowledge of FireSmart	Q3 2026	Communications and Marketing, Fire Services, Community Services

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
11	Work with Alberta Forestry & Parks on the Wapiti Recreational Trail Management Plan to manage access in the Wapiti Sand Dunes	Q3 2025	Forestry & Parks
12	Incorporate ongoing public input into the strategy and subsequent updates	Annually	Communications and Marketing, Community Services, Regional Fire Service

Values at Risk

GENERAL

Values at risk (VAR) are generally classified into four categories:

- Standard Values – Homes, Schools, Commercial buildings
- Special Values – Cemeteries, Cultural sites
- Dangerous/Hazardous – Sites containing explosives, chemicals, other risks hazardous to responders
- Critical – Critical Infrastructure such as communication towers, hospitals, powerlines

A detailed list of values at risk can be found in *Appendix IV Values at Risk*. This list should be updated before each wildfire season. It is also recommended that a spatial layer be created identifying VAR in the County and is updated annually or as needed.

The main values at risk considered were standard values at risk such as homes and other residential structures, critical infrastructure like power lines and roads, and agriculture, including crops, livestock, and farm equipment.

The fire behaviour potential varies across the County, with the North, West and Southern boundaries having a higher risk for fire starts and spread.

The Crown land along the western border with British Columbia has mature aspen stands with scattered pockets of mature spruce and pine, which can be

problematic during certain times of the year. This region has the fewest anthropogenic values and is best managed at a landscape level. Mountain Pine Beetle infested stands have been harvested and continued management of coniferous fuels through commercial logging is the most efficient methodology to manage these stands.

The forest stands along the Northern boundary also is best managed through landscape level management. Values at risk are also fewer in the northern portion of the County.

Most of the Values at Risk are found south of the City of Grande Prairie within the Wapiti Dunes. Several residential subdivisions (Figure 7), industrial parks, large industry (sawmills) are found in this area. The concentration of values and people mixed with significant forest fuel types make this area a high priority for both vegetation management and education of residents. A combination of previous fires and FireSmart treatments have managed fuels around many of the communities in the West Dunes area. The East Dunes have had fire prevention work both through FireSmart treatments and fireguards. The fireguards were constructed during the 2023 fire season to protect the communities southeast of the City of Grande Prairie.

The most critical season for fire risk is during the spring period between snow melt and green-up, when forest and grass vegetation can be susceptible to fire. Human ignitions are the main concern for wildfire in the County, caused mainly by recreational vehicles, agricultural equipment and grass burning. Lightning is also a potential ignition source, with dry lightning storms pose a risk during periods of hot, dry weather.

Wildfire Preparedness Guides are operational tools that are used in the event of an emergency. They provide immediate, operational information for responding to and managing wildfires when they occur. It is recommended that the County identify rural communities that would benefit from a Wildfire Preparedness Guide.

Rural subdivisions and hamlets were assigned a preliminary risk rating of High, Medium, or Low based on their proximity to hazardous fuels (*Appendix V Community Risk Rating*). This classification offers an initial overview of relative wildfire risk across the County.

To build on this, and in alignment with a Wildfire Preparedness Guide, a more detailed assessment is recommended for each community. This would include evaluating building materials, structures, internal hazards, local values, and the

community's own fire suppression capabilities to better understand potential wildfire impacts.

The results of this assessment can then be used to rank communities based on their relative wildfire risk, helping to prioritize planning, mitigation, and resource allocation efforts.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
13	Conduct Community Risk Assessments to rank all communities in the County for risk of wildfire including grass fires	Q4 2025	Community Services
14	Continue to update the Fire Behaviour Potential (FBP) Fuel Type map for the County reflecting the change in timber type and condition due to the MPB infestation and subsequent harvest and FireSmart projects	Q3 2025	Forestry & Parks
15	Complete "Wildfire Preparedness Guides" with higher fire-risk communities (see Appendix V)	Q4 2026	Regional Fire Service
16	Create spatial data inventory of Values at Risk within County	Q4 2025	Community Services, GIS Services

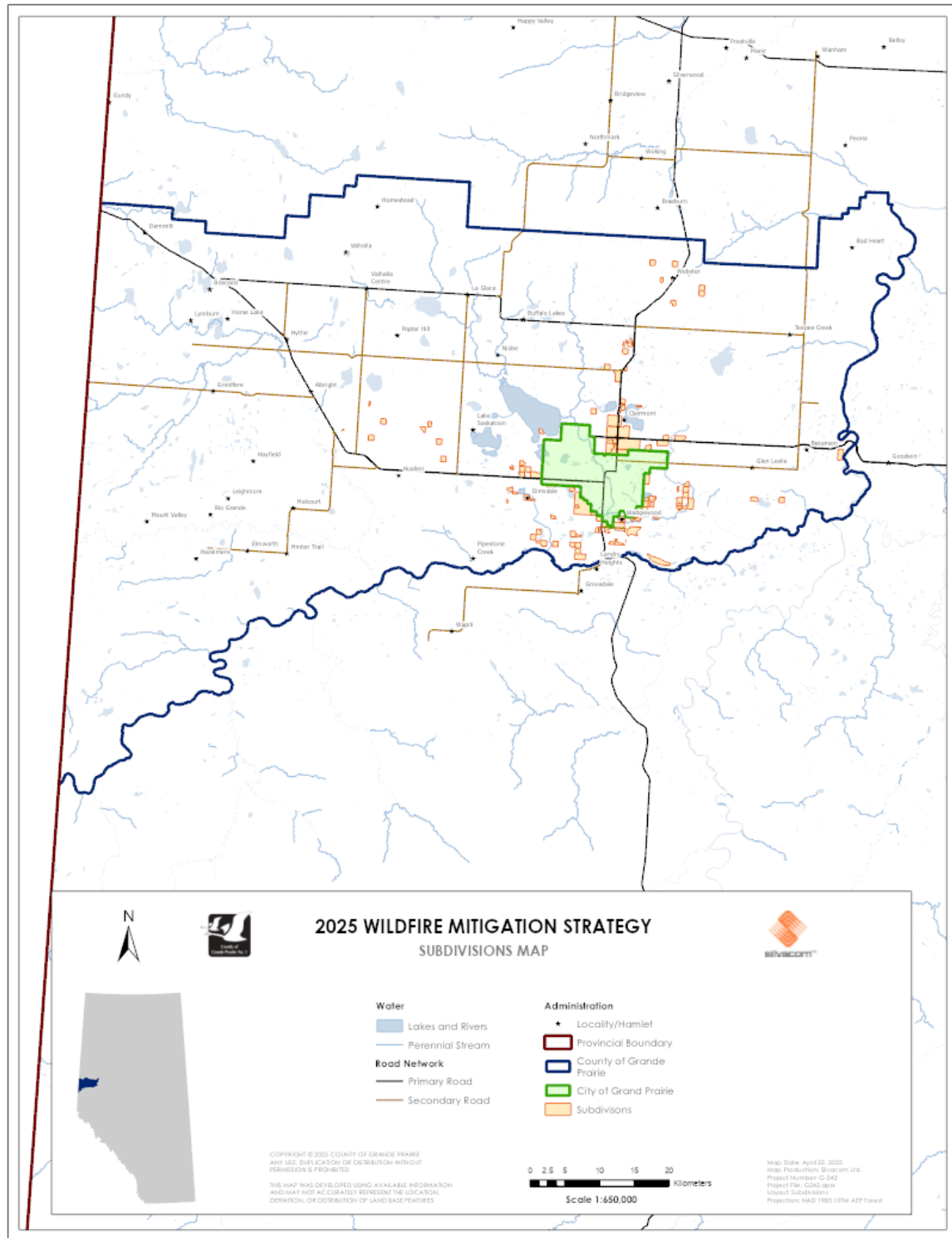


Figure 7 Subdivisions Map, County of Grande Prairie

Education and Communications⁶

PUBLIC EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Public education, engagement, and communications related to FireSmart principles is a priority for the County. Efforts have focused on increasing awareness, promoting prevention, and equipping residents, businesses, and stakeholders with the tools and knowledge to reduce wildfire risk.

Key accomplishments to date include:

- **Enhanced Public Awareness:** Increased knowledge of FireSmart principles through County-wide education campaigns, workshops, digital media, and community engagement.
- **Awareness through Public Events:** Participation in regional trade shows, County-led annual open houses, and FireSmart Community Champion workshops, along with introducing interactive learning opportunities such as wood-chipping demonstrations and fire mitigation events.
- **Targeted Communications:** Development of accessible FireSmart resources, including brochures, fact sheets, video content, and online information hubs tailored to residents in wildfire-prone areas.
- **FireSmart Community Growth:** Continued engagement with private landowners, businesses, and local organizations to build resilience and reduce wildfire risks across the County.

As the County looks ahead, efforts will focus on enhancing communication consistency, and frequency while expanding digital engagement and public participation.

COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION

The County will continue to grow FireSmart public education and outreach through the following channels:

⁶ This section submitted by Andrea Holscher, Senior Marketing Advisor, County of Grande Prairie

- Two County initiated wood chipping events per year promoted on County social media channels, assisting residents in reducing wildfire fuel loads on their properties.
- County-led events public engagement opportunities including three open houses in June and additional events throughout the year, such as the Agri-Show and the Home & Garden Show in April.
- Articles in the County of Grande Prairie's triannual newsletter, County Connections (Fall, Winter, Spring) featuring wildfire prevention updates and seasonal FireSmart tips.
- Communicate and highlight Regional Fire Service key activities from the previous year in the County's Annual Report, including other critical initiatives that contribute to community safety.
- Educational videos and digital media campaigns covering fire prevention, FireSmart best practices, mitigation efforts, fire permitting requirements, home assessments, and practical steps for homeowners and businesses to reduce wildfire risks.
- Newspaper and radio advertising to promote FireSmart initiatives and key wildfire safety messages.
- Utilizing the County's subscriber-based notification system, Voyent Alert! to notify residents and businesses on current wildfire status, and public County-led events.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
17	Maintain and enhance the County's public education and awareness programs, with regular review and updates to ensure continued relevance and impact.	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service
18	Develop a formal and robust FireSmart Communications and Marketing Plan to support the County's wildfire mitigation strategy. The plan will outline timing, budget, target	Q4 2025/Q1 2026	Communications and Marketing

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
	audiences, key messages, and educational content, using tactics such as video, print, and digital outreach.		
19	Include an education and awareness component on grass fire prevention—targeted at high-risk groups such as rural landowners, farmers, and acreage owners—to the County Communications Plan.	Q1 2026	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service
20	Promote sign-ups for the County's Voyent Alert! system by sharing updates on fire status, emergencies, and County events. Also encourage use of Alberta's Fire Bans app for province-wide information.	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service
21	County of Grande Prairie Planning Director or Senior Planner, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal and Marketing and Communications representative (or designates) to attend the annual FireSmart Community Series Workshop	As Available	Community Services
22	Host FireSmart Neighbourhood Recognition Program to engage private landowners	Q1 2026	Regional Fire Service

Continued engagement and consultation with the public and key stakeholders remains essential to the County's FireSmart approach, ensuring that wildfire mitigation efforts are informed, effective, and responsive to evolving risks. Since the development of the 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy, the County has continued to collaborate with wildfire experts, industry stakeholders, and community members to enhance wildfire preparedness and prevention.

The 2015 strategy was developed through consultation with Alberta Forestry and Parks (AFP) for wildfire data and expertise, along with input from major industrial stakeholders. Public engagement also played a key role, with community feedback gathered during a dedicated open house held on March 18, 2015, helping shape the final strategy.

The 2025 Strategy will maintain a strong focus on stakeholder consultation and community engagement through a variety of channels, including participation events, yard waste clean-up activities, the County's triannual newsletter, and digital platforms.

Legislation

PROVINCIAL

Alberta Forestry and Parks (AFP), Alberta Environment and Protected Areas, and the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) are responsible for dispositions and management activities on public land in Alberta including both the green and white areas.

Within the County, most of the public land is located in the white area⁷, except for the southwest corner and sections along the western (BC) border. Wildfire management responsibilities in the County are shared between AFP and the County. Generally, AFP oversee wildfire response in the Forest Protection Area along the western portion of the County (Figure 8), while the County is responsible for fire management across the remaining areas, including the Wapiti Sand Dunes. A mutual aid agreement is in place between the County and AFP for firefighting coordination. Additionally, the County enforces a restrictive burning policy in much of the Wapiti Sand Dunes, requiring burn permits year-round.

The Wapiti Sand Dunes have been identified as a priority area for wildfire mitigation in both the 2015 and 2025 strategies. Increased recreational access and unauthorized activities in the area have raised several concerns, including:

- Littering and illegal dumping
- Unauthorized burning
- Environmental damage to sensitive sand dunes and wetlands
- Higher wildfire risk from ATVs and illegal campfires

⁷ The settled portion of Alberta, primarily used for agriculture, residential and industrial purposes.

The growing demand for recreational use in the Wapiti Sand Dunes area highlights the need to manage these activities while reducing wildfire risk and protecting the environment.

In response, the Government of Alberta initiated the development of the Wapiti Recreation and Trail Management Plan⁸. The plan aims to provide a framework for sustainable recreation infrastructure and designated trail networks, helping to manage land use, reduce environmental degradation, and mitigate fire hazards.

This plan, which is currently in the review phase, outlines the long-term management strategies necessary to protect the area's environmental integrity while also reducing wildfire risks and ensuring the region remains accessible for safe recreational use.

⁸ Wapiti Recreation and Trail Management Plan. 2024. Government of Alberta.

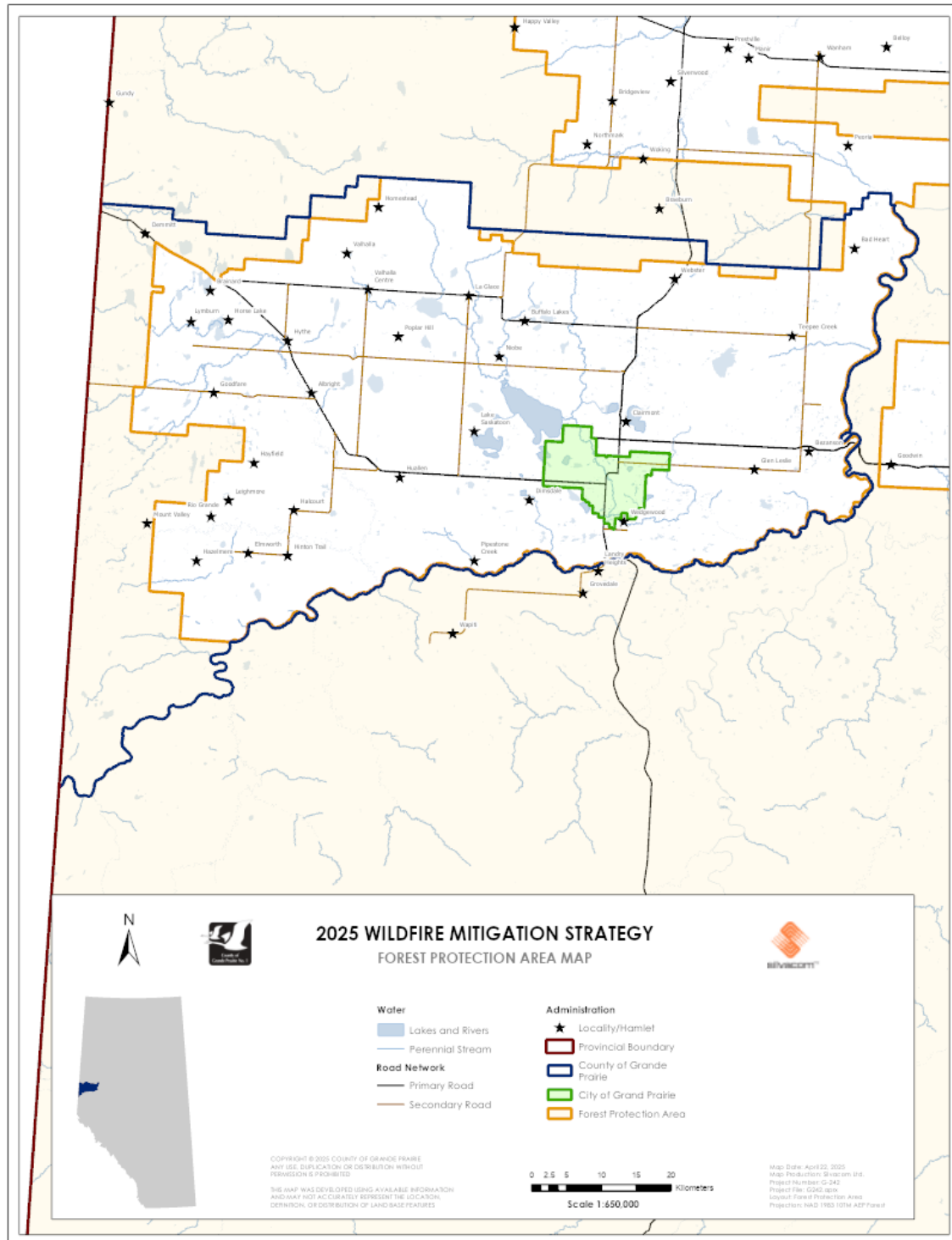


Figure 8 Forest Protection Area Boundary

MUNICIPAL

The 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy recommended that the County explore the feasibility of reclaiming gravel leases for alternative uses while incorporating FireSmart principles. In response, the County, with support from AFP and Alberta Transportation, initiated the development of the Wapiti Recreation Area Management Plan⁹.

This initiative, which started in 2016, envisioned “transforming the depleted gravel leases into a site that provides outdoor recreation enjoyment to the citizens of the region”¹⁰. A draft management plan was completed in 2016, followed by Indigenous consultation in 2017 and public consultation in 2018. The Wapiti Recreation Area Management Plan was subsequently approved, along with the Phase I Concept Plan in 2019.

Note that the pending provincial Wapiti Recreation and Trail Management Plan will operate alongside the County’s Wapiti Recreation Area Management Plan, but will take precedence for guiding the development and management of recreation on unoccupied Public Lands in the Wapiti area. Given the remaining gravel leases, the 2015 recommendation is being carried forward in this strategy.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
23	Continue to investigate the feasibility and practicality of reclaiming gravel leases for other uses while considering FireSmart principles	Q3 2025	Planning Services
24	Investigate and research what other municipalities have done to amend or update their bylaws to reflect FireSmart principles	Ongoing (Q1 2027)	Planning Services

⁹ Wapiti Recreation Area Management Plan, 2019-2040. 2018. County of Grande Prairie.

¹⁰ Ibid, 2018.

Development

The County's Fire Marshal reviews all rezoning and subdivision applications, ensuring that rural developments include two access points for safety. Their feedback helps shape administrative recommendations presented to County Council or the Municipal Planning Commission. Meanwhile, the County's Planning Department manages Development Permit approvals, verifying adherence to the Alberta Building Code, which prioritizes building safety but does not incorporate FireSmart principles.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
25	Include or consider FireSmart principles in the scheduled review of the County's Land Use Bylaw	Q2 2027	Planning Services
26	Maintain hydrants, water tanks, or emergency water sources (including still wells) near developments	Ongoing	Planning Services
27	Require a minimum 30m defensible space (fuel-free or low-fuel zones) around new residential neighborhoods	Q4 2025 (Ongoing)	Planning Services
28	Incorporate FireSmart guidelines into building permits and development approvals	Ongoing	Planning Services
29	Continue to provide information with new development permits when issued, and consider development of a comprehensive (FireSmart) information package	Ongoing	Community Services, Planning Services

Vegetation Management

2015 FIRESMART TREATMENT STATUS

The 2015 priority treatment areas identified for FireSmart vegetation management activities are displayed in Figure 9. These areas were selected based on wildfire risk and their proximity to values-at-risk, such as homes, infrastructure, and other key assets. The County used these priority blocks as the foundation for its vegetation management plan, with the boundaries serving as a roadmap to guide treatment efforts. Each area was ranked by priority to help focus resources and actions where they were needed most.

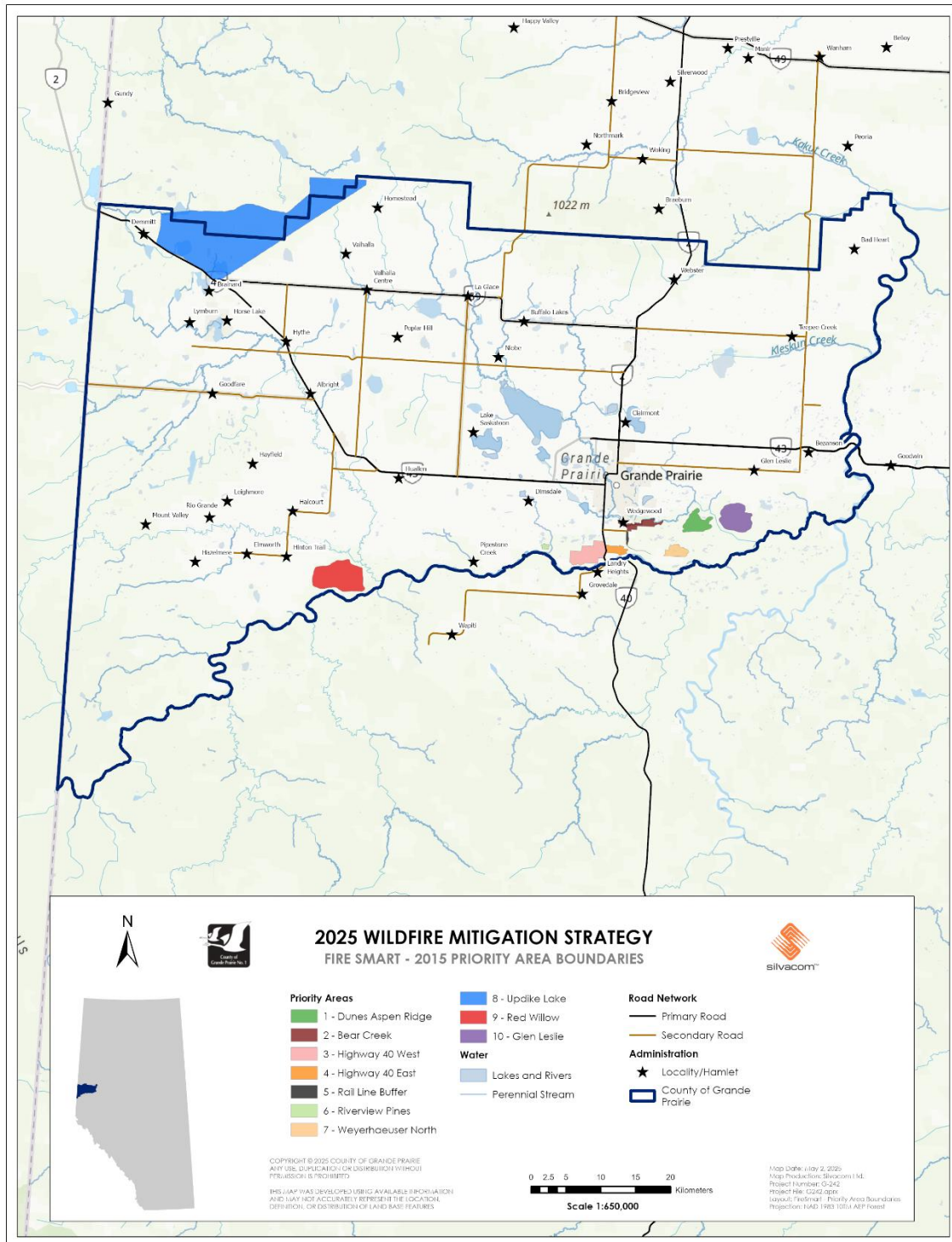


Figure 9 2015 Priority Area Boundaries

Vegetation management in the 2015 report focused on addressing mature pine stands within the County that could contribute to an increased potential for extreme fire events if affected by Mountain Pine Beetle. These mature pine stands were addressed through commercial logging practices that could utilize the harvested timber. In more remote areas of the County these stands were targeted with a clear cut. Within the Wapiti Dunes, mature pine stands were thinned to remove the trees most susceptible to Mountain Pine Beetle. These actions also thinned the pine stands, while maintaining some vegetative cover for the Dunes. This thinning process provides a fuel reduction benefit for an important area.

Table 2 and Figure 10 summarize the status of the treatment blocks recommended in 2015. As shown, treatments in Priority Areas 1 and 2 have been completed. Figure 10 provides a visual overview of the current vegetation management status for each block, using color coding to indicate whether treatment is complete, planned, or still outstanding. *Appendix II 2015 Recommendations - Status* provides a more detailed table showing the status of the 2015 recommendations.

Table 2 2015 Treatment Block Status

Priority Area	Priority Area - Name	Status of 2015 Plan
1	Dunes Aspen Ridge	Complete
2	Bear Creek	Complete
3	Highway 40 West	In Progress
4	Highway 40 East	Not complete
5	Rail Line Buffer	Not complete
6	Riverview Pines	Impacted by Dunes West Fire
7	Weyerhaeuser North	Pine Stands harvested due to MPB control
8	Updike Lake	Significant Harvesting
9	Red Willow	Not Complete
10	Glen Leslie	Not Complete

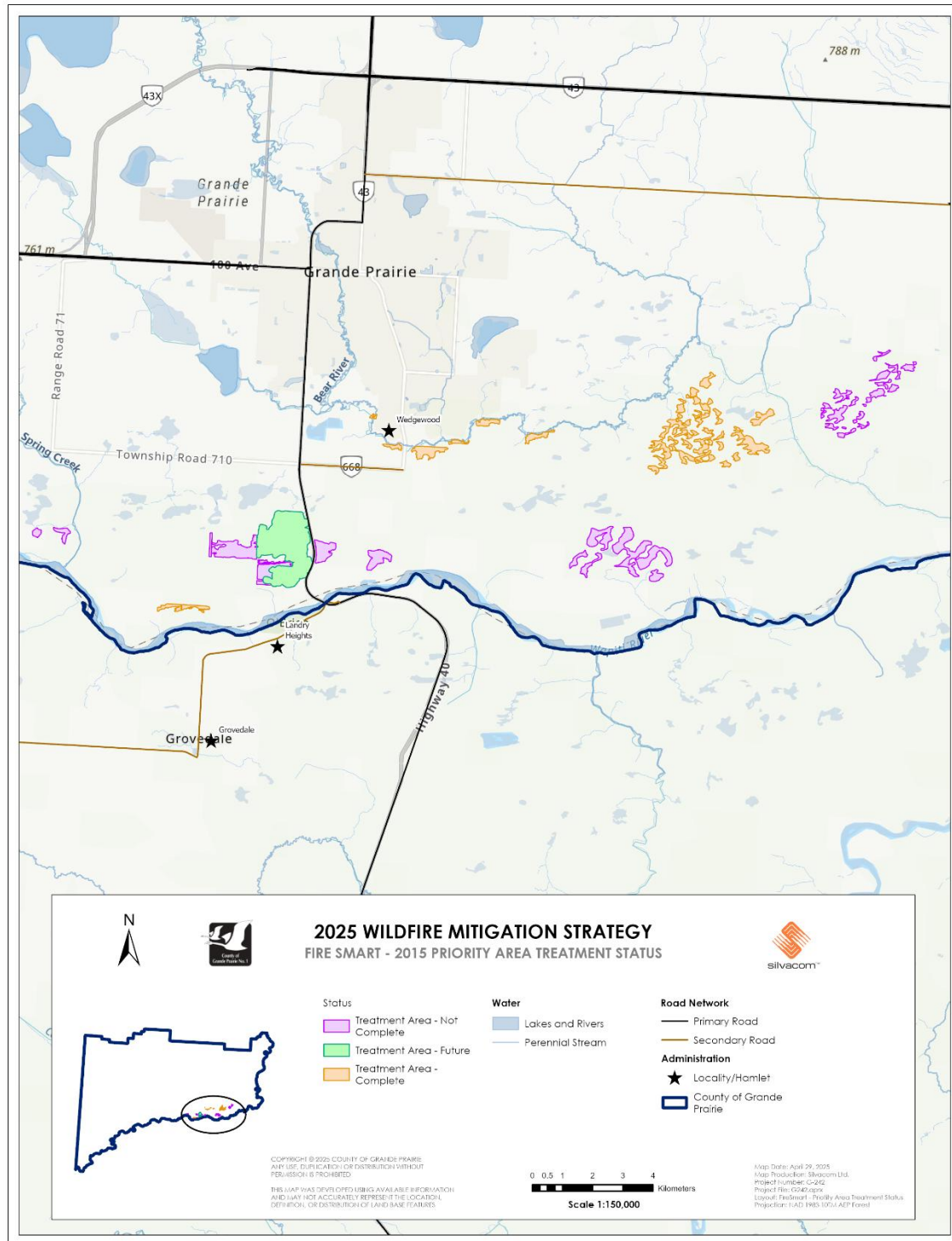


Figure 10 2015 Priority Treatment Area – Status

In addition to the pre-planned treatments outlined in the 2015 strategy, several additional vegetation management activities were undertaken in response to active wildfires and are important to highlight.

Following the Dunes West Wildfire, the Province collaborated with the County and the City of Grande Prairie to construct the Southeast Grande Prairie fireguard. This fireguard stretches approximately 30 kilometers and reaches widths of up to 200 meters in key strategic areas (Figure 11). It is primarily situated on Crown land, extending east from Evergreen Park, north to Aspen Ridge, south to the Wapiti River, and west to Highway 40.

In response to the Wapiti River Wildfire, a series of dozer guards were also established south of the City of Grande Prairie. These lines removed standing vegetation but were smaller in scale compared to the full fireguards.

The design and placement of the 2015 treatment blocks, along with the location of these fireguards, helped inform the 2025 recommended vegetation management activities outlined in the following section.

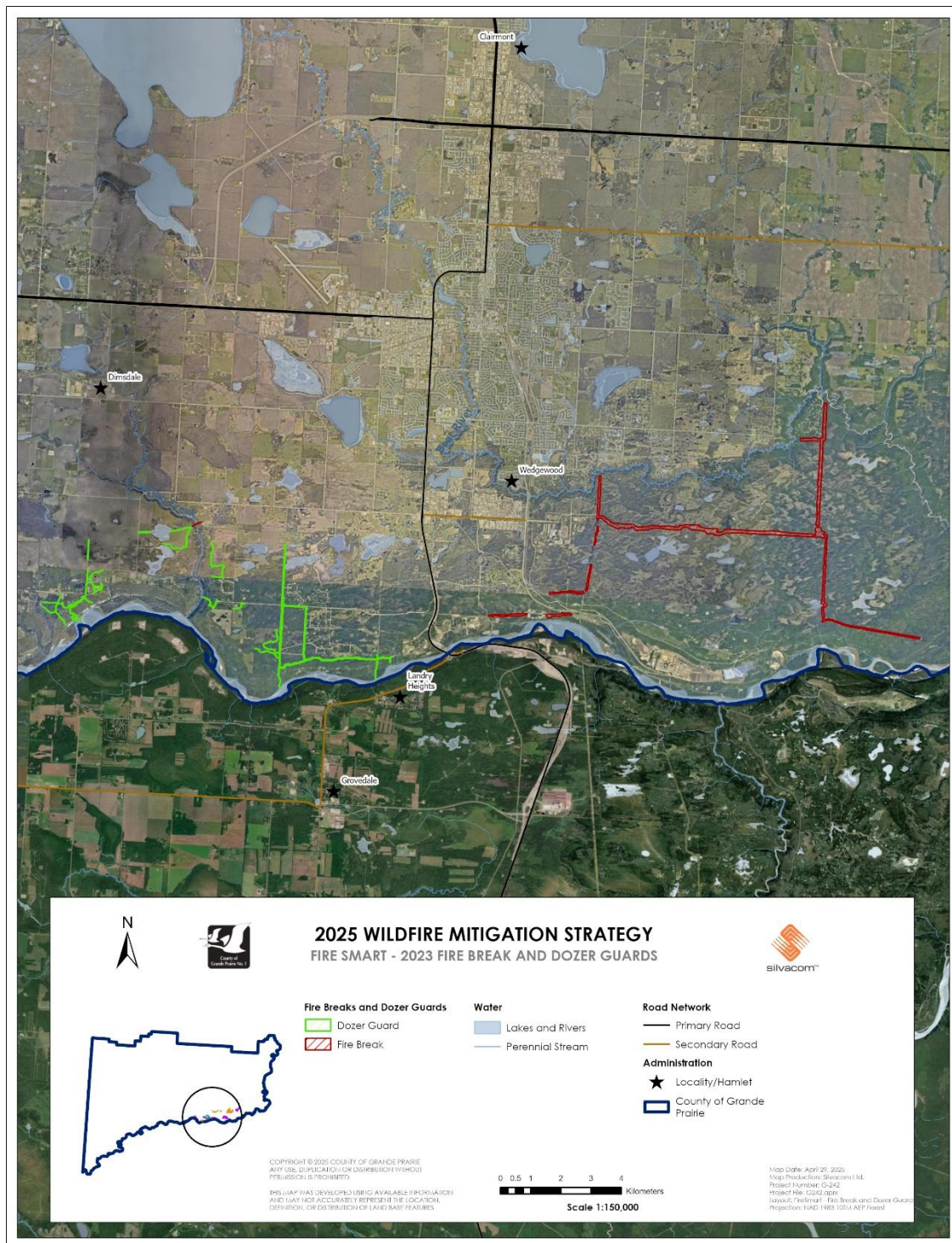


Figure 11 Strategic Fireguard and Dozer Guards, south of the City of Grande Prairie

2025 RECOMMENDED FIRESMART TREATMENTS

The Wapiti Dunes continue to pose the greatest wildfire threat to infrastructure within the County. While Mountain Pine Beetle (MPB) was once a significant concern, declining beetle populations and past control efforts have reduced its impact in this area. These treatments altered some of the high-risk C3 fuel types; however, they did not address adjacent C2 Boreal Spruce stands in the lower-lying areas of the Dunes, which still present a risk of extreme wildfire behavior.

The Dunes West Fire also affected a large portion of previously identified hazardous fuels. While the fire removed some surface fuels, it left behind stands of dead trees that will eventually fall, increasing fuel loads and posing a hazard to people and nearby values. Managing this burnt timber through removal or other treatments will reduce these risks.

In the 2015 Wildfire Mitigation Strategy, MPB-infested pine stands were prioritized for treatment across the County. Although the MPB threat has declined, strategic harvesting of coniferous stands remains important to reduce the risk of large-scale wildfires—particularly in less populated areas of the western and northern County.

This updated strategy revises the approach to prioritization. Instead of designating strict treatment priority zones, treatment blocks are now categorized by implementation timelines: near-term (0–5 years), medium-term (5–10 years), and long-term (10–15 years). This flexible approach allows for adaptation based on seasonal access, funding availability, and evolving wildfire risk.

The recommended vegetation management strategy builds on the pine stands that have been thinned since 2015, and shifts the focus toward black spruce stands to create larger, continuous areas of modified fuels. This will reduce the number of fire wicks—areas where fire can bypass natural or human-made firebreaks—and enhance wildfire protection. Re-entering previously thinned pine stands to bring them up to FireSmart standards is also recommended. The result will be a more cohesive network of fuel-modified areas near key infrastructure, while making use of existing treated stands (Figure 12, Figure 13). This strategic approach would help protect subdivisions in the Wapiti Dunes and the City of Grande Prairie from wildfire threats originating from the south and southeast.

To support implementation, the County intends to seek funding from the Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA). Completion of these activities will be contingent on securing FRIAA funding and adhering to associated timelines.

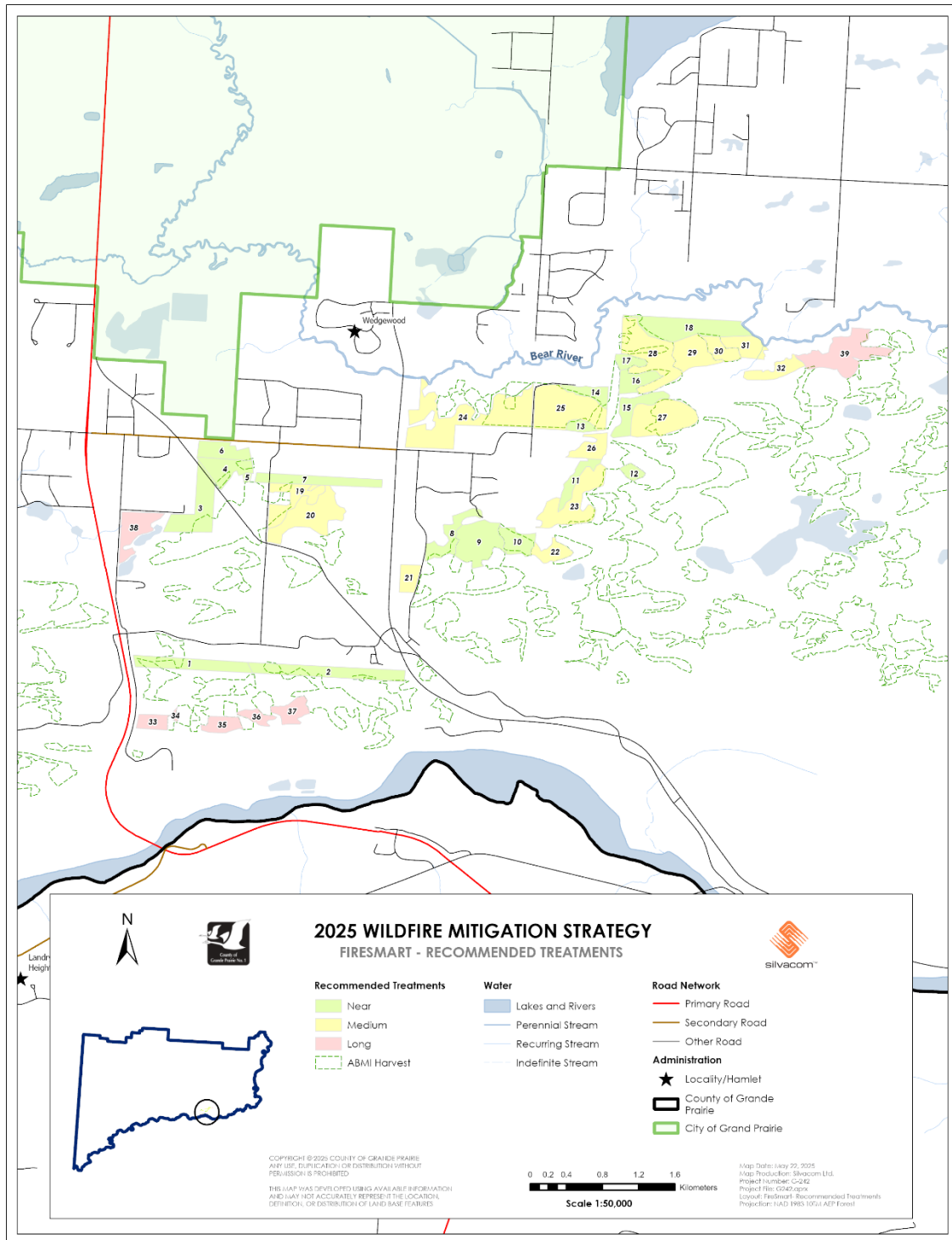


Figure 12 Recommended Treatment Overview Map

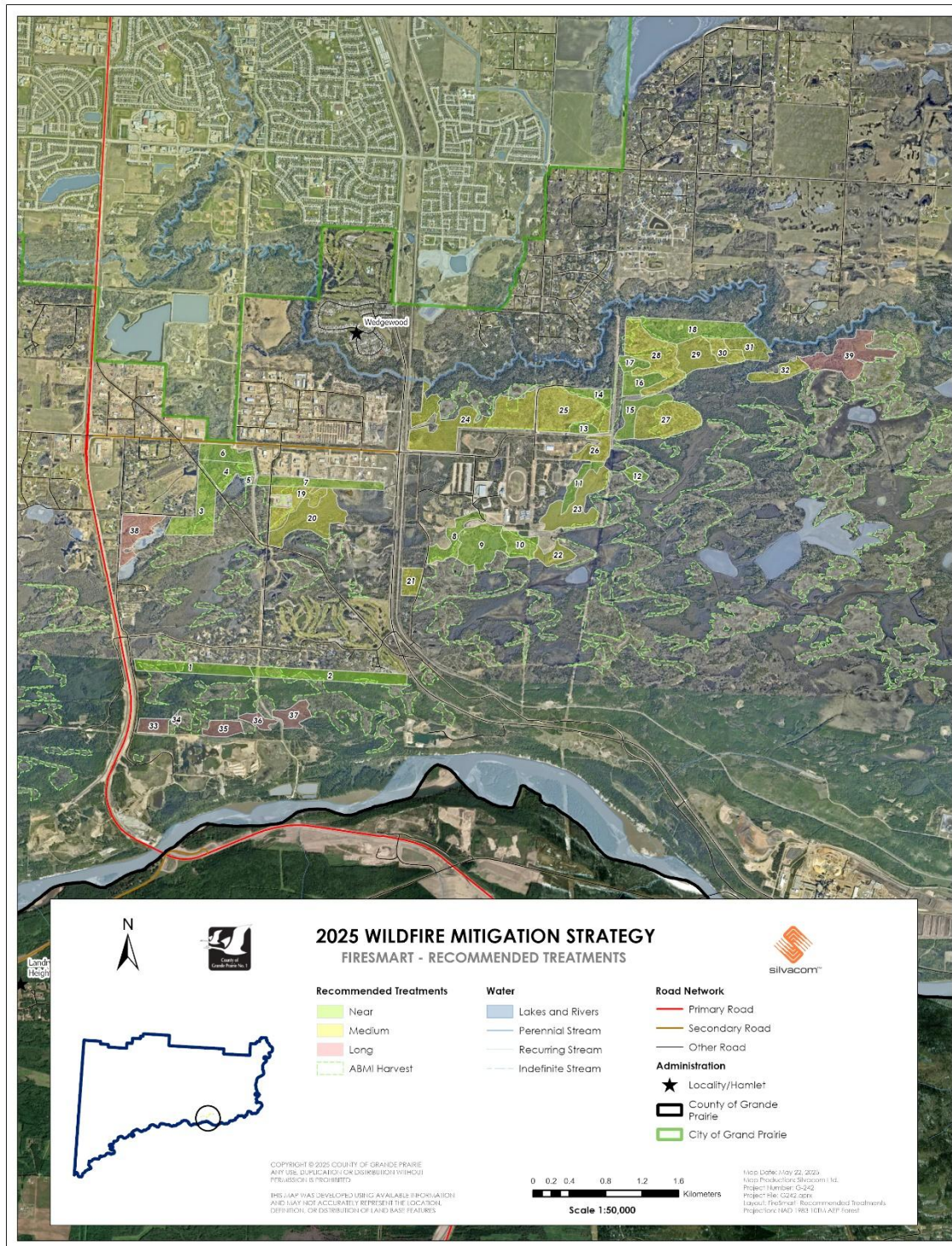


Figure 13 Recommended Treatment Overview Map – Imagery

Table 3 Recommended Treatment Blocks

Block Number	Priority	Recommended Treatment	Previously Treated
1	Near	Fireguard	No
2	Near	Fireguard	No
3	Near	Fireguard	No
4	Near	Thin and Prune	No
5	Near	Fireguard	No
6	Near	Fireguard	No
7	Near	Fireguard	No
8	Near	Thin and Prune	No
9	Near	Thin and Prune	No
10	Near	Thin and Prune	Yes
11	Near	Thin and Prune	No
12	Near	Thin and Prune	No
13	Near	Thin and Prune	No
14	Near	Thin and Prune	No
15	Near	Thin and Prune	No
16	Near	Thin and Prune	No
17	Near	Thin and Prune	No
18	Near	Thin and Prune	No
19	Medium	Thin and Prune	Yes
20	Medium	Thin and Prune	Yes

21	Medium	Thin and Prune	Yes
22	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
23	Medium	Thin and Prune	Yes
24	Medium	Thin and Prune	Yes
25	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
26	Medium	Thin and Prune/Mulch	No
27	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
28	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
29	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
30	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
31	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
32	Medium	Thin and Prune	No
33	Long	Thin and Prune	No
34	Long	Thin and Prune	No
35	Long	Thin and Prune	No
36	Long	Thin and Prune	No
37	Long	Thin and Prune	No
38	Long	Thin and Prune	No
39	Long	Thin and Prune	No



Figure 14 2025 Recommended Treatment Blocks – West Side

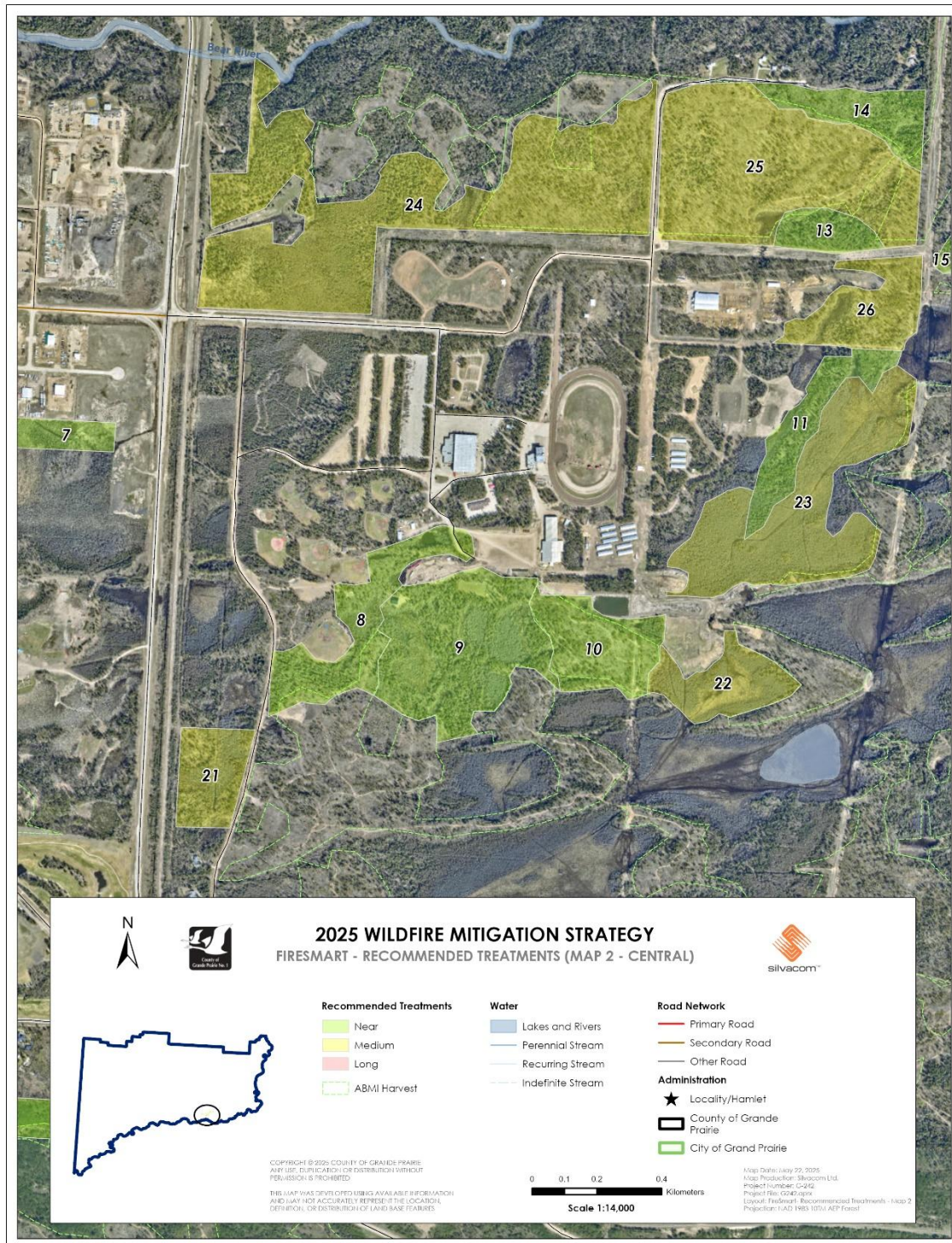


Figure 15 2025 Recommended Treatment Blocks - Central

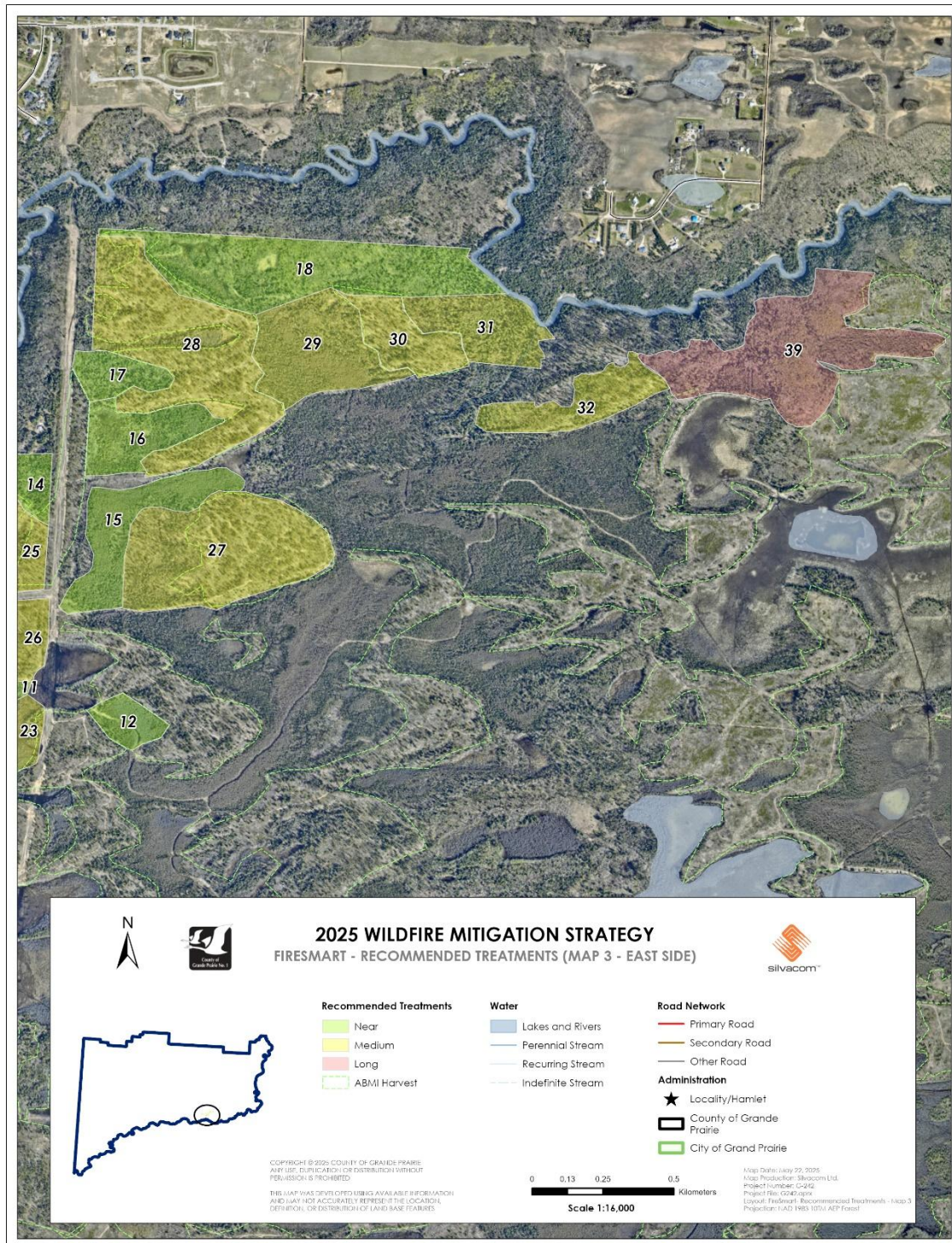


Figure 16 2025 Recommended Treatment Blocks – East Side

There is growing concern about spring wildfires burning in D1 fuel types. Prolonged dry conditions and increasing accumulations of coarse woody debris are contributing to more intense fires in these areas. Many of these deciduous stands are located on private land, making public education and continued chipping events essential. These education efforts should focus on removing hazardous fuels from properties.

The burned areas from the Dunes West Fire offer an additional opportunity to address fuel buildup. As trees fall and dead, dry fuels accumulate near communities, they pose risks to both recreational users and nearby properties. Targeted fuel management, including removal and chipping in high-use areas, can help reduce the risk of injury while also addressing hazardous fuel loads.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
30	Propose fuel reduction/modification project – Near Term Blocks	Q4 2025-2030	Community Services
31	Propose fuel reduction/modification project – Medium Term Blocks	Q4 2030-2035	Community Services
32	Propose fuel reduction/modification project – Long Term Blocks	Q4 2035-2040	Community Services
33	Assess burnt stands for hazard reduction treatments within the fire boundary	Q3 2025	Community Services
34	Investigate and identify possible firewood sites in the County for both private and commercial use	Q4 2025	Community Services
35	Set up areas for firewood production on Crown land (in County)	Q1 2026	Forestry & Parks
36	Continue FireSmart Chipping Days	Q1, annually	Community Services

Interagency Cooperation and Cross Training

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS AND PLANS

As of 2025, the County of Grande Prairie continues to collaborate with Alberta Forestry and Parks under a Mutual Aid Fire Control Agreement, originally established on June 11, 2009. This agreement is supported by an Annual Mutual Aid Fire Control Plan that outlines operating procedures and responsibilities across all lands within the County. A significant aspect of the agreement is the delineation of mutual aid operations within two primary zones:

- Zone 1: Forest Protection Area
- Zone 2: Towns, Hamlets, and all other areas of the County outside the Forest Protection Area

The agreement and its Annual Fire Control Plan address several key components, including:

- Contact information
- Mutual aid request procedures
- Cost recovery and invoicing
- Meetings and communications
- Fire permits
- Fire control orders
- Cooperative prevention initiatives
- Shared detection efforts
- Prescribed burning
- Wildland/Urban interface management
- Cooperative pre-suppression activities
- Hazard and resource information sharing
- Provision of manpower and equipment
- Training programs

In 2022, the County and the City of Grande Prairie formalized a Fire Mutual Aid Agreement, enhancing their collaborative emergency response capabilities¹¹. This agreement allows each municipality to request resources from the other to assist with emergency operations when needed. It also introduces an auto-aid component, ensuring that the closest station responds to a call, regardless of jurisdiction, in select predetermined areas.

¹¹ City and County of Grande Prairie Fire Mutual Aid Agreement Now in Effect. 2022. City of Grande Prairie. <https://www.cityofgp.ca>

Additionally, the County maintains Mutual Aid Agreements with neighbouring municipalities, including the towns of Beaverlodge, Sexsmith, Wembley, and Horse Lake First Nation. Following the dissolution of the Village of Hythe in 2021 the area was incorporated into the County of Grande Prairie and officially became a Hamlet in 2021¹².

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
37	Explore feasibility of establishing a wildfire support agreement between Wildfire Services and Transportation & Utilities	Q3 2025	Regional Fire Service
38	Create a standardized vendor qualification checklist that outlines the required criteria for inclusion on the wildfire support vendor list	Q4 2025	Regional Fire Service
39	Develop a list of private contractors/equipment to be used for fighting wildfire, updated annually	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service
40	Monitor current Mutual Aid Agreements and update as required	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service
41	Carry out mock wildfire emergency exercise	Q1 2026	Regional Fire Service

¹² Hythe Transition. County of Grande Prairie. <https://www.countygp.ab.ca/en/county-government/hythe-transition.aspx>

Emergency Planning

CURRENT PLANS, PROTOCOLS AND EQUIPMENT

The Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership (GPREP) is a collaborative agreement among five municipalities to provide coordinated emergency planning, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery efforts for disasters or emergencies affecting one or more member communities¹³. As of 2025, the participating municipalities include:

- County of Grande Prairie
- City of Grande Prairie
- Town of Beaverlodge
- Town of Sexsmith
- Town of Wembley

The Hamlet of Hythe, previously a member, was incorporated into the County of Grande Prairie.

GPREP's responsibilities include coordinating emergency response exercises and providing training opportunities to prepare municipalities for various large-scale disasters. GPREP has also been involved in responding to wildfires affecting the region. For instance, during the 2023 Dunes West and 2024 Kleskun Creek wildfires, GPREP established a command center and executed response plans, demonstrating its capability to manage such emergencies.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
42	Modify and renew existing plan on an as needed basis	Ongoing	Community Services

Implementation Plan

Once approved by County Council, County staff will be responsible for implementing the Wildfire Mitigation Strategy in accordance with its outlined recommendations. Any recommendations requiring funding will be subject to the County's standard budgeting process and allocation protocols. The Plan will be

¹³ Grande Prairie Regional Emergency Partnership. <https://www.gprep.ca>

subject to regular review and updated as necessary, particularly in response to significant changes to the landscape or high-priority values at risk.

Updates and Plan Maintenance

The strategy will undergo an annual review and be updated every five years or as needed in response to significant landscape changes, such as new infrastructure, shifting values at risk, or fuel distribution changes. Council may also request an update at any time to address unforeseen circumstances or changes in the County's fire risk.

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
43	Establish a quarterly meeting cycle for the FireSmart Committee to ensure the ongoing annual review and timely updates of the FireSmart strategy	Q1, annually	Community Services
44	Establish a dedicated FireSmart position to support and coordinate the implementation of FireSmart initiatives within the County	Ongoing	Community Services, Regional Fire Service

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Appendix I 2025 Recommendations

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
1	Review Ignition Exposure layer every spring before Fire season	Q1, annually	Regional Fire Service, Community Services
2	Identify and map water sources (large dugouts, lakes, etc.) that could be available for fighting wildfires	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service
3	Monitor Aspen mortality in areas with values at risk	Ongoing	Community Services, Forestry & Parks
4	Provide copies of the approved Wildfire Mitigation Strategy to all major industrial companies in the County and a letter from Council promoting a cooperative approach to reduce the risk of wildfire	Q3 2025	Community Services
5	Share final document with the City of Grande Prairie	Q2 2025	Community Services
6	Share final Wildfire Mitigation Strategy with all communities in the County, as well as neighbouring municipalities	Q3 2025	Community Services, Communications and Marketing
7	Share subsequent amendments and updates	Ongoing	Community Services
8	Identify stakeholders that are active or have facilities in the highest risk areas; share final document	Q3 2025	Community Services, Planning Services
9	Look for opportunities to encourage FireSmart practices and share information	Ongoing	Community Services, Other County Departments

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
10	Develop a survey to gather the public's wildfire concerns and knowledge of FireSmart	Q3 2026	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service, Community Services
11	Work with Alberta Forestry & Parks on the Wapiti Recreational Trail Management Plan to manage access in the Wapiti Sand Dunes	Q3 2025	Forestry & Parks
12	Incorporate ongoing public input into the strategy and subsequent updates .	Annually	Communications and Marketing, Community Services, Regional Fire Service
13	Conduct Community Risk Assessments to rank all communities in the County for risk of wildfire including grass fires	Q4 2025	Community Services
14	Continue to update the Fire Behaviour Potential (FBP) Fuel Type map for the County reflecting the change in timber type and condition due to the MPB infestation and subsequent harvest and FireSmart projects	Q3 2025	Forestry & Parks
15	Complete "Wildfire Preparedness Guides" with higher fire-risk communities (see Appendix V)	Q4 2026	Regional Fire Service
16	Create spatial data inventory of Values at Risk within County	Q4 2025	Community Services, GIS Services

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
17	Maintain and enhance the County's public education and awareness programs, with regular review and updates to ensure continued relevance and impact.	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service
18	Develop a formal and robust FireSmart Communications Plan to support the County's wildfire mitigation strategy. The plan will outline timing, budget, target audiences, key messages, and educational content, using tactics such as video, print, and digital outreach.	Q4, 2025/Q1 2026	Communications and Marketing
19	Include an education and awareness component on grass fire prevention—targeted at high-risk groups such as rural landowners, farmers, and acreage owners—to the County Communications Plan.	Q1 2026	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service
20	Promote sign-ups for the County's Voyent Alert! system by sharing updates on fire status, emergencies, and County events. Also encourage use of Alberta's Fire Bans app for province-wide information.	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service
21	County of Grande Prairie Planning Director or Senior Planner, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal and Marketing and Communications representative (or designates) to attend the annual FireSmart Community Series Workshop	As Available	Community Services

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
22	Host FireSmart Neighbourhood Recognition Program workshops to engage private landowners	Q1 2026	Regional Fire Service
23	Continue to investigate the feasibility and practicality of reclaiming gravel leases for other uses while considering FireSmart principles	Q3 2025	Planning Services
24	Investigate and research what other municipalities have done to amend or update their bylaws to reflect FireSmart principles	Ongoing (Q1 2027)	Planning Services
25	Include or consider FireSmart principles in the scheduled review of the County's Land Use Bylaw	Q3 2027	Planning Services
26	Maintain hydrants, water tanks, or emergency water sources (including still wells) near developments	Ongoing	Planning Services
27	Require a minimum 30m defensible space (fuel-free or low-fuel zones) around new residential neighborhoods	Q4 2025 (Ongoing)	Planning Services
28	Incorporate FireSmart guidelines into building permits and development approvals	Ongoing	Planning Services
29	Continue to provide information with new development permits when issued, and consider development of a	Ongoing	Community Services, Planning Services

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
	comprehensive (FireSmart) information package		
30	Propose fuel reduction/modification project – Near Term Blocks	Q4 2025-2030	Community Services
31	Propose fuel reduction/modification project – Medium Term Blocks	Q4 2030-2035	Community Services
32	Propose fuel reduction/modification project – Long Term Blocks	Q4 2035-2040	Community Services
33	Assess burnt stands for hazard reduction treatments within the fire boundary	Q3 2025	Community Services
34	Investigate and identify possible firewood sites for both private and commercial use	Q4 2025	Community Services
35	Set up areas for firewood production on Crown land (in County)	Q1 2026	Forestry & Parks
36	Continue FireSmart Chipping Days	Q1, annually	Community Services
37	Explore feasibility of establishing a wildfire support agreement between Wildfire Services and Transportation & Utilities	Q3 2025	Regional Fire Service
38	Create a standardized vendor qualification checklist that outlines the required criteria for	Q4 2025	Regional Fire Service

	Recommendations	Timing	Responsibility
	inclusion on the wildfire support vendor list		
39	Develop a list of private contractors/equipment to be used for fighting wildfire, updated annually	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service
40	Monitor current Mutual Aid Agreements and update as required	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service
41	Carry out mock wildfire emergency exercise	Q1 2026	Regional Fire Service
42	Modify and renew existing plan on an as needed basis	Ongoing	Community Services
43	Establish a quarterly meeting cycle for the FireSmart Committee to ensure the ongoing annual review and timely updates of the FireSmart strategy	Q1, annually	Community Services
44	Establish a dedicated FireSmart position to support and coordinate the implementation of FireSmart initiatives within the County	Ongoing	Community Services, Regional Fire Service

Appendix II 2015 Recommendations - Status

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
1	Complete an assessment of all fuel management and other FireSmart projects to date to determine the effect on fuel types, fire hazard and risk and protecting identified values at risk as outlined in this strategy	Not complete	Community Services, Forestry & Parks (formerly Agriculture & Forestry)	
2	Provide copies of the approved Wildfire Mitigation Strategy to all major industrial companies in the County and a letter from Council promoting a cooperative approach to reduce the risk of wildfire	Complete	Community Services	
3	Share final document to the City of Grande Prairie	Complete	Community Services	
4	Share subsequent amendments and updates	Ongoing	Community Services	
5	Rank all communities in the County for risk of wildfire including grass fires	Partially complete	Community Services	2014-15 risk assessment completed for communities along wapiti corridor; some

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
				communities remain (hamlets and subdivisions are the focus)
6	Identify communities that require a “Wildfire Preparedness Guide” that would support the overall County strategy	Not complete	Community Services	City of Grande Prairie and MD of Greenview have guides in place
7	Complete “Wildfire Preparedness Guides” with communities identified in Recommendation 5; and include a “values-at-risk assessment”	Not complete	Community Services	
8	Share final Wildfire Mitigation Strategy with all communities in the County, as well as neighbouring municipalities	Not complete	Community Services	
9	Share subsequent amendments and updates	Not complete	Community Services	
14	Identify stakeholders that are active or have facilities in the highest risk areas; share final document	Complete	Community Services	Final document shared with relevant stakeholders

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
15	Look for opportunities to encourage FireSmart practices and share information	Complete	Community Services, Other County Departments	
17	Update the FBP Fuel Type map for the County reflecting the change in timber type and condition due to the MPB infestation and subsequent harvest and FireSmart projects	Ongoing	Forestry & Parks (formerly Agriculture & Forestry)	County of Grande Prairie GIS Department working on this
20	Provide firefighting training to all equipment operators in Public Works (Transportation & Utilities)	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service	
21	Identify and map water sources (large dugouts, lakes, etc.) that could be available for fighting wildfires	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service	An initial assessment was completed, and now an annual verification is in place; GIS layer available
24	Develop a list of private contractors/equipment to be used for fighting wildfire, updated annually	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service	
25	Provide ongoing public input into the strategy and subsequent updates	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing	Information is made available at the annual open house and

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
	during the County's annual open houses.			during FireSmart engagement activities
26	Continue all public education and awareness initiatives and programs that have been implemented within the County of Grande Prairie, regularly assessing and updating them.	Ongoing	Communications and Marketing, Regional Fire Service	See "Past Public Events and Initiatives"
27	Develop a formal FireSmart Communications Plan to support the FireSmart Program within the County. This plan will identify target audiences, key messages, education/communication methods and tools, timing and budget.	Not complete	Communications and Marketing	
30	County of Grande Prairie Planning Director or Senior Planner, Fire Chief, Fire Marshal and Communications Manager or designates to attend the annual FireSmart Community Series Workshop.	Ongoing	Community Services	

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
31	Host a FireSmart Community Series Workshop in the region for developers, realtors, homebuilders, elected officials and various County staff departments to equip them with the tools, expertise, and contacts they need to help build a FireSmart region.	Not complete	Community Services	
33	Host FireSmart Community Champion workshops to engage private landowners	Complete	Regional Fire Service	
36	Investigate and research what other municipalities have done to amend or update their bylaws to reflect FireSmart principles	Complete	Planning Services	Bylaw update in progress
37	Include or consider FireSmart principles in the scheduled review of the County's Land Use Bylaw	Partially complete	Planning Services	The focus has been on safety measures within a building (Alberta Building Code) - not FireSmart. New recommendation to focus on FireSmart home protection principles

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
38	Continue to provide information with new development permits when issued, and consider development of a comprehensive information package	In progress	Community Services, Planning Services	Began in Q1 2016
47	Work with land owners to develop FireSmart projects on private land - Priority Area 3	Ongoing	Community Services	Public information webinar, recorded & posted, engagement page on website, final report shared publicly; completed June 2021. Implementing FS principles on private properties
48	Propose fuel reduction/modification project - Priority Area 3	In progress	Community Services	Treatment of the first 19.09 ha completed in June 2024; Approximately 41.05 ha under current vegetation management grant (proposed completion 2025-2026); potentially another ~70 ha TFA in 2025 (not specifically a FS project)
69	Investigate and identify possible firewood sites for both private and commercial use	Not complete	Community Services	Campground wood purchased directly in previous years

	Recommendation	Status	Responsibility	Notes
70	Set up areas for firewood production (in County)	Not complete	Forestry & Parks (Agriculture & Forestry)	
71	Monitor current Mutual Aid Agreements and update as required	Ongoing	Regional Fire Service	
73	Modify and renew existing plans on expiration	Complete	Community Services	
74	Form a FireSmart Committee responsible for the annual review of the strategy and any updates	Ongoing	Community Services	Project based taskforces set up; consider dormant role in between strategies

Appendix III Indigenous Communities and Stakeholders

Category	Organizations/Entities	Relevance to Wildfire Mitigation
Expert	Brian Reid (Infinite Forestry Consulting)	Provides expertise in forestry management and mitigation strategies.
Expert	Wes Nimco (FRIAA)	FRIAA focuses on forest resource improvement, offering insights for sustainable management and fire prevention. Wes has been involved in many mitigation efforts for in the County.
Forest Industry	CanFor	Influences risk and management of forested areas.
Forest Industry	International Paper	Influences risk and management of forested areas.
Forest Industry	West Fraser	Influences risk and management of forested areas.
Forest Industry	Weyerhaeuser GP	Influences risk and management of forested areas.
Government Agencies	Alberta Forestry and Parks	Manages forestry resources and enforces regulations for fire management strategies.
Government Agencies	Wildfire Management Branch	Responsible for wildfire prevention and management.

Category	Organizations/Entities	Relevance to Wildfire Mitigation
Government Agencies	Wapiti Recreation and Trail Management Plan Group	Planning the recreation and trails for the Wapiti Dunes
Indigenous Communities	Duncan's First Nation	Traditional Ecological Knowledge vital for understanding fire behaviour and land stewardship.
Indigenous Communities	Grande Prairie Metis District	Traditional Ecological Knowledge vital for understanding fire behaviour and land stewardship.
Indigenous Communities	Horse Lake First Nation	Traditional Ecological Knowledge vital for understanding fire behaviour and land stewardship.
Indigenous Communities	Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation	Traditional Ecological Knowledge vital for understanding fire behaviour and land stewardship.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Aquatera	Water and wastewater treatment in the County with fire safety considerations.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	ATCO	Provides electricity and natural gas services and participates in plans ensuring industrial safety.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Cenovus	Involved in energy production, contributing to regional emergency preparedness.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	CN (Canadian National Railway)	Plays a role in transportation safety, potentially critical during wildfire activities.

Category	Organizations/Entities	Relevance to Wildfire Mitigation
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Evergreen Park	The recreational facilities provide an excellent opportunity to collaborate with users to encourage responsible behaviour during high-risk fire conditions.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Knelsen Sand and Gravel	Involved in resource extraction, influencing land management practices.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Pembina Pipelines	Engages in energy transportation, contributing to infrastructure resilience planning.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	TC Energy	Involved in energy production, contributing to regional emergency preparedness.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Tourmaline Oil	Involved in energy production, contributing to regional emergency preparedness.
Major Industrial Stakeholders	Wapiti Sand and Gravel	Involved in resource extraction, influencing land management practices.
NGOs	Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance	Promotes watershed health and community engagement in ecological risk management.
Other Entities	Beaverlodge RCMP	Local law enforcement contributing to community safety and emergency preparedness.

Category	Organizations/Entities	Relevance to Wildfire Mitigation
Other Entities	GP RCMP	Local law enforcement contributing to community safety and emergency preparedness.
Other Community Representatives	Birch Hills County	Local governance contributing to land use planning and wildfire preparedness.
Other Community Representatives	City of GP	Local governance contributing to land use planning and wildfire preparedness.
Other Community Representatives	GP Fire Department	Plays a crucial role in firefighting, emergency response, and community education.
Other Community Representatives	MD of Greenview No. 16	Local governance contributing to land use planning and wildfire preparedness.
Other Community Representatives	Saddle Hills County	Local governance contributing to land use planning and wildfire preparedness.
Recreational Clubs	Wapiti Nordic Ski Club	Engages the community in outdoor activities while promoting responsible land use.
Recreational Clubs	Wapiti Off-Road Association	Critical in the discussion about wildfire safety.

Appendix IV Values at Risk

STANDARD VALUES AT RISK

Name	Location (legal)	Owner	Type of Facility
Wapiti Ridge	SE 20,70,3,W6	private	subdivision
Crystal Creek Acres	parts SW,SE 24, 71,4,W6	private	subdivision
Aspen Ridge	W 13,71,5,W6	private	subdivision
Sunridge Estates	SE 13,71,5,W6	private	subdivision
Arthur Lane	SE 14,71,5,W6	private	subdivision
Bear Ridge Estates	parts SE 9,71,5,W6	private	subdivision
Taylor Estates	SW 8,71,5,W6	private	subdivision
Pine Valley Estates	NW 5,71,5,W6	private	subdivision
Wedgewood Estates	NE 1,71,6,W6	private	subdivision
Dunes	parts NW,NE 25, 70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Dunes on 17th	NE 25,70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Tamarack Estates	parts NE 6,70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Sandy Lane Estates	NW 35,70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Mandalay Estates	NE 25, 70,6,W6	private	subdivision

Name	Location (legal)	Owner	Type of Facility
Dunes West	SW 21,SE 20,70, 6,W6	private	subdivision
The Ranch	NE 20,70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Deer Ridge Estates	SE 29,70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Mystik Ridge	SW 29,70,6,W6	private	subdivision
Sunrise Estates	NE 34 70 6 W6	private	subdivision
Wapiti Heights Estates	NE,27,70,7,W6	private	subdivision
Bearspaw Estates	NE 11,71,5, W6	private	subdivision
The Banks at Spring Creek	SE 25 70 7 W6	private	subdivision
River Road Estates	NW,35,70,6 W6	private	subdivision
Pinebrook Estates	NE,6,71,5 W6	private	subdivision
Riverview Pine Estates	parts SE,SW26, 70,7,W6	private	subdivision
Wapiti Nordic Ski Club	Parts SW,SE27, NW,NE22,70,6,W 6	Wapiti Nordic Ski Club	recreation
Scouts Canada	SW 27, 70,6,W6		Summer camp
Pineridge Camp	NE 27, 70,6,W6	Grande Prairie Church of Christ	summer camp

Name	Location (legal)	Owner	Type of Facility
Camp Wapiti	SE 25,70,6,W6	Mclaurin Baptist Church	summer camp
Camp Tamarack	parts NW26,70,6,W6	Camp Tamarack Association	camp
Wapiti Shooters Club	SE 36,70,6,W6	Wapiti Shooters Club	recreation
Evergreen Park	31, W32,70,5,W6	Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society	-
PARDs	parts SW5,71,5,W6		-
McGovern's RV & Marine Campground	NW 31,70,5,W6	Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society	recreation
Archery Range	NW 31,70,5,W6	Game County Archers	recreation
Peace Draft Horse Club	NW 31,70,5,W6	Peace Draft Horse Club	recreation

Name	Location (legal)	Owner	Type of Facility
Grande Prairie Minor Baseball Association	NW 31,70,5,W6	Grande Prairie Minor Baseball Association	recreation
Evergreen Centre for Resource Excellence and Innovation	NW 31,70,5,W6	Grande Prairie Regional Agricultural & Exhibition Society	research
Dunes Golf and Winter Club	NE 25, 70,6,W6	private	recreation
Camp Tamarack RV Park	NW 26, 70,6,W6	private	recreation
Minhas Industrial Park	NW, NE 36, 70,5,W6	private	industrial
County Industrial Park	SW, SE 1, 71,6,W6	private	industrial
Grande Prairie Golf and Country Club	SE 12, 71,6,W6	Grande Prairie Golf and Country Club	recreation
Paved hiking/walking trails	NW,NE 25, SE,NE 35, NW,SW 36, 70,6,W6	County	-

Name	Location (legal)	Owner	Type of Facility
Weyerhaeuser	parts 14, 15, 16; 21,22,SE,SW,NW 23,70,5,W6	private	industrial
International Paper	parts 14-16 and 21-23, 05, W6	private	industrial

CRITICAL VALUES AT RISK

Name	Owner	Type of Facility
Main Transmission Line	ATCO	
Water Treatment Plant	Aquatera Utilities	
Water pipeline	Aquatera Utilities	
Electrical power sub-station	ATCO	
Communications Tower		
CN rail and bridge across the Wapiti River	CN	Private rail and bridge
Hwy 40 Bridge	Alberta	Public bridge
Weyerhaeuser Bridge	Weyerhaeuser	Private bridge
Canfor/Wapiti Gravel Bridge	Canfor and Wapiti Gravel	Private bridge

SPECIAL VALUES AT RISK

Name	Location (legal)	Owner
Bear Creek Cemetery	parts NW6,71,5, W6	County
ACA Conservation Site	Parts SE18,NE 18, SE19,70 6 W6	Alberta Conservation Society

Appendix V Community Risk Rating

HIGH RISK

Autumn Wood Estates	Dunes On 17
Hillside Estates	JD Renton Estates
Bear Ridge Estates	Sandy Lane Estates
Deer Run Estates	Maple Grove
Aspen Ridge	Mystic Ridge
JD Barr Estates	Wapiti Heights Estates
Weyerhaeuser And IPP	Spring Creek Estates
Taylor Estates	Morgans Mountain
Tamarack Estates	Riverview Pines Estates
Minhas	Mandalay Estates
Sunridge Estates	Wedgewood
Pinebrook Estates	Deer Ridge Estates
Sunrise Estates	Dunes West
Core 40 Industrial Park	Park Meadows
Crystal Creek Acres	River Road Estates
Dunes	The Banks At Spring Creek
Pine Valley Estates	Evergreen Park
Meadow Brook Estates	Wapiti Ridge
Arthur Lane	Bearspaw Estates
The Ranch	Sunrise II Estates
County Industrial Park	

MEDIUM RISK

Grandview Heights	Triple L Mobile
JD Willis Estates	Spring Mountain Estates
Mountain Side Estates	Woodlake Estates
Lawra Estates	Hilltop Estates
Willowood Estates	Sunnybrook
Saskatoon Mountain Acreages	Rio Bend Estates
Eastland Acres	Windwood Lane
Woodland Acres	Jersey Meadows
Green Acres	Bezanson
Maple Ridge	Demmitt
Sandy Ridge Estates	Halcourt
Brookside	Lymburn
Spruce Villa Estates	

LOW RISK

Dunkley Meadows	Mountain View Estates
Shannon Park	Westmount South Industrial Park
Althen Corner	Hwy 43 West Industrial Park
Peregrine Business Park	Westridge Estates
Juggers Landing	Centennial Subdivision
Hwy 40 Industrial Park	Silver Pointe
Kestrel Business Park	Hwy 43 East Industrial Park
Crossroads North	Canon Lake Estates
Clear Water Subdivision	Lakeview Trailer Park
Elizabeth Estates	Northgate Industrial Park
Lake Pointe Properties	Flyingshot Lake Settlement
Westview	Willow Grove
Heritage Pointe	Crossroads 53 South
Old Town	Crossroads 53 North
Silver Pointe	Grandeview Estates
Parkview	West 70 Estates
Westlake Village	Foxstone Meadows
Willow Estates	Whispering Ridge
Spring Ridge	Lakeview Meadows
Rycroft Ridge	Wynngate
Catherine Estates	Northfield Landing
Painted Sky	Bridgewater
Crossroads South	Smallwood Estates
Lakeview Estates	Werk
Sprucewood Park	Buffalo Lake
Redtail Business Park	Clairmont
Carriage Lane Estates	Dimsdale
Emerson Trail Industrial Park	Elmworth
Forest Grove	Goodfare
Westmount North Industrial Park	Huallen
Goldenrod Estates	Hythe
Richmond Hill Estates	La Glace
Dimsdale Industrial Park	Teepee Creek
Hawker Industrial Park	Valhalla Center
Whispering Ridge	