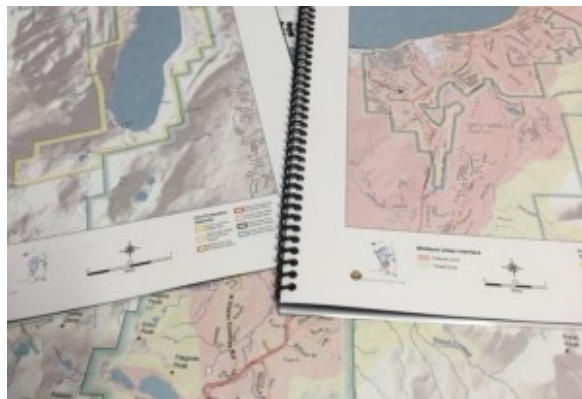


Tahoe fire officials coordinating plans

Creating a strategy for how best to fight a wildfire, knowing the resources available, and making plans to reduce potentially catastrophic blazes are some the particulars of the Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

While such a plan has existed, this is the first time every fire agency in the Lake Tahoe Basin has participated.

“It’s a living document. It’s more about how we do our planning,” South Lake Tahoe Fire Chief Jeff Meston told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Maps help fire officials identify at-risk areas.
Photo/LTN

The document is expected to be finalized this summer. The basin has been broken into quadrants, with each area focusing on issues specific to that geographic area.

The information will be updated as needed.

This document that fire officials are preparing delves into what agencies have done to thin the forest to make it healthier and less susceptible to a devastating wildfire as well as how well prepared residents are. This then allows for

other agencies to know what others are doing and the resources available. It also is an opportunity for the respective departments to assess where they could make improvements.

Prevention is a better tool than suppression for dealing with fires, officials sat.

“There’s a pretty good level of public apathy,” Meston said. This is a concern, especially as fuels are so dry because of the fourth year of drought.

In nine days it will be the eighth anniversary of the start of the Angora Fire that swept through the outskirts of South Lake Tahoe and took down 254 houses. And while those affected by that blaze won’t forget that particular Sunday, it’s not in the forefront of most people’s minds. One of the bigger hurdles, fire officials say, is to get absentee homeowners engaged in defensible space measures to reduce the threat of fire reducing their house to ash. Fire adaptive communities make the entire neighborhood safer.

– *Lake Tahoe News staff report*