

Wildfire Mitigation and Adaptation Pilot Project – Ignite Preparedness, Not Wildfires

Washoe County Leadership Academy

2026 Cohort

June 2026



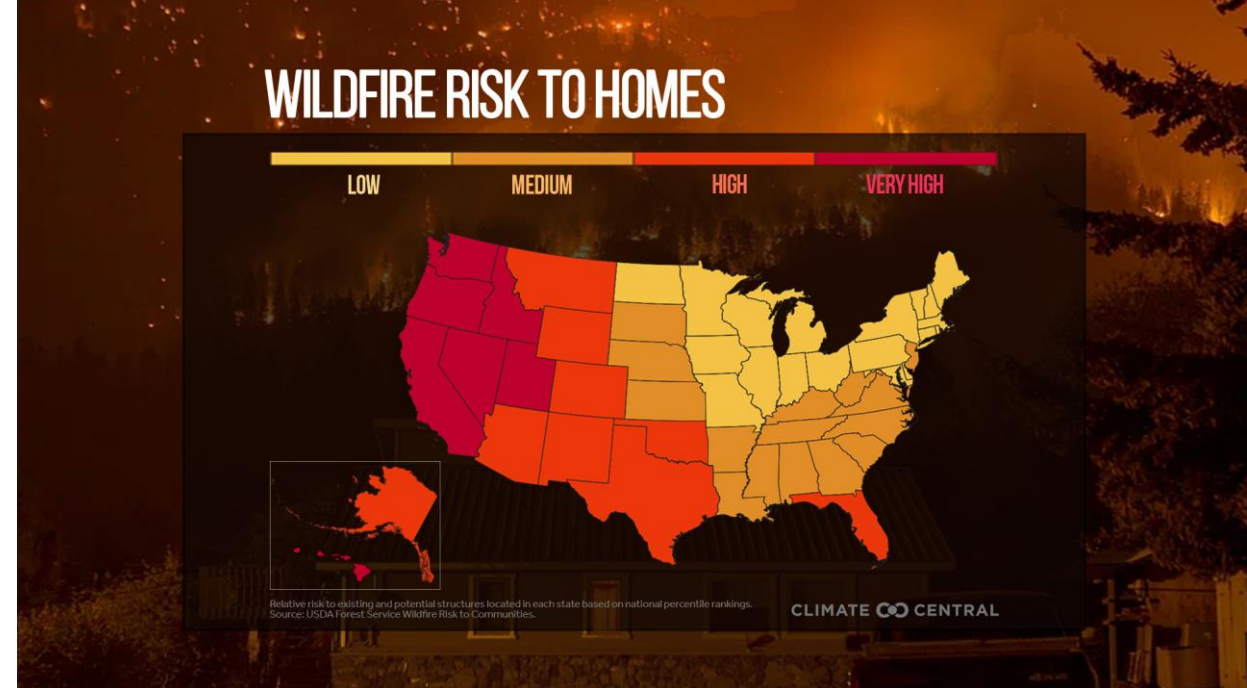
Research & Impact

- The Washoe County Leadership Academy (WCLA) selected Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District's (TMFPD) presentation on the need for Wildfire Safety and Preparedness and created a decision brief aligned with the following:
 - **Problem Area:** Wildfire risk and lack of engagement in home hardening;
 - **Geographic Lens:** Identify a high fire-risk community with the ability to replicate; and
 - **Project Goal:** Increase Awareness and access to realistic home hardening actions.

Problem Area - Wildfire Risk

- Fires are large, widespread, costly, and devastating.
- Western states at very high risk due to climate change with longer fire seasons.
- Fire staffing and equipment levels are limited.
- Nearly 169,000 properties (over 90% of local housing) face wildfire risk in the next 30 years.
- Fire staffing and equipment levels are limited.

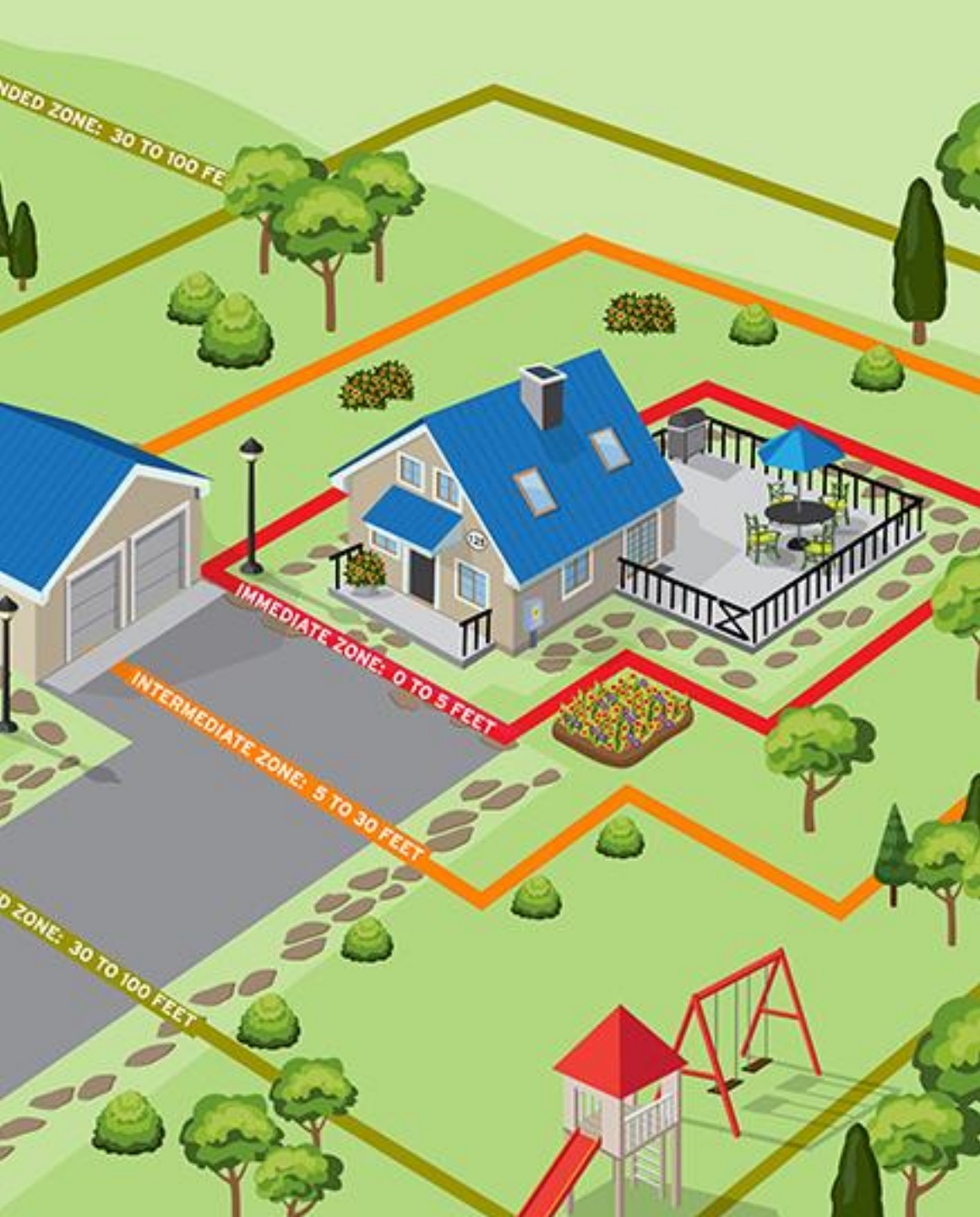
These factors create a pressing need for mitigation and adaptation in the West and within Washoe County.



Geographic Lens - Sun Valley

- Despite years of outreach, most of Washoe County households remain unprepared for wildfire. The community of Sun Valley was chosen as the focus community for this project to serve as a pilot community because it is at increased risk for wildfires due to the following conditions:
 - Location of community next to wild lands
 - Language barriers with authority
 - One road in and out of the community
 - Lack of education about methods to adapt and mitigate fires
 - Lack of resources to implement home hardening measures





Project Goal -

WCLA's three-pronged campaign – **Ignite Preparedness, Not Wildfires**

- **Outreach** through Sun Valley's Elementary school residents.
 - Create flyer in English and Spanish along with educational booklet (provided by UNR Coop Ext) for distribution to 4th graders.
- Conduct **home assessments** and narrow down to 1-3 homes for pilot project, to **harden homes** for fire mitigation.
 - Create a PSA for Washoe County website for sustainability.
- Meet the community where they live by having a table with **Educational Resources** at the GID Dive into Summer event and food truck event to distribute more educational materials.



Impact

- Activity Books were sent to **355** 4th grade students in **16** classrooms across the **4** Elementary Schools in Sun Valley.
- **106** fire aware materials distributed at the Dive into Summer Event (combined English and Spanish).
- **2** homes were recommended for hardening. Pending county action.
- **3** additional outreach activities planned.



Next Steps & Recommendations for Sustainability

Following the research and work of this project, the Academy feels that in order to scale-up this important work across the county it is important to:

- **Engage** with existing partners. We did not create something new, we leveraged existing resources.
- **Consider** redirecting funding to fire mitigation/adaptation to address the the reduction of Washoe County Extension funding for fire mitigation/adaptation activities.
- Build upon the knowledge obtained from this project and **expand** this work in the future.
- **Contemplate** using future WCLA academy projects as an avenue to expand beyond the pilot phase into other areas of the county.
- **Build** upon successes and replicate around the county.

Academy Member Engagement

WCLA Members:

- Attended the Fire Adapted Nevada Summit;
- Presented at the Sun Valley CAB meeting where 11 residents expressed interest in home assessments;
- Became trained in Home Hardening;
- Conducted home assessments with Cooperative Extension Partner on 9 homes in Sun Valley;
- Distributed to 4th grade Sun Valley classrooms;
- Engaged with community members at the GID Dive into Summer Event;
- Participated in UNR/Washoe County Day; and
- Volunteered at the Washoe County Emergency Management Pollinator Gardening Day.






With Gratitude

Though we all had different reasons for applying to the Washoe County Leadership Academy, we ALL walked away with a sincere appreciation of all of the work the County does across the distance, across our communities and across constituent needs.

We are so grateful for this opportunity and are excited to continue to be engaged in our communities in ways that we never knew were possible.



Project Partners & Special Thanks



A special Thank You to the Sun Valley General Improvement District for allowing us to participate in the Dive into Summer Event.

