

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Placerville – Today, the first in a series of free public workshops will be held at the El Dorado County Government Center, from 1-5pm, to introduce rural Sierra communities to the Sierra Nevada Community Conservation and Wildfire Protection Plan Guidebook. The Guidebook is designed to help communities in California's Sierra Nevada create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) that balances fire safety and conservation values, and is a collaboration between state, federal, and local fire agencies including CALFIRE, USFS, California Fire Safe Council, local governments and conservation leaders.

“We all have a stake in helping Sierra communities reduce and manage wildfire risk,” said Kate Dargan, California State Fire Marshal. “Our goal is to help local communities develop proactive fire planning that enhances the natural values of their surrounding lands while providing for community fire safety and conserving our remaining wild areas.”

The inaugural workshop is offered to introduce Sierra Fire Safe Councils, state and federal agencies, and community stakeholders to a new template to create and utilize a customized Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Two more sets of workshops will be held later in the summer in Butte County and Sonora. The CCWPP Guidebook is an important tool for local communities to work collaboratively, to help reduce the extreme fire threats facing California’s wildland-urban interface communities.

In addition to creating the Guidebook to help communities develop fire plans, the multi-stakeholder project team -- led by Registered Professional Forester Tracy Katelman -- has developed a landowner brochure based on a detailed set of Conservation Principles. The brochure is especially targeted to Sierra residents who want to learn how to reduce the fuels around their property without adversely affecting the natural environment. A website has also been developed as part of the package of information to support these local collaborative efforts.

“This is an exciting time to be offering this project to Sierra communities. Most people want to do what’s appropriate to be fire safe

while still respecting the wildness of the Sierra Nevada. The materials we developed through this collaborative process will provide the tools for them to do that," stated Katelman.

The CCWPP Guidebook is an extensive document with seven sections: How To Use this Guidebook, Executive Summary & Action Plan, Appendices, References, Project Files, Conservation and Wildfire Background Materials, and Instructions for writing a plan. The entire Guidebook has been created in Microsoft Word documents that can be downloaded and customized to create a local community fire plan. Although it was written specifically for the Sierra Nevada, many of these documents and supporting materials are transferable to other regions.

According to Jay Watson from the California Fire Safe Council, "Diverse interests have come together to address a critical need and promote conservation-based planning that helps keep communities safe. In the aftermath of Lake Tahoe's Angora Fire, it has never been more timely – or more important – to have this kind of tool, and to take action."

**Steering Committee Members Available for Comment:**

Jay Watson, CA Fire Safe Council (510-435-7937)

Kate Dargan, CA State Fire Marshal (916-248-2205)

Paul Mason, Sierra Club California (916-214-1382)

Vicki Yorty, El Dorado County Fire Safe Council (530-647-1098)

Kim Rodrigues, University of California Cooperative Extension (530-754-8509)

For more information

<http://www.forevergreenforestry.com/SierraConservationCWPP.html>

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