

Kansas Corporation Commission

Wildfire Risk and Mitigation Workshop

How Kansas's state agencies manage and
coordinate wildfire response

Office of the State Fire Marshal

Kansas Forest Service

Introductions

Today's Presenters:

Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office

Richard Watson, Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal

Kansas Forest Service

Bill Waln, State Fire Management Officer

Shawna Hartman, Fire Prevention Specialist

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 4

- Outlines the state's approach to coordinate and mobilize fire and emergency services resources, personnel, equipment, and other state resources to support the local government's firefighting operations.
- This is accomplished through collaborative cooperation with ESF 4 partner and support agencies:
 - Kansas State Forest Service (KFS)
 - Kansas State Fire Marshal Office (KSFMO)
 - ESF-4 Support Agencies
 - Kansas Division of Emergency Management (KDEM)
 - Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)
 - Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP)
 - Kansas National Guard
 - Kansas Water Office
 - Local Government

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 4

- The State of Kansas has 627 active Fire Departments
 - The majority are volunteer, but also include paid and combination departments
 - Local authorities are primarily responsible for fire suppression activities and maintain authority throughout
 - All political subdivisions within the state are a part of the Kansas Mutual Aid System (KMAS)
 - They may elect to not participate, or withdraw through adoption of an ordinance or resolution
 - Responding participating departments may withhold resources as necessary to provide protection for its own jurisdiction
- Kansas is typically at highest risk for wildfires from mid-February to mid-April when weather conditions are optimal for fires

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 4

- Fires have the potential to cause loss of life and significant damage to residential property, private and public infrastructure
- Extreme fire and other weather conditions and/or multiple fires may impact the state simultaneously, limiting local ability to provide intrastate aid and require prioritization of state assistance
- Jurisdictions seek assistance:
 - Through existing mutual aid (MA) agreements
 - KMAS
 - Through Emergency Management when local and MA resources are depleted

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 4

- Local authorities maintain jurisdictional authority, as authorized constitutionally and granted by statute
- A declaration of a state emergency is made
 - KDEM activates the respective ESF's
 - Mission assigned resources are under the command and control of the SEOC, but upon arriving on scene will be under the operational control of incident command (local jurisdiction)
- Under the provisions of a presidential disaster declaration, the SEOC may request federal assistance
 - Additional resources
 - Federal reimbursement for certain incidents and responses

Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office

- How do we contribute to the cause?
 - Collaborate with ESF-4 partner agencies when weather conditions indicate potential increase in fire activity and/or severity
 - Identify available resources for possible activation and response
 - Respond to the incident when state resources/state funded resources are deployed
 - Provide support to local Fire Chiefs, Emergency Managers as needed/requested
 - Be the “eyes” of the incident to the greatest extent possible to the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)
 - Assist local jurisdictions with requesting needed and/or available resources

Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office

- How do we contribute to the cause? (continued)
 - Fire Investigations
 - Assist in or conduct the origin and cause investigation of a fire or explosion
 - KSA 31-137 excerpt: The state fire marshal, deputies of the fire marshal, the chief of any organized fire department of any municipality,..... are authorized to make any investigations deemed necessary of any fire or explosion occurring within this state.
 - This includes wildfires

Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office

- How do we contribute to the cause? (continued)
 - Fire Investigations
 - Accountability: who, what, how
 - Includes potential cost recovery
 - Prevention/Community Risk Reduction
 - Injuries to fire suppression personnel
 - Serious injury or death of citizens
 - Coordinate with or refer to other appropriate agencies
 - State and/or federal

Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office

- How do we contribute to the cause? (continued)
 - Fire Incident Reporting
 - Through the National Emergency Response Information System (NERIS), all fire departments are required to report in accordance with KAR 22-5
 - An incident report for each incident where a response is made
 - Casualty reports for each civilian casualty resulting from a fire or explosion
 - Casualty reports for each firefighter casualty resulting from a fire or explosion

Kansas Forest Service

Kansas State Statue for KFS

KSA 76-425d

- (g) provide assistance for the prevention and suppression of forest, brush or grassland fires in nonfederal areas of the state except on lands within the exterior boundaries of incorporated cities.

Responsibilities under the Kansas Response Plan

- Assist agencies in conducting educational programs and demonstrations in forest management, forestation, reforestation and other forestry related programs.
- Identify fire mitigation strategies and coordinate with the Kansas Hazard Mitigation Team (KHMT) to support implementation as necessary.
- Conduct fire prevention and education activities for the public.

Kansas Forest Service

- Promote and assist rural fire districts with organization, equipment acquisition and conversion, training, planning, and funds to develop and augment fire suppression capabilities.
- Encourage the issuance of local fire bans when weather conditions dictate.
- Monitor wildland fire conditions and elevate risks with supporting partners.
- Make recommendations to KDEM when conditions warrant prepositioning of resources nonorganic to the KFS.
- As mission assigned by the SEOC, and in partnership with the OSFM, coordinate the prepositioning of firefighting resources.

Kansas Forest Service

- Provide assistance for the suppression of forest, brush, or grassland fires in nonfederal areas of the state except on lands within the exterior boundaries of incorporated cities.
- As requested by the SEOC, establish communications with the federal regional fire coordinator to assist with the coordination of information relevant to a fire management assistance grant (FMAG) program request.
- As requested by the SEOC, assist with garnering federal fire response resources.
- As mission assigned by the SEOC, and in partnership with the OSFM, coordinate technical assistance and/or deployment of firefighting resources to detect and suppress wildland fires.
- Coordinate, in collaboration with OSFM, the relocation of firefighting resources when endangered or pending impact from a disaster or emergency.
- As requested by the SEOC, provide available resources and conduct additional responsibilities to support ESF 4.

Coordinated Response

- The Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office (KSFMO) and Kansas Forest Service (KFS) collaborate closely before, during and after an incident occurs.
- Before The Fire
 - KSFMO and KFS communicate often especially before critical weather events.
 - KFS will recommend the type and quantity of in-state resource needs. KSFMO will order those resources.
 - KFS will collaborate closely with KSFMO on where to stage those resources based on weather conditions and values at risk.
- During the Fire
 - KFS will prioritize suppression resource requests as they are received.
 - KSFMO will move those "surge" resource, and as requested order additional surge resources to cover behind the resources that have been ordered.
 - KFS field staff will coordinate with the local jurisdiction in charge to assist in the use of surge resources and long term planning.

Coordinated Response

- After the Fire
 - Once surge resources have been released KSFMO will coordinate with KFS on moving those resources back to staging or demobilization back to home unit.
 - KSFMO will process payment of those resources under their cooperator agreement.
 - KFS will map the large fire using burn scar telemetry and report the fire to Pueblo Interagency Dispatch Center (NWCG)
- KFS Specific role
 - Ordering of any out-of-state resource through a variety of channels
 - National Incident Mobilization System
 - Great Plains Compact
 - State-to-State Agreement

Kanas Forest Service

- KFS Specific Resources
 - KFS has field staff to support active incidents
 - 4 District Fire Management Officers for the whole state
 - They work closely with Emergency Managers, Fire Chiefs and Incident Commanders
 - KFS manages the Tactical Aircraft Contacts
 - 3 Contracts with 3 different in-state aviation contractors
 - 4 total SEATs (Single Engine Air Tanker)
 - 1 Type 3 Air Tanker
 - KFS has suppression resources
 - KFS can staff 3 fire engines to support tactical operations
 - KFS has staff to support the other ICS functional areas
 - Command
 - Public Information
 - Finance
 - Logistics
 - Operations
 - Planning

Kansas Forest Service

- Training
 - KFS provides at no cost to Kansas Fire Departments both NWCG fire training, as well as continuing education courses for those fire departments that request it.
- Excess Equipment
 - KFS manages an Excess Equipment Program where we canvass the nation looking for excess federal and state equipment
 - This will be repurposed for use by small volunteer fire departments as fire engines.
- VFA Grants
 - Through a federal grant program, distribute funds to qualifying departments.
 - Nearly \$1,000,000 distributed the last three years to small fire departments.

Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal

A data-backed web application to assist community leaders, homeowners, and landowners better prepare for future wildfires.

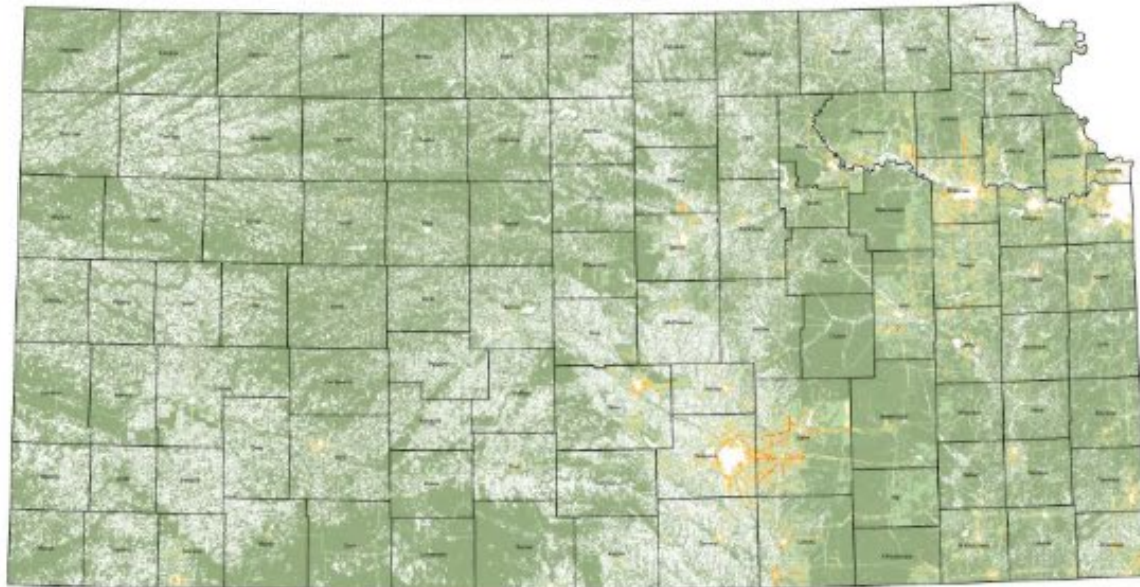
- Kansas-based data
 - Fuel/vegetation
 - Infrastructure
- Utilization
 - Community Risk Assessments
 - Homeowners' Risk Reduction Plans
 - Risk Identification and Planning for Partners
 - Identify Grant Opportunities



<https://kansaswildfirerisk.org>

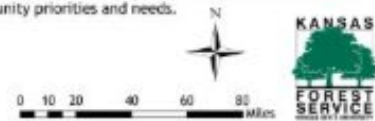
West Wide Risk Assessment

Fire Risk Index



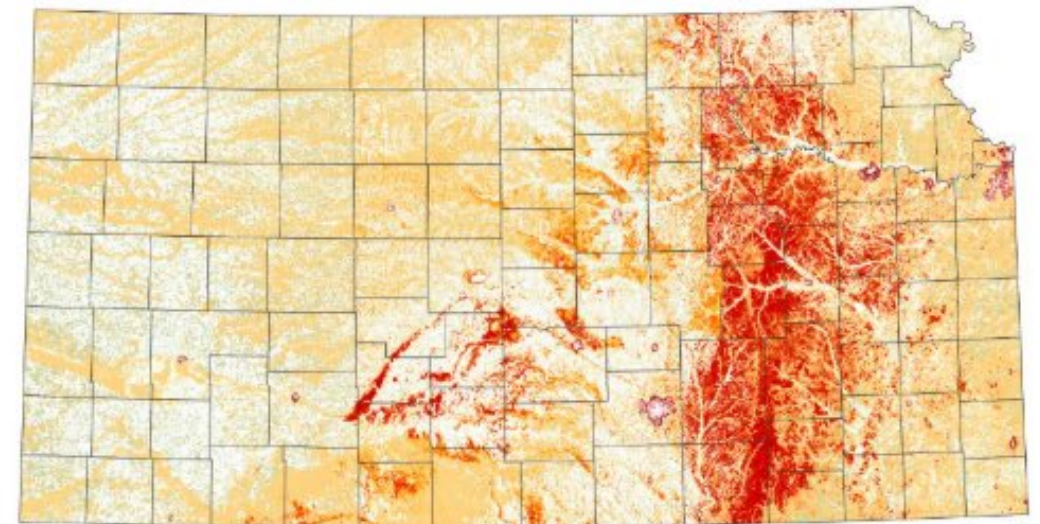
The Fire Risk Index provides a measure of wildfire risk. The FRI can be used to identify where mitigation options may be of value; allow agencies to work together and better define priorities; develop a refined analysis of a complex landscape and fire situations using GIS; and increase communication with local residents to address community priorities and needs.

The FRI is calculated as the FTI times the FEI. It combines the probability of an acre burning with the expected effects if a fire occurs. This reflects the possibility of suffering loss.



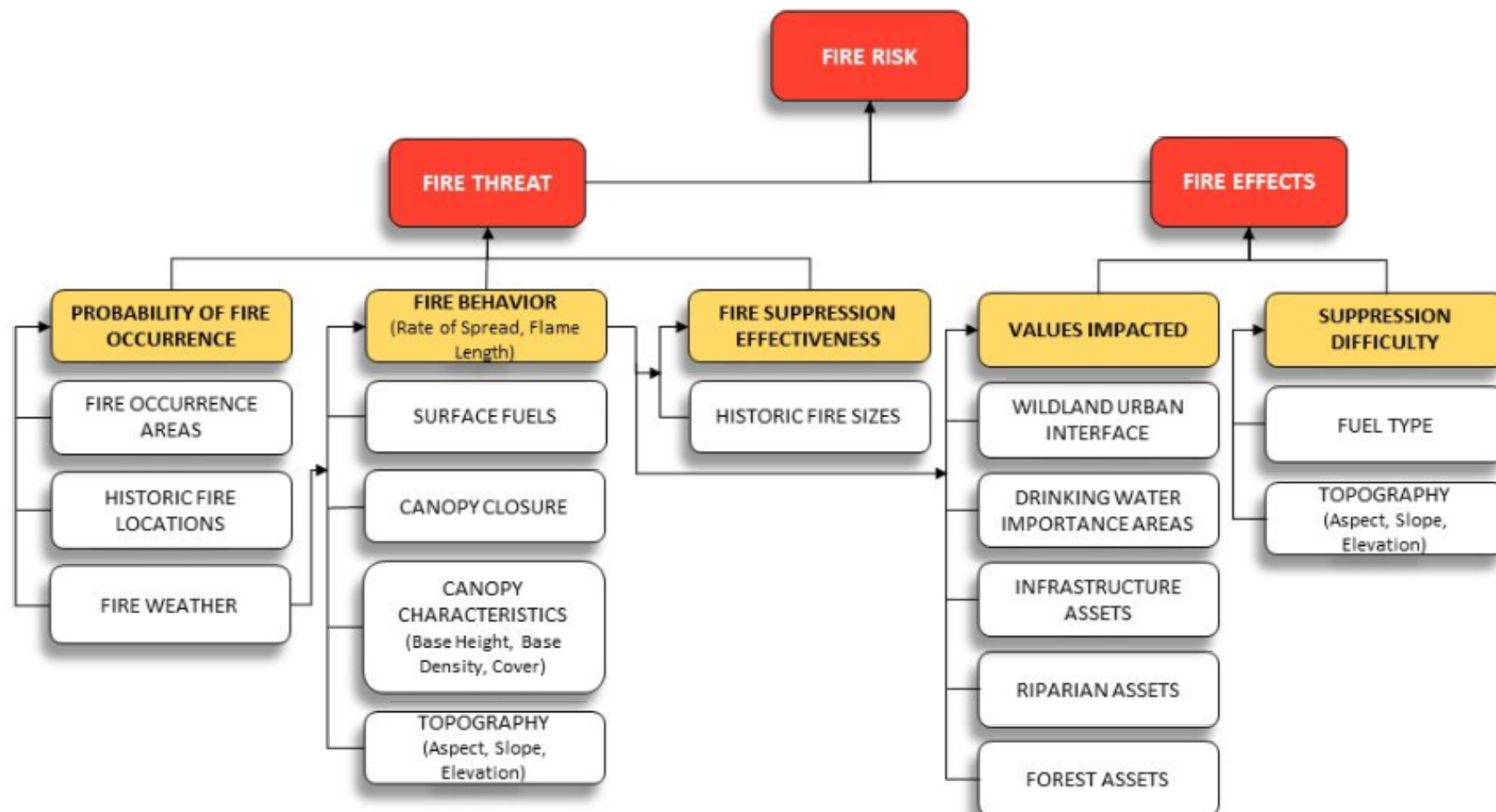
KS Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal

Wildfire Risk Index



KANSAS WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT PORTAL

Providing a data backed web application to assist first responders, community leaders and landowners to better prepare for future wildfires



Wildfire Risk Assessment Details:

- Project originally commissioned by The Council of Western State Foresters (CWSF) in 2005
- Kansas Forest Service updated with more accurate data
- Final product will be displayed on a web application to communicate and mitigate wildfire risks
- 34 datasets were used to create the Wildfire Risk
- Methods and procedures were created and supplied by Sanborn Map Company





KANSAS WILDFIRE RISK EXPLORER BASIC VIEWER

Interested in more features? [Create an Account](#)

[SIGN IN](#)

v2.2.0.1109

[HOME](#)

[ASSESS YOUR LOCATION](#)

[MAP THEMES](#)



Enter address, place, or coordinates



ASSESS YOUR LOCATION

Pan the map to view the likelihood a location may be impacted by wildfire.

Extreme

38.88297° N 99.34122° W

[Download Report](#)

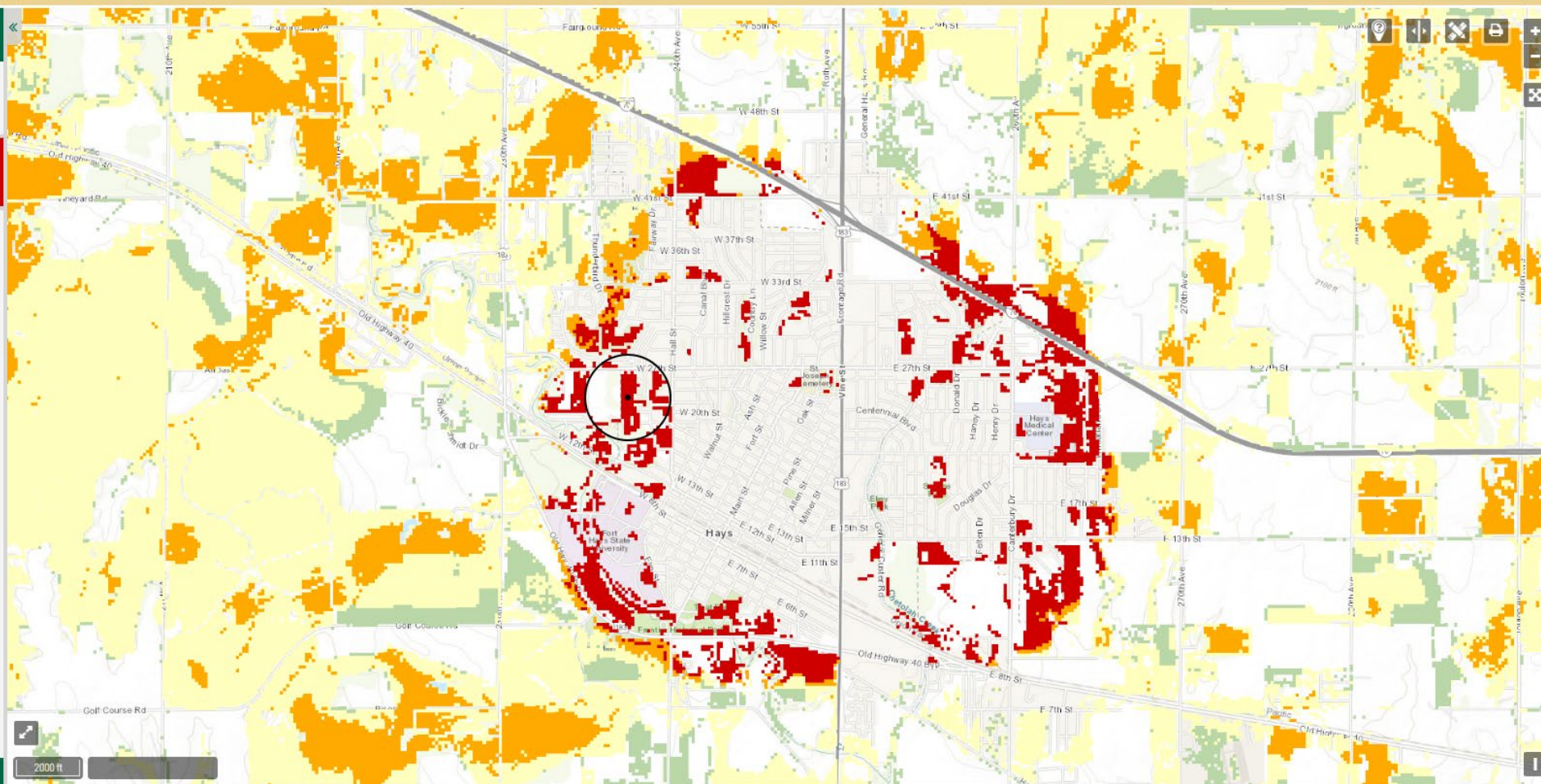
Take action towards implementing wildfire mitigation strategies to better protect your home and property.

As a homeowner, you are not powerless in your defense against wildfires. By taking a proactive approach to wildfire mitigation, you can significantly increase your safety and your home's likelihood of survival during a catastrophic wildfire event. The actions you take to reduce the risk on your property before a fire occurs can make all the difference.

[Learn more about reducing your risk](#)



Wildfire Risk



Community Risk Assessments

A comprehensive evaluation that defines a community's unique risks, capabilities, and characteristics.

Goal: To move from reactive emergency response to proactive risk reduction, reducing the occurrence and impact of emergencies



Community Risk Assessments

- Offer community leaders a foundation to develop an Action Plan
- Suggestions for community-driven mitigation projects
- Emphasizes the importance of Home Ignition Zones
- Initiates emergency preparedness and evacuation planning
- Provides opportunities for wildfire education and outreach
- Represents the initial step towards becoming a nationally recognized Firewise USA Community or a Fire Adapted Community.



Conclusion

The Kansas State Fire Marshal Office and the Kansas Forest Service continue to collaborate closely on the ever-increasing wildfire challenge we face in Kansas.

Thank you for your time today.