

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

This Annual Report is intended to present a summary of the goals, progress, and accomplishments of this non-profit organization.



OUR FOCUS

Vision: All Yavapai County communities safely co-exist with wildfire

Mission: To reduce wildfire risk in Yavapai County communities through education and joint efforts among neighborhood and relevant agencies

Goals:

1. Be fiscally sound with an annual balanced budget
2. Implement a strategic marketing plan across Yavapai County
3. Implement effective Firewise educational programs
4. Be sought-out for assistance by neighborhoods/sites to reduce wildfire risk
5. Communicate county-wide efforts to reduce wildfire risk.

A NOTE FROM YAVAPAI FIREWISE CHAIR

I am very pleased to provide this message for the Yavapai Firewise Annual Report, also known as the Prescott Area Wildland Urban Interface Commission (PAWUIC). Yavapai Firewise Articles of Incorporation as a State of Arizona Nonprofit Corporation was approved by the Department of Corporations on March 27, 2023. This action was a significant step toward the complete transition of Yavapai Firewise as a state recognized Nonprofit and reinforces our commitment and service to the entire Yavapai County community. PAWUIC was nationally recognized by the Firewise USA® program in 2012, and its partner communities/sites have been recognized since 2002.

Three words summarize our commitment to the people of Yavapai County: prepare; protect; preserve. Over the last five (5) years Yavapai Firewise (PAWUIC) has distributed over \$1 million dollars in grant funding to assist residents, HOAs, and partner agencies to reduce wildfire risk (fuel reduction). In 2023, Yavapai Firewise (PAWUIC) provided \$336,786 in grant dollars to help create defensible space across Yavapai County. These projects include 23 Firewise Sites, 171 acres, at total costs of \$399,204 and included \$62,418 in local match dollars.

Many thanks go to our partner agencies, particularly Yavapai County Board of Supervisors and City of Prescott. I am continually impressed by our dedicated and hardworking Firewise communities, agencies, and volunteers. I look forward to an even more successful 2024.

Tom Davis

FIREWISE MITIGATION

“BEING FIREWISE”

Yavapai Firewise is focused on Firewise Mitigation (reducing fuel loads and reducing vulnerability to wildfires), because of the potential for wildfires in Yavapai County. Here’s a list of wildfires in 2023.



- Lonesome Fire: started on January 28 and consumed 20 acres
- Grayback Fire: started on May 15 and consumed 65 acres
- Pilot Fire: started on July 1 and consumed 34,778 acres. Did not affect any citizens’ homes and only monitored by wildfire agencies until it burned out by itself.
- Cross Fire: started on July 8 and consumed 28 acres
- Grazer Fire: started on July 17 and consumed 75 acres
- Grapevine Fire: Started on July 21 on the Mingus Mountain Range and consumed 1,000 acres. Initially it was monitored like a prescribed burn. No structures were damaged but there were approximately 400 residences evacuated in the Whitehorse area, which affected 1000 citizens and more than 100 large animals.
- Racetrack Fire: started on July 23 on the Mingus Mountain Range and consumed 405 acres. The Community of Cherry was evacuated, affecting approximately 100 residences.
- White Spar Fire: started on August 13 and consumed 22 acres
- Point Fire: started on October 17 and consumed 110 acres

A broader history of Wildfires in Yavapai County is provided within the Yavapai Community Wildfire Protection Plan (YCWPP). Click on “Fire History” at the top of the page. LINK: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/d61c338d49e447ca8487609a7ab18138>

WILDFIRE RISK: *Wildfire is a real and ever-present danger across Yavapai County. Each resident has a role in reducing wildfire risk, helping make their neighborhood safer, and protecting their home. As we all know, the vegetation that surrounds us is continually growing and creating more dense fuel for potential wildfire. Hazardous fuel loads (vegetation) must be continuously managed and selectively thinned in order to significantly reduce wildfire risk and the potential of loss of homes.*

Financial Support for Firewise Mitigation.

Various reimbursement grant programs are administered through Yavapai Firewise (PAWUIC) via USDA Forest Service and Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management.

- ✓ Firewise mitigation projects: 23 Firewise Sites, 171 acres, and a total cost of \$399,204
- ✓ \$336,786 in grant dollars provided reimbursement for Firewise Mitigation projects across Yavapai County.

Grant Dollars at Work in Yavapai County:

Grant	Closing Date	# of Sites	Acres	Grant Dollars	Local Match
WFHF-20-204	6/30/2023	12	86	\$148,325	\$26,149
FHP-20-201	9/30/2023	1	16	27,094	3,311
NFHF-21-205	12/31/2023	5	48	\$96,056	\$25,256
Title 3 22-23	12/31/2023	2	3	10,000	1,000
HFI-22-319	3/31/2024	1	20	50,000	5,000
NFHF-22-204	6/30/2025	2	2	\$5,311	\$1,702

Note: This table represents estimates based on information available as of 12-31-2023 (dollars rounded to whole numbers)

Details relevant to each grant and specific sites are available from Yavapai Firewise Office. Please contact our administrator at PAWUIC1@gmail.com

Additionally, the Yavapai County Board of Supervisors elected to pass along federal grant monies for reducing wildfire vulnerability in the Wildland Urban Interfaces across Yavapai County. Over the past 5 years that has included more than \$659,000, mostly to help residents with Firewise Mitigation. In 2023, more than \$129,000 was awarded to 14 Firewise Sites across Yavapai County.

OUR PROGRESS

GOAL #1: Be fiscally sound with an annual balanced budget

- Crafted budget projections for 2023 & 2024 and utilized:
 - Standard accounting principles, balance sheets, and cash-flow sheets
 - Review of budget, expenses, & income at Member Meetings
 - Projections vs. actual year-to-date accounting principles (not consistently applied yet)
- Expanding grant procurement strategies (still working on exploring new sources)



Financial Summary

Grant Income	\$ 212,584
Contributions & Support	\$ 8,651
Income	\$ 221,235
Grant Distributions	\$ 129,567
Gross Profit	\$ 91,668
Operational Expenses	\$ 44,472
Net Income	\$ 47,136

Note: This table represents estimates based on information available as of 12-31-2023. Data cannot be finalized for several months into the New Year because Firewise Sites are still completing and submitting Firewise Mitigation grant paperwork through the first quarter of 2024.



GOAL #2: Implement a strategic marketing plan across Yavapai County

- Consistent use of Name, Logo, Vocabulary, etc.
 - ✓ Inconsistent application across sites & agencies at this point in time
- Crafted and/or gathered information (brochures, articles, etc.) for communicating/marketing “Being Firewise”
 - ✓ Yavapai Firewise brochure + numerous other sources of brochures
 - ✓ “Be Ember Prepared” visual, checklist & video on website
 - ✓ “Creating Defensible Space” visual, checklist, & video on website
- Crafted new messages/information for the website (revisions approved & implemented)
 - ✓ Alignment with strategic plan continuing to be a work in progress
- Engaged in “Being Firewise” marketing via Wildfire Expo, Home & Garden Show, and Founders Day events
 - ✓ 76 resident contributed 348 volunteer hours in supporting of local Firewise Committees
 - ✓ Firewise Sites distributed over 4,500 pieces of information to residents across Yavapai County
- Donations of \$8,651 were received from residents for marketing “Being Firewise” and fuel reduction (mitigation)
 - ✓ We need more donations to improve “Being Firewise” marketing and reach more Yavapai County residents

GOAL #3: Implement effective Firewise educational programs

- **Wildfire Expo** was held on April 22. Theme: Can You Survive a Wildfire? Residents were provided information and discussed with local firefighters, wildfire mitigation crews, and state & federal agencies regarding HOW to reduce wildfire risks on their property. A variety of written materials, valuable advice, and experiences were shared regarding the importance of being ember prepared, creating defensible space, and the advantages of becoming a Firewise Site.
 - ✓ 30 residents contributed 200 volunteer hours to help implement our role with the Wildfire Expo
 - ✓ This event was attended by over 2,000 Yavapai County residents.
- **Home & Garden Show** was held on May 19-21. Residents were provided information about HOW to reduce wildfire risks on their property and other information relevant to reducing wildfire risk. Booth volunteers shared the importance of protecting their property, home, family, and first responders in the event of a Wildfire.
 - ✓ 26 residents contributed 60 volunteer hours to help implement our role with the Home & Garden Show
 - ✓ This event was attended by over 10,000 Yavapai County residents.
- **2nd Annual Firewise Festival** held on Oct 7, 2023 at Founding Fathers Collective. This event kicks off National Fire Prevention Week. Fire safety organizations participate to educate the public to learn how to be fire safe.
 - ✓ 12 residents contributed 48 volunteer hours to help implement our role with the Annual Firewise Festival
 - ✓ This event was attended by over 300 Yavapai County Residents
- **Christmas Parade** was held on December 2. Yavapai Firewise, and its member agencies, participate annually by providing floats, equipment, walkers, and other roles. This year's theme was "A Hometown Christmas".
 - ✓ 8 resident contributed 40 volunteer hours to help implement our portion of the Christmas Parade.
- Firewise Sites provided over 35 educational events that engaged 1,290 hours of resident learning about "Being Firewise"
- Multiple DRAFT PowerPoint & Handouts have been created for educational presentations for sites & residents.



GOAL #4: Be sought-out for assistance by neighborhoods/sites to reduce wildfire risk

- Yavapai Firewise works to engage neighborhoods/sites in reducing vulnerability to wildfires in the Wildland Urban Interface, and collaborates with local agencies to impact fuel reduction efforts.
 - ✓ 2 new sites joined Yavapai Firewise and/or became recognized Firewise USA® sites in 2023.
 - ✓ Yavapai Firewise assists/trains sites with...
 - Firewise-USA applications, establishment of a site committee, and requirements of implementation
 - Mitigation processes, quarterly reports, and paperwork to receive grant reimbursement.
 - ✓ 2 experienced Yavapai Firewise members have assisted and/or mentored new Firewise sites
 - ✓ 6 presentations (or speakers) were provided to 6 Firewise Sites and/or neighborhoods
- Each Firewise Site has a volunteer committee to manage Firewise-USA requirements and mitigation work.
 - 16 Firewise Sites engaged 88 residents and 4673 hours of volunteer time toward site/community efforts
 - Firewise Sites contributed 16,944 volunteer hours (that's over 500,000 Firewise-USA dollar value)
- Yavapai Firewise facilitated monthly meetings for Firewise sites, partner agencies, and residents of Yavapai County.
 - ✓ Established "moment" for Firewise Sites to share successes & challenges
- 48 individuals/residents engaged in 2-day "Assessor's Course". This was facilitated by the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management to provide initial training in the assessment and evaluation of properties from a wildland fire and Firewise perspective. These volunteers were either taking the course for the first time or updating their skills (as required every five years).
 - ✓ 251 assessments for homeowners were provided by trained assessors (Firewise Site volunteers).

GOAL #5: Communicate county-wide efforts to reduce wildfire risk.



- Established an Annual Report aligned with the 2021 Strategic Plan to clarify, document, and communicate progress.
 - ✓ Working to create one database to track appropriate measures of progress of each goal/initiative
- Clarified and communicated interagency collaborations focused on Firewise Mitigation efforts
 - ✓ Hazardous Fuels Mitigation in Yavapai County Mtgs (spring & fall)
 - ✓ Yavapai Firewise Member Meeting Agency Reports
 - ✓ Collaborations and mitigations completed across Yavapai County

Resources Communicating Efforts.

- **AZ-WRAP:** provides the level of risk for the area near your address and surrounding neighborhood.
LINK: <https://apps.azgeo.az.gov/azwrap/index.html>
- **AZ-DFFM:** The Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) works to implement Being Firewise practices including Defensible Space, Ember Preparedness, Reducing Fuel Loads, and other prevention methods. In 2023 AZ-DFFM proactively treated 9,332 acres in prescribed burn projects.
LINK: <https://dffm.az.gov/arizona-forestry-successfully-treats-more-9000-acres-during-spring-burn-window-9272023>
- **Arizona Interagency Wildfire Prevention:** This site has many links which provide valuable information regarding wildfire prevention efforts in Yavapai County.
LINK: <https://wildlandfire.az.gov/wildfire-prevention>
- **Confronting the Wildfire Crisis:** Describes the challenge and potential strategies to reduce vulnerability to wildfires.
LINK: https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/Confronting-the-Wildfire-Crisis.pdf
- **Yavapai Community Wildfire Protection Plan (YCWPP):** This website contains information regarding past wildfires, high risk communities, and descriptions of strategies/initiatives prioritized for 2023-2024.
LINK: <https://www.yavapaiaz.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v1/resident-services/environmental-safety/documents/2023-cwpp-final.pdf>
- **Communities at Risk in Yavapai County:** Provides a list of identified “At Risk” Communities in Yavapai County.
LINK – PDF on our website: <https://yavapaifirewise.org/additional-resources>
- **Arizona Forest Action Plan:** Provide background and steps to assist a variety of partners and stakeholders:
LINK – PDF on our website: <https://yavapaifirewise.org/additional-resources>
- **Firewise-USA:** Firewise-USA recommends steps for reducing wildfire risk within a neighborhood or site. This link provides information on how to become a Firewise-USA site (necessary to qualify for many of the mitigation grants) and access to more info.
LINK: <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa/become-a-firewise-usa-site>
- **Fire Adapted Community:** This contains an “overview” or description of the components of a Fire Adapted Community.
LINK: <https://www.yavapaiready.gov/Resilience/Prepare/Mitigation/Fire-Adapted-Communities-Defensible-Space>

IMPORTANT FACT:

The cost to fight a wildfire is over 20 times the cost of preventive Firewise Mitigation.



BEFORE



AFTER

COLLABORATORS WORKING ACROSS YAVAPAI COUNTY

Arizona Department of Forestry & Fire Management

- Significant Grant dollars contributed and numerous acres mitigated

Jerome Fire Department

- Completed 6 Firewise home assessments, 572 volunteer hours, 353 truckloads of vegetation, 5 acres of fuels mitigation, and 5 safe pile burns. Reduced fuel loads near highway and around the town.

Peoples Valley Fire District & Weaver Mountains Firewise:

- Completed mitigation on 30 residential parcels and 191 acres, including grant reimbursement of \$223,000 and additional local match of \$84,947.

Yavapai County Board of Supervisors

- Arranged for several free slash drop-off programs at the Yavapai County transfer stations valued at more than \$100,000, distributed \$129,700 in Title III funds, and collaborated for completion of acreage of fuel breaks.

Yavapai County Office of Emergency Management (YCOEM)

- Facilitated Annual Basin Ops Drill, Updated County CWPP & Hazard Mitigation Plans, Initiated Evacuation Zone Software, and Aided Financial Assistance for Mitigation and Recovery Efforts.



MORE INFORMATION

Go to YavapaiFirewise.org for information on HOW you can reduce vulnerability to wildfire on your own property!

- ❖ Be Ember Prepared: Engage in spring & fall yard cleanup. (see website for checklist & video)
- ❖ Create Defensible Space: Applying zone management guidelines. (see website for checklist & video)
- ❖ Learning your wildfire risk and take action on your property.
- ❖ Participate in Firewise Events and Volunteer!

For more information contact Yavapai Firewise at: PAWUIC1@gmail.com