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# SONOMA COUNTY DECISION SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

## A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

### *Prioritizing Vegetation Management, Fire Resiliency and Climate Action in Sonoma County*

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#### BACKGROUND

The Sonoma County Decision Support Framework (DSF) is an integrated set of tools that operate at multiple scales to enable strategic investments in fuel load reduction, vegetation management, community health and safety, and the long-term resilience of Sonoma County watersheds.

The Sonoma County Board of Supervisors authorized the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) and the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) to actively collaborate to develop the DSF and to ensure the compatibility of publicly funded tools for prioritizing activities that reduce fuel loading and enhance community and landscape resiliency.

#### ONE FRAMEWORK, TWO PLANNING TOOLS

##### UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION: WILDFIRE FUELS MAPPER

The **Wildfire Fuel Mapper** project, created with Pepperwood, provides Sonoma County landowners and land managers with a set of tools, resources, and information to help reduce fire hazards, manage fuels and protect people, ecosystems, and infrastructure. These tools and resources include detailed maps of landscape elements, contact information for forest and fire specialists, funding information, and educational resources. The project will continue to develop these resources as part of the DSF. Visit [wildfirefuelmapper.org](http://wildfirefuelmapper.org) for more information.

##### SONOMA WATER: SONOMA COUNTY DECISION SUPPORT FOR WILDFIRE RESILIENCE

This project will develop a spatially explicit model and a web-based application to support strategic planning and tracking of fire risk-reduction vegetation management actions across Sonoma County. The spatially explicit model will be a transparent, science-based analysis of wildfire risk to built and natural assets and ecosystem resilience. The model outputs and other relevant datasets will be built into an easy-to-use decision support tool that will assist county-wide stakeholders in prioritizing sites for vegetation management to protect natural and built assets.

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## DECISION SUPPORT FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES

- Support decisions guiding adaptive vegetation management that are collaborative, strategic, transparent, and that are based on science and local knowledge.
- Provide the data, analyses, and integrated web-based tools to prioritize the most effective vegetation treatment projects to reduce wildfire risk to Sonoma County's critical built and natural assets, protect our region's ecosystem services, and enhance climate resilience.
- Provide information and outreach to help landowners implement effective vegetation management on their properties.
- Establish & support the use of these resources by the community as rapidly as possible to accelerate wildfire risk reduction, secure additional funding for vegetation management, and provide transparency and accountability for the expenditure of public funds.

## COMPATIBILITY WITH OTHER ASSESSMENTS & TOOLS

There are many datasets, assessments, tools and resources being developed at the local, state and national level to support community and wildfire resiliency. For example, Permit Sonoma's Community Wildfire Protection Plan process includes the development of datasets, assessments and models to support the protection of communities, watersheds and other at-risk lands by providing wildfire hazard and risk assessments, community descriptions, and a prioritized list of projects which can serve to reduce loss of life and property, and environmental damage. The DSF will track these resources and collaborate with partners to ensure compatibility and the effective use of taxpayer dollars.

## DSF DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Leadership and overall project management for the DSF will be provided by UC Cooperative Extension and Sonoma Water, with support from the following entities, technical service providers and partners:

- Permit Sonoma, Sonoma County Fire, CAL FIRE, FEMA, NRCS
- Tribes, state and local agencies, RCDs, Farm Bureau, NGOs, cities
- Conservation Biology Institute: Technical Lead for Sonoma Water Decision Support Tool
- Pepperwood Foundation: Technical Contractor to Conservation Biology Institute/Technical Advisory Committee
- Tukman Geospatial: Technical Consultant to Conservation Biology Institute
- Ag Innovations: Stakeholder Engagement
- West Coast Watershed: Integration State & Regional Objectives, Project Management
- Technical Advisory & Stakeholder Advisory Committees

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

- Enhanced community health and safety through the reduction of potential for losses from catastrophic wildfire.
- Healthy watersheds and ecosystems that are more resilient to the impacts of climate change including drought, wildfire, and extreme events.
- Efficient targeting of taxpayer dollars and strategic prioritization of investments.
- A more informed Sonoma County community that is actively involved in reducing risk of loss from wildfire.

## MORE INFORMATION

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