

# National Fire Plan

## Wildfire Hazard Assessment Guide

### Florida

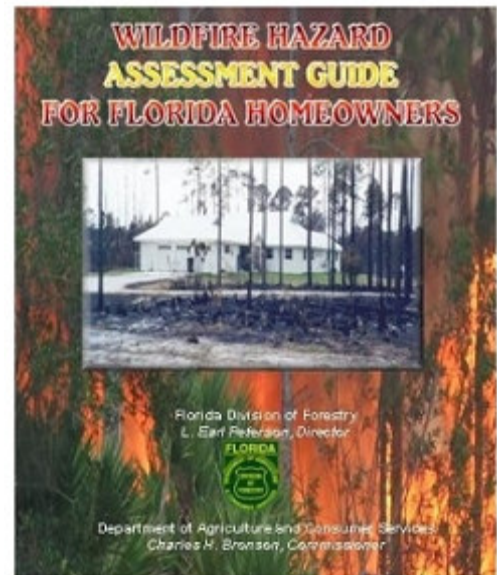
### 2003



The Florida Division of Forestry has for some time needed educational material to help Florida homeowners understand how and why interface homes burn and how to assess the vulnerability of their neighborhoods. With \$10,000 in National Fire Plan funding, the Division produced and printed 20,000 copies of a *Wildfire Hazard Assessment Guide for Florida Homeowners*.

The 32-page, full-color guidebook is an easy-to-read, non-technical instructional publication for fire protection. It begins with an explanation of the natural role of fire in Florida's forests and the importance of prescribed burning for fuel reduction. Subsequent chapters introduce the reader to: Hazard Rating Factors, Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment, A Home Protected Against Wildfire, Firewise Communities USA, Glossary of Wildfire Terminology and Where To Go For More Information.

A key component of the guidebook is a Florida Wildfire Hazard and Risk Assessment Checklist. The checklist is a version of the Wildland Fire Severity Assessment Form provided in NFPA 1144, adapted for Florida conditions. Using the Assessment Checklist, homeowners, accompanied by representatives of the Florida Division of Forestry and partners such as local fire departments, emergency managers, or Cooperative Extension Service, can determine a wildfire hazard rating for their neighborhood.



Color plates of Florida wildland fuel types included in the appendix help the reader determine a hazard rating for vegetation in the immediate vicinity of their homes. The guidebook and assessment help homeowners understand the need for specific actions to mitigate wildfire hazards.

Division of Forestry Wildfire Mitigation Specialists speak frequently at a homeowner meetings, leave copies of the assessment guide, and return later to schedule a neighborhood wildfire hazard assessments. The *Wildfire Hazard Assessment Guide for Florida Homeowners* has proven to be a valuable tool in helping homeowners become fire protection partners in the wildland/urban interface.

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