

ANCHORAGE CWPP UPDATE PROJECT KICKOFF MEETING SUMMARY

OCTOBER 30, 2024

The following minutes summarize the project kickoff meeting. Portions of the PowerPoint presentation created by Bintel, Inc. are included for reference.

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Many of these departments and organizations were represented by multiple individuals

Anchorage Fire Department

MOA Office of Emergency Management

Alaska Venture Fund

MOA Parks & Recreation

US Forest Service

Native Village of Eklutna

Alaska Division of Forestry

Chugach Electric Association

Bureau of Land Management

Girdwood Fire & Rescue

MOA Geographic Information Systems

UAA ISER

Chugiak Volunteer Fire & Rescue

Office of the Mayor

JBER

AFD FIRE CHIEF DOUG SCHRAGE

- 3 years ago, the urgent need was identified for this project; the last CWPP update was in 2008
- Congressional appropriation from Senator Murkowski managed by the USFS paved the way for us to do this work
- This CWPP will provide a roadmap to guide the next few years of mitigation work
- Assembly members in support of this project include Johnson, Sulte, and Brawley
- This project is a marriage of Dr. Jen Schmidt's (UAA ISER) research and data recommendations with an actionable plan

AFD WILDFIRE MANAGER JON GLOVER

- Thank you for your engagement; everyone on the team contributes significant value and plays a critical role in this project
- CWPP Objectives: Identify wildfire risk; establish clear priorities in reducing our hazards; and strengthen our emergency preparedness
- CWPP Aim: Develop a comprehensive, actionable plan that protects lives, property and our natural resources.

AFD WUI PROJECT MANAGER STEPHANIE DUFEK

- Multifaceted role during this project: coordinating/facilitating meetings; communicating project needs and updates; establishing workgroups; acting as a liaison between the team, Bintel, and the community to promote collaboration and transparency; and taking measures to ensure a quality end-product
- This project is an opportunity for this team to build and strengthen working relationships that will last well beyond this project. The CWPP is step one in the larger objective of protecting our community
- Working on establishing a community committee and seeking team members' recommendations

TEAM INTRODUCTIONS

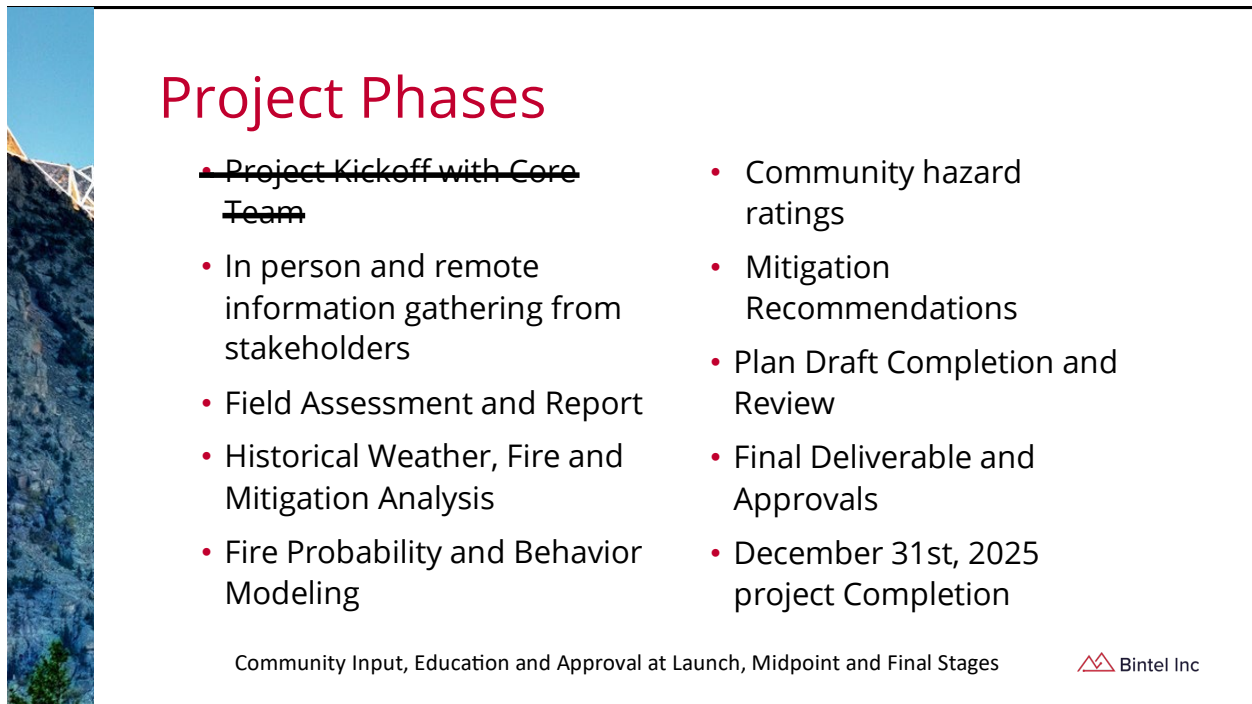
See attendee list

Notes arranged in order of topic for ease of following

BINTEL'S BACKGROUND: Primary products are CWPPs. Originated 5 years ago as an extension of a 15-year-old AI business that focused on geospatial representatives of intelligence. Performed work for large organizations such as NASA. Began specializing in CWPP writing approximately 1.5 years ago. In final steps of writing CWPPs for the Denali Borough and kicking off a project for Fairbanks.

INITIAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE ANCHORAGE PROJECT: The project team is robust and full of subject matter experts; the role of Bintel will be to collect all the team members' experience and wisdom into a meaningful CWPP. The Anchorage project is considered a big project for Bintel due to its complexities (topography, vegetation, weather) and amount of data available.


METHODOLOGY HIGHLIGHTS: Overlapping process of analyzing technical data with field assessments by experienced individuals. Heavy reliance on geospatial data and thankful for the expertise Dr. Jen Schmidt offers. Will modify the typical methodology to address the project start in relation to winter: technical assessment first, interview stakeholders, perform modeling based on the information obtained and then truth their work with a field assessment in the spring. Planning on working 1:1 with each team member. Data sets will include imagery, historical weather and fire incidents, and any hazard ratings analyses.



Project Phases

- ~~Project Kickoff with Core Team~~
- In person and remote information gathering from stakeholders
- Field Assessment and Report
- Historical Weather, Fire and Mitigation Analysis
- Fire Probability and Behavior Modeling
- Community hazard ratings
- Mitigation Recommendations
- Plan Draft Completion and Review
- Final Deliverable and Approvals
- December 31st, 2025 project Completion

Community Input, Education and Approval at Launch, Midpoint and Final Stages

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ANALYTICS: A 3-layered approach – Athena (an AI, analytics-based platform using data from the sky/geospatial data sets), USFS information, local information. Both Athena and the USFS utilize LANDFIRE. All analytics will be available on a project SharePoint site; not all will be placed in the CWPP for brevity's sake.

HAZARD RATINGS: An example from Healy was used. Work with the project team to identify the community- Bintel is anticipating approximately 50 communities to be named within Anchorage; evaluate the community with the technological tools and on the ground assessment; take that information to establish an ICHR (Interface/Intermix Community Hazard Rating).

Complete Hazard Rating for Each “Community”

About ICHR and Fire Modeling

The Interface/Intermix Community Hazard Rating (ICHR) analysis of structural ignitability and home ignition zone hazards is combined with the fire behavior outputs and a GIS analysis of physical factors to determine the hazard rating class of the Communities of the study area.

Healy Alaska CWPP ICHR Ratings (2024)		
Community Name	Score	Adjective Rating
Ridgetop	86	Very High
June Creek/Bear Creek	73	Very High
Stampede/Lignite	68	High
Ferry	60	High
Rock Creek	52	High
Tri Valley	47	Moderate
Otto Lake	45	Moderate

Rating Categories: Low < 30; Moderate 31-50; High 51-70; Very High 71-90; Extreme > 90.

MITIGATION RECOMMENDATIONS: Headings include the goals, responsibility, and priority level. Each recommendation will offer geospatial data information to identify the area/location, who is responsible for the project, who owns the land and who needs to sign off on the project. Depicted both in maps within the CWPP and a table in one of the appendices. This information is crafted to be used for grant applications.


PROJECT SCHEDULE: 6-10 large “regions” will be established by the project team and Bintel; Bintel will work region by region to lay the groundwork for analytics and begin penciling in anticipated mitigation needs; in May, perform the field assessment to evaluate all work performed this winter; will provide the plan region by region as the project progresses and then provide drafts that aggregate all the previous months’ work.

Project Schedule

Anchorage CWPP Update Project	Monthly Mtg		Monthly Mtg		Monthly Mtg		Monthly Mtg		Monthly Mtg	
Kickoff	Nov									
AOI Research	Nov									
Stakeholder Data Collection	Nov	Dec								
Region Investigations										
Region 1			Jan							
Region 2			Jan	Feb						
Region 3			Jan	Feb	Mar					
Region 4			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr				
Region 5			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May			
Region 6			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun		
Region 7			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	
Region 8			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Assessments										
Fire Behavior										
Plan Draft										
Community Review										
Final Edit										
Approval										

This will be revised in March once Regions are finalized, and community boundaries are set.

PLAN COMPONENTS: Slide briefly reviewed with nod to pre-existing knowledge about CWPPs held by the majority of the project team.



Completed Plan Components

1. Overall CWPP Update Document (est 80 pages)
2. Estimate 40 maps both published in the document and on the platform
3. Appendix A – Community Hazard Analysis and Ratings with mitigation plans
4. Appendix B – HIZ Home Hardening Recommendations
5. Appendix C – Rating Methodology
6. Appendix D – Mitigation Recommendations and Maps
7. Digital Delivery of all work product

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Q&A

These questions were asked during and at the conclusion of Bintel's presentation

Q. Will there be a treatment history layer on the map?

A. Yes. Bintel has access to a BLM file for treatments throughout Alaska. Information provided by the project team will also be solicited/used.

Q. What is the difference between AOI and ASI (with follow up clarification questions/discussion)?

A. AOI – Area of Interest – this is the entire MOA

Communities – Established from a fire behavior point of view. A group of people who live on the edge of the WUI. Map image in PowerPoint of the Basher/Stuckagain Heights neighborhood referenced. These areas are to be established collaboratively between the project team and Bintel. The plan is to establish these very early in the project.

ASI – Area of Special Interest – these are sub areas that do not have the same risk factors as communities but are significant in some way. Examples: Native allotments, infrastructure that is important but does not have residences nearby, areas of cultural significance, parks. These are subjective and a point of flexibility within the planning process. Bintel will gladly write plans/discuss ASIs established by the project team.

Q. Will project recommendations be available publicly/to other jurisdictions?

A. Yes. We place map imagery in the plan but offer a table format as an appendix for shareability to grantors, between agencies, and with the public.

Q. Is the municipality as a whole being considered as one homogenous area or are service areas being considered as different jurisdictions? For example, what may be ranked as a [project] priority to a small community that has a smaller population may not be considered as the same ranking compared to an area with a larger population. Will everything be considered independently? In other words, is the plan to create one large CWPP or several smaller, community-based CWPPs each with their own defined priorities? Every community has merit when it comes to the CWPP. *Highlights of the question and ensuing discussion are included in this document, with agreement that a future team discussion and/or 1:1 discussions are required.*

A. Bintel establishes project priority levels based on the risk posed and timeliness.

Timeliness considerations: what projects should be completed soonest due to the greatest risk? What projects may require significant planning/interagency efforts? Balancing these two factors.

Risk considerations: fire does not care about political boundaries; it cares about fuels, rate of spread potentials, ember cast, etc. Bintel will perform the analysis and make recommendations; the project team will ultimately determine which projects will be prioritized.

Q. What defines the rank structure for threat values established by Bintel; is it based on property values? Probability? Known ignition points?

A. Bintel will provide enough data and the framework for the project team to make decisions. As a part of that, Bintel will make recommendations based on fire risk.

Q. What data is used to establish fire risk?

A. Bintel has a list of factors and will provide this information on a later date.

Q. Regarding recommendations: We know that there will be a lot of recommendations for fuels treatments. Will you provide specifications that delineate the size of the area to be treated, the type of treatment to be performed (example: shaded fuel break) in a prescriptive manner? Your maps appear to have features where you identify areas to be treated, but are there detailed specifications associated with each of these features?

A. This [PowerPoint] presentation provides snippets of these detailed recommendations. *A screen share was provided, displaying some Denali Borough maps.* The PDF of the CWPP will contain hyperlinks to the associated map(s) for each project recommendation. Table/data sets containing specifications will be provided for each project recommendation. *Screen share displayed an example of a specification table associated with one of the Denali Borough treatment recommendations.*

Q. How are you integrating fuel mortality (associated with beetle kill, for example) to fire behavior analytics and the plan as a whole?

A. This is a part of our assessment process. We are using data from various applications, including the 2023 LANDFIRE map. **Statement made by DOF:** the state is working on regulations that will require a CWPP to be reviewed every 3 years; updated every 5 years; and expire every 10 years to address this concern and maintain CWPP relevance.

Q. Do you think we should include representatives responsible for the Forest Health Protection Program as an SME to participate in this project?

A. Provided by DOF: There will be several SMEs including this group who will be part of the team who will review the CWPP prior to the State signing an approval of the CWPP.

Q. Can you expand on the sustainability of your CWPP project; describe to the team the pitch you provided in your proposal that your product will not be a stagnant product?

A. Bintel offers services to keep the CWPP current, relative to geospatial information. We use the term “living document,” The data in the map platform is general to the GIS platform.

Q. Follow-up clarification statement: The data, though, is owned by the MOA and can be placed into our arc-GIS program and subsequently/concurrently FieldMaps.

A. Affirmative.

NEXT STEPS:

Meeting minutes and a copy of the presentation slides will be emailed to everyone in attendance

We will work on establishing workgroups based upon need, interest, and expertise.

Provide any community member contact information for individuals you think should be a part of the community committees.

Bintel plans to reach out to each project team member individually to obtain further information

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THIS MEETING AND FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO ENSURING WE DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE, ACTIONABLE PLAN THAT PROTECTS LIVES, PROPERTY AND OUR NATURAL RESOURCES.