CAMBRIA COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN

NR 455

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I. Executive Summary

The Cambria Community Wildfire Protection Plan is a collaborative initiative developed by Cal Poly students in partnership with local and state agencies, as well as conservation groups regional to Cambria. The primary objectives of the plan are to assess current wildfire conditions, develop effective evacuation and emergency response, mitigate wildfire hazards, promote involvement in wildfire preparedness and resilience efforts to the community, and develop post fire recovery efforts.

The town of Cambria is within a high hazard severity zone with a history of fire concern, and faces further fire risks due to prolonged drought, as well as high-density and aging vegetation. This community wildfire protection plan incorporates updated maps illustrating zoning, geological features, fuels, areas of concern, and treatments to the area.

High priority actions identified in the plan include the construction of an emergency egress route through Green Road and the establishment of a shaded fuel break along Burton Drive. In addition to physical efforts, the plan prioritizes sociopolitical actions such as doubling fines on an annual basis, creation of an encroaching powerline reporting program, and development of community workshops that train residents how to operate safely without power during a high wind shutoff event.

The Cambria Wildfire Protection Plan complies with the requirements of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act (HFRA) and aligns itself with the goals of Cal Fire and the CSD Fire Department, while also meeting the requirements of local and state agency regulatory standards and preserves the biological features of Cambria. The implementation of the strategies within this plan reduces wildfire risk, and fosters a local culture of preparedness, responsibility, and long-term fire resilience.

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1. Introduction

In 2003, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) was put into place to increase hazardous fuel reduction and forest-restoration projects on certain Federal lands that are at risk of insects and disease, while most notable wildfires (USDA Forest Service, 2025) legislation was passed due to the immense amount of concern regarding the ever-increasing severity, intensity, and frequent wildfires occurring throughout the United States. To reduce hazardous fuels, restore forest health, and increase collaboration between agencies and communities, the legislation was purposeful to create changes. The HFRA enactment led to the preparation and encouragement of Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP).

Creation of the Community Wildfire Protection Plans under the HFRA gave rise to community involvement to clarify and refine its priorities in the wildland urban interface for life, property, and critical infrastructure (Society of American Foresters, 2004). The legislation gives communities the ability to create effective plans that are relevant and specified for their community and conditions (USFA FEMA, 2025). Local communities now have a significant, central role in identifying risks to the area and creating mitigations that prioritize local values and ensure the community input is effective in location for specific projects and efforts.

The CWPP contains an assessment of hazards and risks in the wildland urban interface to determine proper prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery measures associated with the community. These measures are specific to the community that will provide meaningful and specific treatments to help the community become more fire safe.

CWPP do contain requirements for the HFRA which include three main aspects (Society of American Foresters, 2004):

1) **Collaboration** – Developed by local and state governments, along with consulting with other agencies.
2) **Prioritized Fuel Reduction** – Identify and prioritize specific locations in the community for treatment of fuel reduction including the types and methods.
3) **Treatment of Structural Ignitability** – Recommended measures to reduce structural ignitability that homeowners and communities can take.

As proven, CWPP in any given community is necessary to reduce the risk of wildfire impacting life, property, and critical infrastructure. Thus, a CWPP in the city of Cambria is essential as Cambria is surrounded by Monterey pine and highly susceptible to wildfire. The Cambria CWPP will aid in determining specific areas at risk, prioritize fuel reduction

projects, promote community education, and establish ways to enhance community involvement to reduce wildfire occurrence in Cambria.

The Cambria CWPP supports and addresses the history and context of Cambria, and the many ways Cambria is at risk and how to combat it. The plan will recommend specific treatments and actions along with prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery measures. These will aid in providing the short-term and long-term recommendations for the community to reduce wildfire impacts by discussing defensible space for residences, home hardening, fuels reduction, and prioritized actions with the collaboration from stakeholders for each to deal with issues regarding the wildland urban interface.

The Cambria CWPP is meant for the community to combat issues of wildland fire and the Wildland urban interface. This plan is to be used for management strategies for years to come but has the ability to adapt to change for communities' needs and specifications as the community and resources evolve. The CWPP for Cambria contains action plans that insist on short term and long term, resulting in yearlong processes to complete.

Project Area in Relation to County and to State: Cambria, California

Cambria, California is a small village by the sea that is an attractive location filled with ocean views, pine forests, artistry, and natural environments that are destination locations. The city is known for being 1 in 5 Monterey Pine Forests in the World and is home to many coastal bluffs and rolling hills from the surrounding wine country. Cambria is located along the Central Coast of California in San Luis Obispo County (Figure 1). Cambria is nearly halfway between Los Angeles and San Francisco along the Pacific Coast Highway (Visit SLO CAL, 2025). The town is in between the Pacific Ocean and Santa Lucia Mountains, right next to both Cayucos and San Simeon which is on the way to the famous Hearst Castle. Cambria, California is in the northern part of San Luis Obispo County and on the central coast of California.

Figure 1: Cambria in relation to county and state.

This location is a destination for many tourists and those seeking a beautiful escape, as well as being home to many individuals. Having this area as a center for many assets, Cambria contains many jurisdictions that include the City of Cambria, the state, school districts, San Luis Obispo County, and Green Space. The primary jurisdiction for the City of Cambria is the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD). The CCSD was created in 1976 and includes many services such as water supply, fire protection, street lighting, refuse collection, wastewater treatment, and parks, recreation, and open space management (Cambria Community Services District, 2025). The state jurisdiction within Cambria is based upon the California Coastal Commission and other state agencies. School districts in Cambria are based on the Coast Unified School District that has jurisdiction over educational services within Cambria. Additionally, as Cambria is within San Luis Obispo County's jurisdiction, the management of land use planning, public health, building permits and more are based on the county's collaboration with the CCSD. These allow for proper and efficient preservation and use. Lastly, Greenspace contains jurisdiction in Cambria regarding protection and enhancement of the environment and resources through management and education (Greenspace Cambria, 2023). These jurisdictions are spread throughout the community and are depicted in figure 2 below.

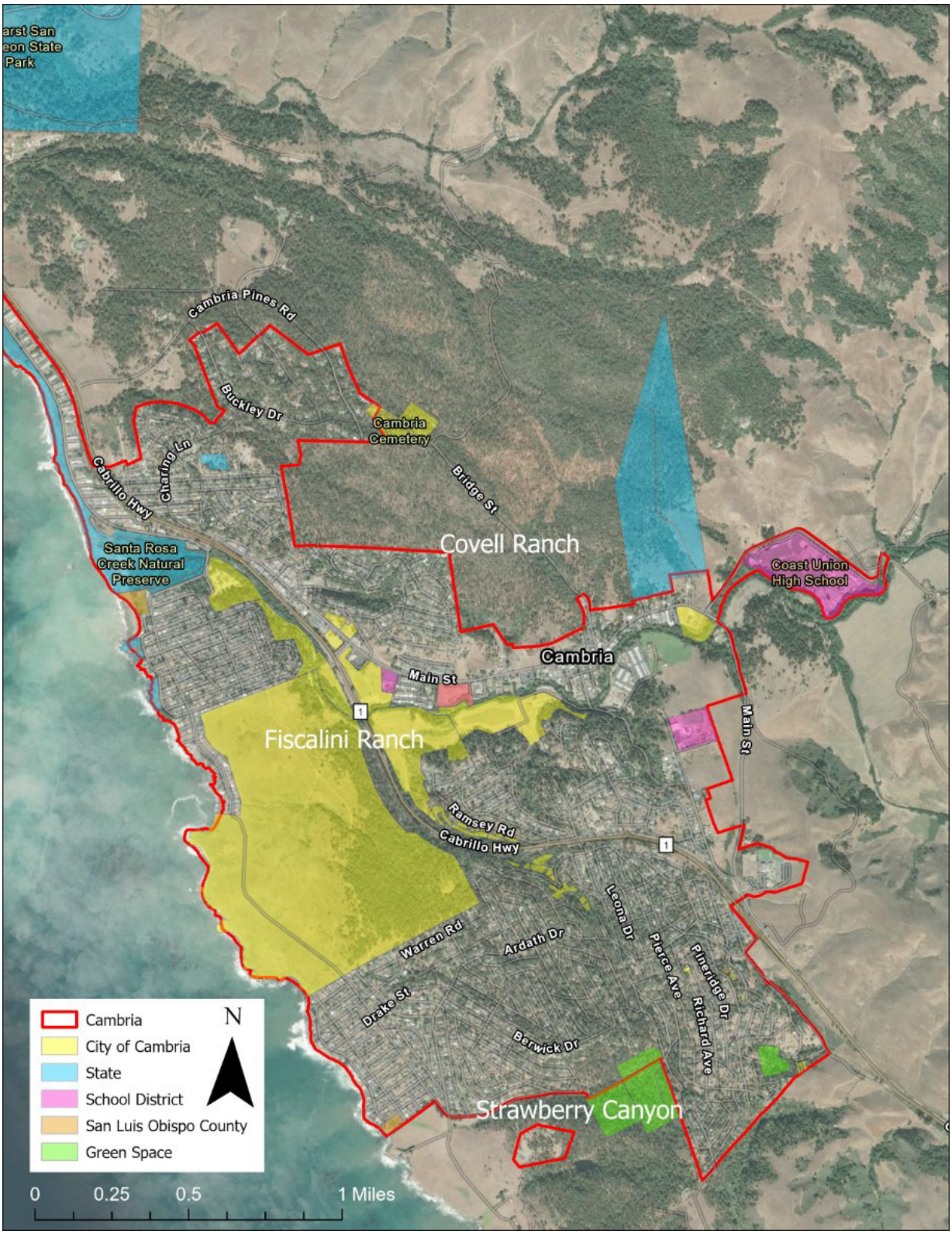


Figure 2: Cambria jurisdictions.

Community Overview & Demographics

The 2025 Community Wildfire Protection Plan for Cambria identifies a high wildfire risk due to dense vegetation, aging pine forests, and a growing wildland-urban interface (WUI). With 6,163 properties at risk, areas like Covell Ranch and Strawberry Canyon are of special concern. Hazards include limited evacuation routes, sparse fire hydrant placement, and abundant fine fuels.

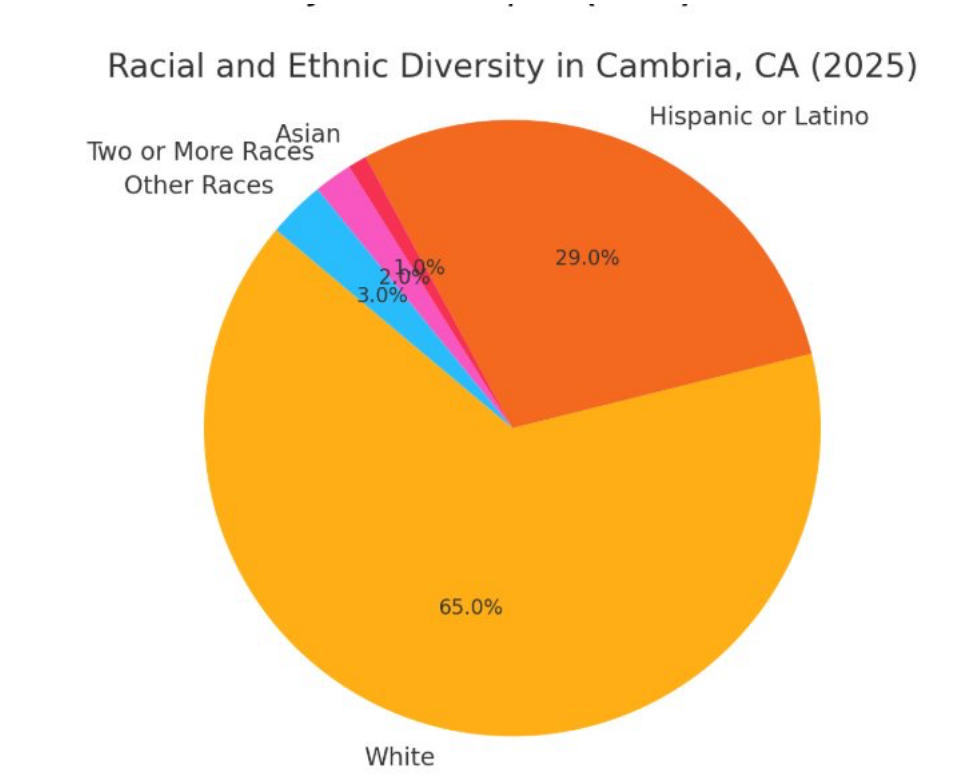


Figure 3: Racial and ethnic diversity of Cambria.

Cambria, governed by the San Luis Obispo Board of Supervisors and serviced by the Cambria Community Services District, is home to a predominantly older population, with 44.5% of residents aged 65 or older. Racial and ethnic diversity in Cambria is very limited. White residents make up much of the population at 65% while Hispanic or Latino populations make up 29%. This required consideration for Spanish-speaking only families within the community as it pertains to wildfire preparedness and sharing important information. It features 2,858 households and experiences a seasonal influx of tourists in summer and for winter events.

General Description of Fire Problem

Fires across the state of California have become more prevalent, frequent, and intense over the years. The changing fire regime from factors such as drought and increased temperatures, has led to a high accumulation of fuel load. These fires have a primary ignition source ranging from powerlines, vehicles, and natural causes, while the landscape with various types of vegetation, varying weather patterns, and topography hold a huge influence over the fire that can easily spread these ignitions. Wildfires approaching urban areas have become an increasingly hazardous situation that contains an issue throughout the state of California. The proximity of urban areas in relation to wildland areas, called wildland urban interfaces are defined by the Society of American Foresters as a "line, area, or zone where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels." Wildland urban interface fires are complex fires that associate both a wildland fire and an urban fire that contain many dangers and complexities. Cambria, California is a high-risk wildland urban interface due to the vegetative fuels surrounding the community and homes, as well as the wildland urban intermix within Cambria. Figure 4 shows the high fire hazard rating that has been given to the community.

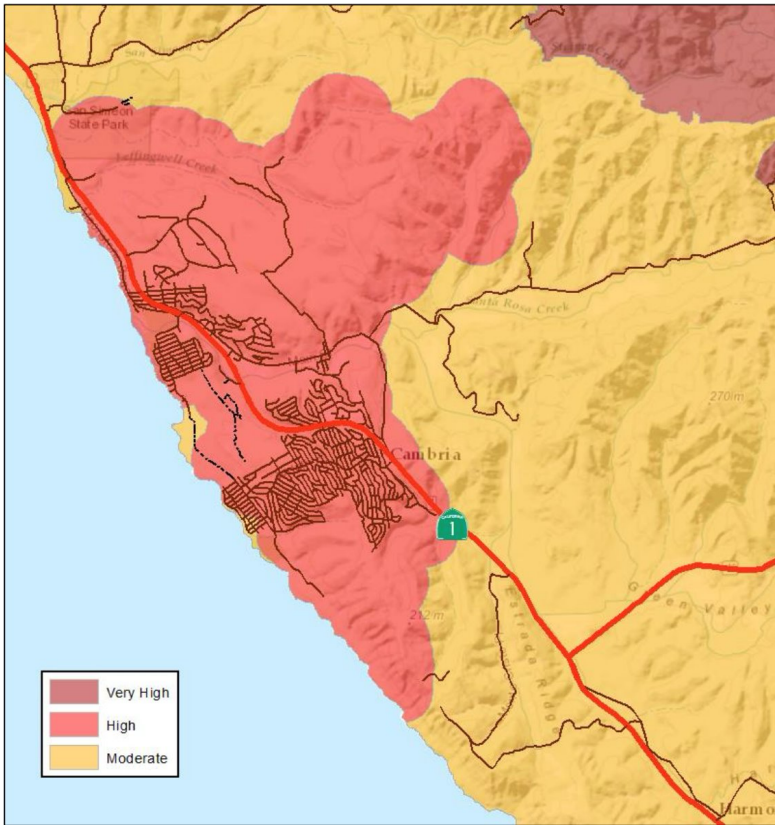


Figure 4: SRA fire hazard severity zones (Roberts & Herold, 2004).

The County of San Luis Obispo has experienced frequent wildfires due to the weather and vegetation of the area, especially in the months of June to October however the fire season is beginning to lengthen and become more intense. Vegetation in San Luis Obispo County include chaparral, grasslands, and Pine forests along with the native Coast Live Oaks. Cambria is within the County of San Luis Obispo on the Central Coast of California.

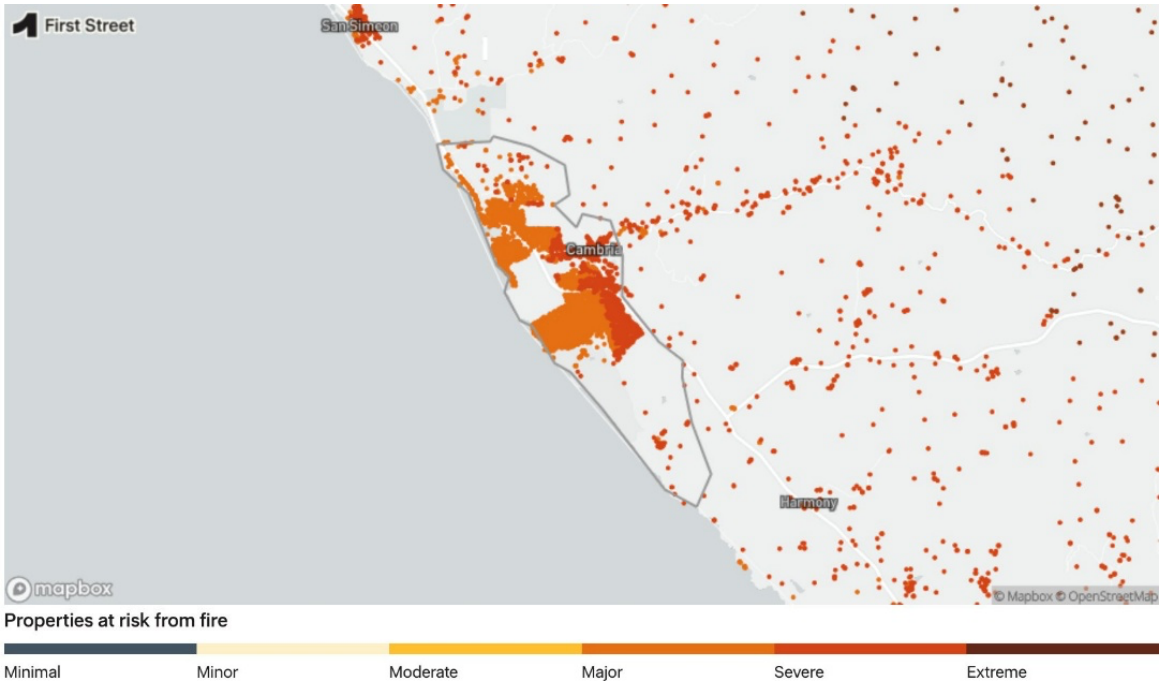


Figure 5: Cambria properties at wildfire risk (First Street Technology, 2025).

The city of Cambria contains some huge areas of concern due to the vegetation in the area which are Covell Ranch, Strawberry Canyon, and the overall wildland urban interface. Covell Ranch is a native Monterey Pine Forest stand, which is 1 of 5 in the world. This area contains a high fuel load content due to the dense number of trees and fuels of downed logs. Strawberry Canyon is an area of concern for the density of fuels it contains which can be seen in figure 5. The high density of homes at severe fire risk all mainly surrounding the Strawberry canyon area. Covell Ranch and Strawberry Canyon create concern for wildfire risk due to the invasive plants and fuel build up that can create an intense fire in the understory that can lead to an intense canopy fire, along with having risk to disease and improper forest management.

The community of Cambria, which is the wildland urban interface, is the biggest area of concern due to the fuels that can continue to spread from a fire. There are a total of 6,163 properties in Cambria, of which 100% of these properties are at risk of wildfire (“Cambria, CA Wildfire Map and Climate Risk Report”). The community of Cambria faces a high fire severity risk due to the many challenges of vegetation management, fuels, and the hazards

associated. The hazards within the community include evacuation routes, fire hydrant placement, Pine forests, and fine, grassy fuels. Cambria contains a harmful fire problem that proceeds from the forest to homes. The forest is full of dead, downed fuels and other vegetation that can increase the intensity of the fire while also having homes that contain fuels right next to or on the homes.

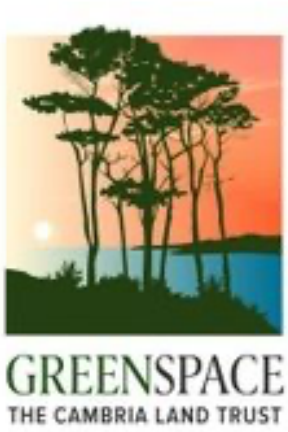
Local Jurisdiction

Jurisdictional responsibilities span federal (U.S. Forestry Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), state (CAL FIRE, Coastal Commission), county, and city levels. Collaboration among agencies—such as CAL FIRE, Cambria Community Service District (CCSD), the California Coastal Commission, SLO County Fire Safe Council, and Greenspace Cambria Land Trust—balances fire mitigation with ecological preservation.

Falling within the San Luis Obispo County area, Cambria also has access to local resources that are available in case of an emergency, particularly relating to a wildfire. Local agencies would include Paso Robles Fire Department, Cayucas Fire Department, and San Luis Obispo Fire Department. With the addition of an air attack base in Paso Robles carrying, 2 Grumman S-2T (1,200 gallon airtankers), 1 OV-10A air tactical aircraft, and a new aircraft ,C-130H, is set to replace one of the Grumman tankers this 2025 wildfire season, with a greater capacity of 4,000 gallons (Cal Fire, Air Operations). Each base is built in areas where they have the ability to be able to reach a fire within 20 minutes.

Cal Fire's presence within the county counts 6 battalions with a total of 21 active stations and 2 under maintenance. One located within the northern area of Cambria, in collaboration with the Cambria Community Service District Fire Department. Together, these stakeholders aim to implement fire-safe practices, improve emergency preparedness, and maintain the natural integrity of Cambria's coastal environment.

2. Collaboration



Greenspace Cambria Land Trust

Greenspace Cambria Land Trust is an environmental land trust local to Cambria, dedicated to the protection and restoration of the region's natural and cultural resources. Founded with the mission to preserve the scenic beauty, biodiversity, and rural character of the Central Coast, Greenspace works through land acquisition, conservation easements, habitat restoration, and environmental education. The organization works under four pillars: land acquisition with the purpose of conservation, preservation of one of three native Monterey pine stands, STEM based environmental education, and resource advocacy. With a focus on safeguarding open space, wildlife corridors, and ecological reserves Greenspace Cambria Land Trust plays a key in player in the preservation of Cambria ecological aspects. As a result, there may be pushbacks, from any treatments to the vegetation of properties owned by them.

SLO County Fire Safe Council

The SLO County Fire Safe Council is a community-run organization dedicated to promoting wildfire awareness and preparedness throughout San Luis Obispo County. Focused on empowering residents with the knowledge and tools to reduce fire risk, the council provides education on critical topics such as evacuation planning, home hardening, and creating defensible space around properties. Through outreach, workshops, and collaboration with local agencies, the Fire Safe Council plays a vital role in fostering a fire-resilient community.

California Coastal Commission

The California Coastal Commission is the state agency responsible for the preservation of California's coastal resources, overseeing land use and development within the state's designated coastal zone including Cambria to ensure that growth is balanced with environmental protection and public access. Because Cambria lies within the Coastal Commission's jurisdiction, all actions classified as projects within the town require review and approval from the Commission.

Cal Fire and Cambria CSD

Cal Fire and the Cambria Community Services District (CSD) are the primary local fire response agencies serving Cambria. They work collaboratively to mitigate and extinguish fires in the area, ensuring rapid and coordinated emergency response. Although the Cal Fire station functions as an unofficial second station to Cambria CSD Fire, Cal Fire resources may be dispatched to emergencies elsewhere in the state, at times leaving Cambria CSD Fire solely responsible for local fire protection.

California Department of Transportation

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the state agency responsible for managing California's highway system. Caltrans oversees six key programs: Highway Transportation, Mass Transportation, Transportation Planning, Administration, and the Equipment Service Center. Any project involving modifications to the Cabrillo Freeway, including the construction of overpasses that cross or connect to it, will require appropriate permits from Caltrans.

3. Hazard Assessment

Fuel Conditions

During the summer months, relative humidity in Cambria steadily declines, reaching a seasonal low of approximately 61% in October. This reduction in humidity, coupled with little to no rainfall from late spring through early fall, leads to critically low fuel moisture levels across the landscape, greatly increasing the likelihood of wildfire ignition and rapid spread.

Cambria's diverse vegetation types present varying levels of ignition potential and fire behavior. Coniferous forests**,** particularly the Monterey pine stands, exhibit high ignition risk and can produce intense crown fires. These forests typically have a Fire Return Interval (FRI) of 11 to 20 years but have not experienced a significant fire in over a century, contributing to substantial fuel buildup. As seen in figure 6, these fuels cover a large area of Cambria, meaning the highest intensity fires are a concern throughout most of the community. Hardwoods**,** such as coast live oak, pose a moderate ignition and intensity risk, with an FRI ranging from 2 to 20 years. Although coast live oak is highly common along the central coast, Monterey pine has shaded out oaks in many areas within the community.

Chaparral species, including coyote brush, chamise, and sagebrush, are highly flammable surface fuels, characterized by high ignition potential and intense fire behavior. These fuels generally follow a longer FRI of 40 to 60 years. Herbaceous vegetation**,** such as native grasses, ignites easily but tends to burn with lower intensity; however, due to their short FRI of 1 to 15 years, they contribute frequently to initial fire spread. This is a particular concern near Cambria because the grasses surround many of the roads (Figure 6) and can potential spread fire to the Monterey pines.

The extended absence of major fire activity in the region, combined with diverse and aging vegetation, has resulted in a dangerous accumulation of fuels that poses a severe wildfire threat to both the natural landscape and the built environment of Cambria.

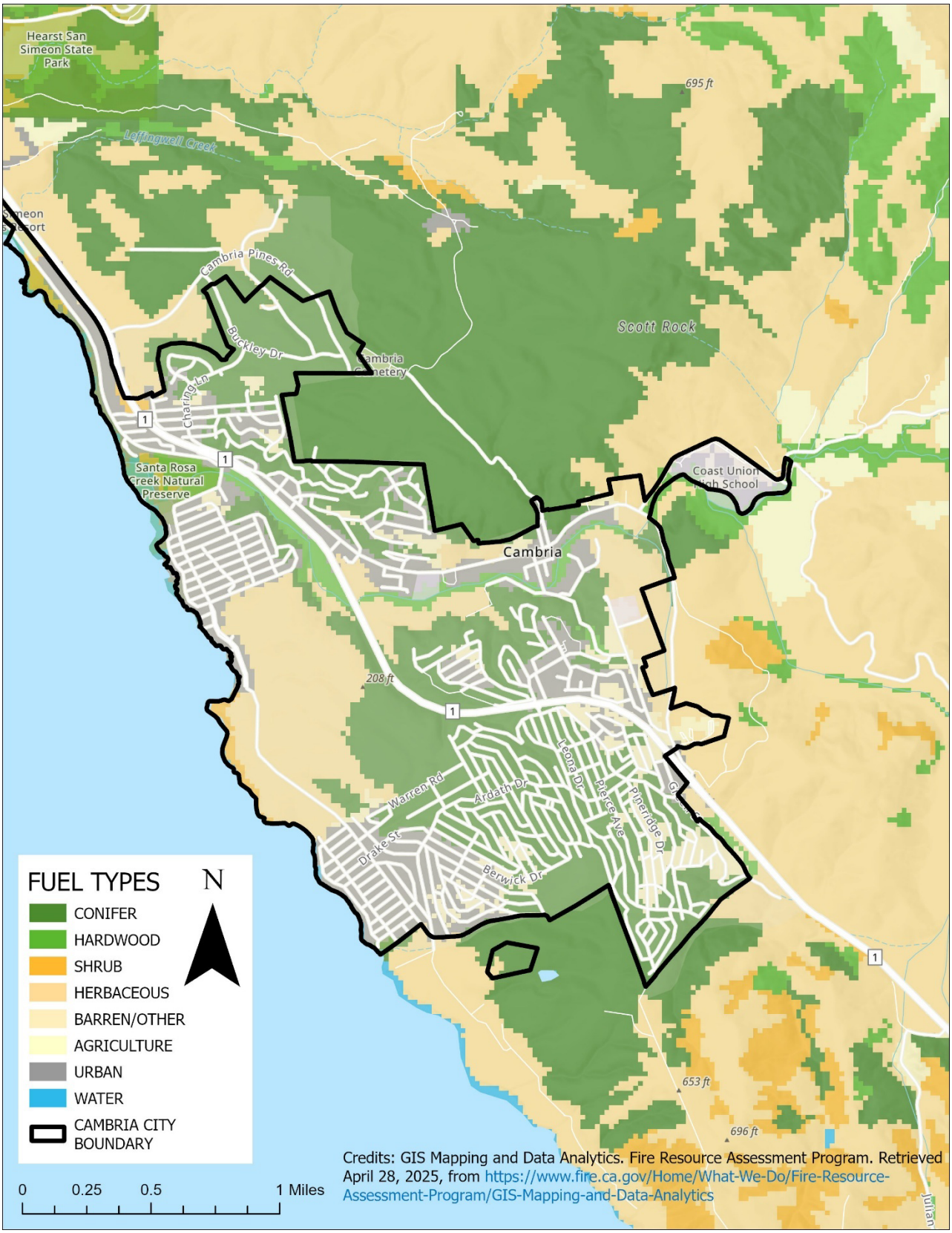


Figure 6: Fuel Types found in and around Cambria, CA.

Weather

Cambria experiences its highest average temperatures between late June and October, which coincides with the region's peak wildfire season. This same period also aligns with the clearest skies, particularly from May through October. The overlap between high temperatures and increased atmospheric clarity contributes to drier conditions, which heightens wildfire risk. This seasonal correlation underscores the importance of heightened fire preparedness and mitigation efforts during these months.

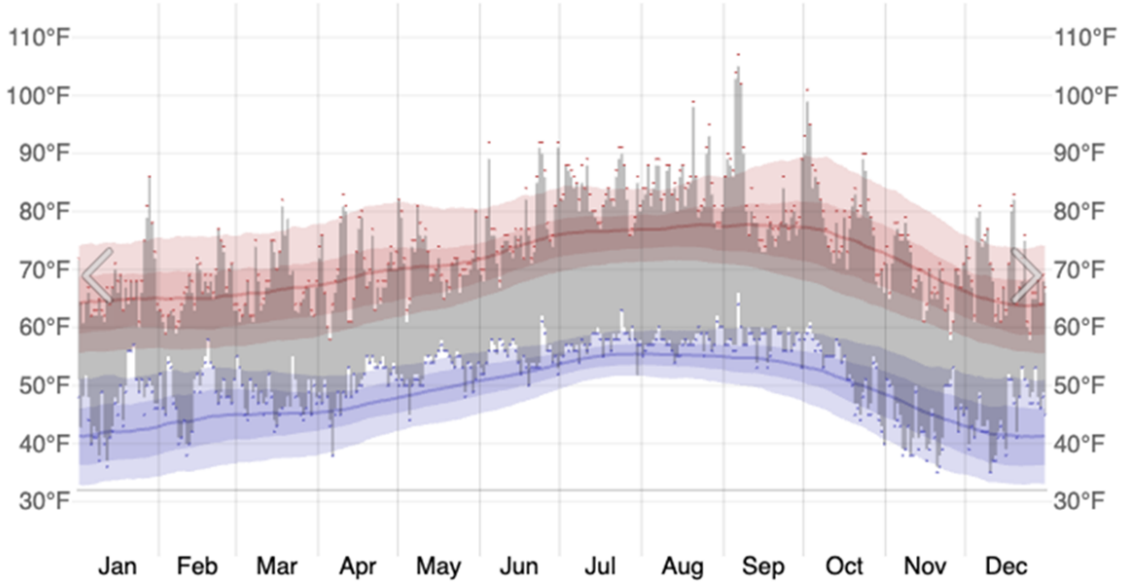


Figure 7: Daily temperature highs and lows for Cambria, CA in a year (WeatherSpark, n.d.).

Wind speeds in Cambria peak in January but remain relatively steady throughout the year (Figure 8). Although gusts exceeding 40 mph are infrequent, they pose a significant wildfire risk, particularly if they occur before the start of the rainy season, when vegetation is still dry and fuel moisture levels are critically low. These high-wind events, combined with

existing dry conditions, can rapidly accelerate fire spread and hinder suppression efforts, underscoring the importance of seasonal preparedness and infrastructure resilience.

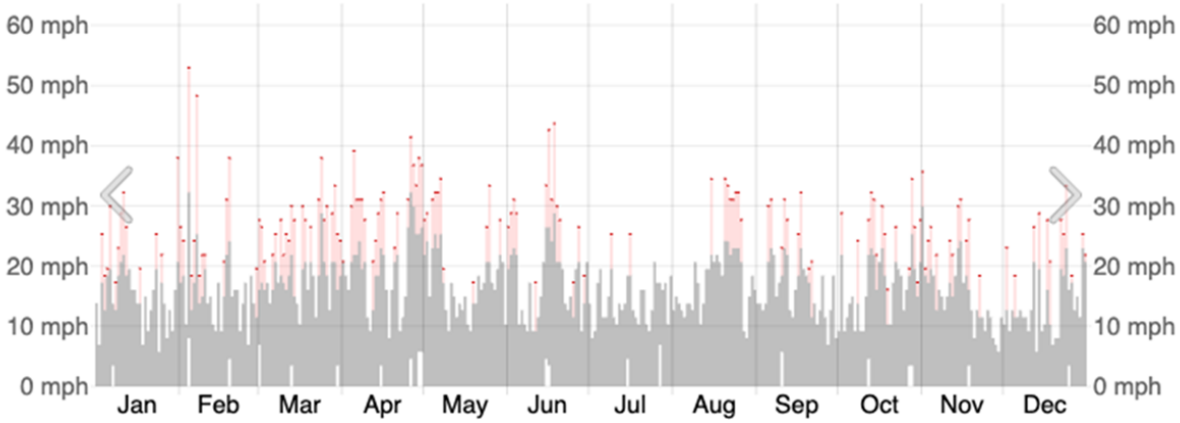


Figure 8: Daily wind highs and lows for Cambria, CA across a year (WeatherSpark, n.d.).

Cambria receives little to no rainfall from late spring through early fall, resulting in significantly reduced fuel moisture levels during the region's peak wildfire season. This prolonged dry period, when paired with high summer temperatures, clear skies, and periodic strong winds, creates ideal conditions for wildfire ignition and rapid spread. The combination of these environmental factors greatly elevates the overall fire hazard during the summer and early fall months, underscoring the need for heightened preparedness and fuel mitigation efforts during this time.

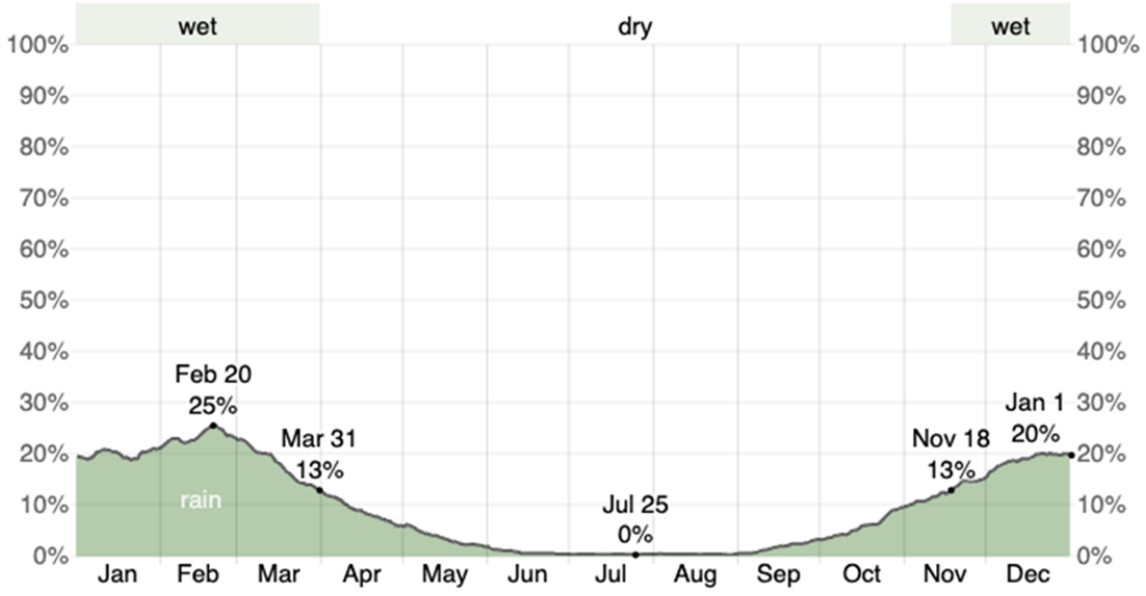


Figure 9: Annual rainfall percentage received throughout the year for Cambria, CA (WeatherSpark, n.d.).

Topography

Cambria's elevation spans from sea level along the Pacific coastline to approximately 850 feet inland. The terrain is characterized by rolling hills, marine terraces, and coastal bluffs, which contribute to varied fire behavior and can influence the rate of wildfire spread.

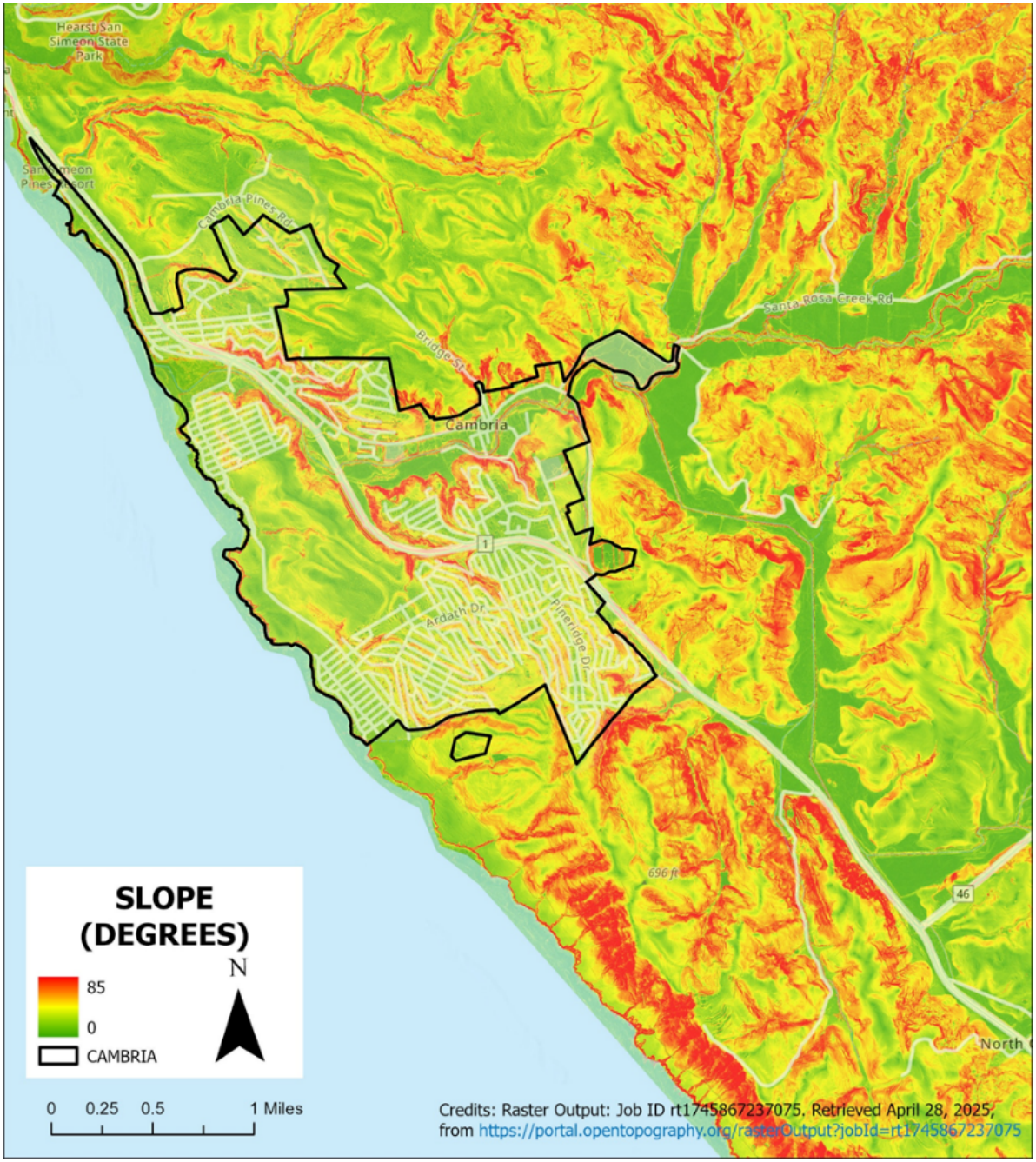


Figure 10: Map of slope in and around Cambria, CA in degrees.

Geologically, Cambria is positioned between the inland Cambria Fault and the offshore San Gregorio–Hosgri Fault, both of which are part of the broader San Andreas Fault Zone. While primarily relevant to seismic risk, the region's fault-driven topography shapes watershed patterns, vegetation zones, and evacuation route planning, all of which intersect with wildfire risk and emergency response considerations.

Fire History

Between 1984 and 2021, there have been 837 documented wildfires within a 50-mile radius of Cambria (Figure 11), highlighting the area's exposure to frequent wildfire activity. Although Cambria itself has not experienced a major wildfire in over a century, this long period without fire is not necessarily a sign of safety. In fact, it is a major cause for concern—particularly when viewed through the lens of fire ecology and fuel accumulation.

Understanding fire history is critical because many of the natural ecosystems surrounding Cambria, such as chaparral, coastal grasslands, and Monterey pine forests, have evolved to burn at regular intervals. When fires are suppressed or absent for long periods, dead vegetation, dry brush, and small trees accumulate, creating unnaturally high fuel loads. This condition, known as fuel buildup, dramatically increases the likelihood that when a fire does occur, it will be more intense, less predictable, and more difficult to control.

The absence of major fire events in Cambria over the past 100+ years suggests that natural fire cycles have been interrupted, and that dangerous levels of fuel may now exist in undeveloped and forested areas like Covell Ranch, Strawberry Canyon, and along Santa Rosa Creek. This concern is not hypothetical; it is supported by observed fuel conditions on the ground and by fire return interval (FRI) data indicating that many local vegetation types are overdue for fire.

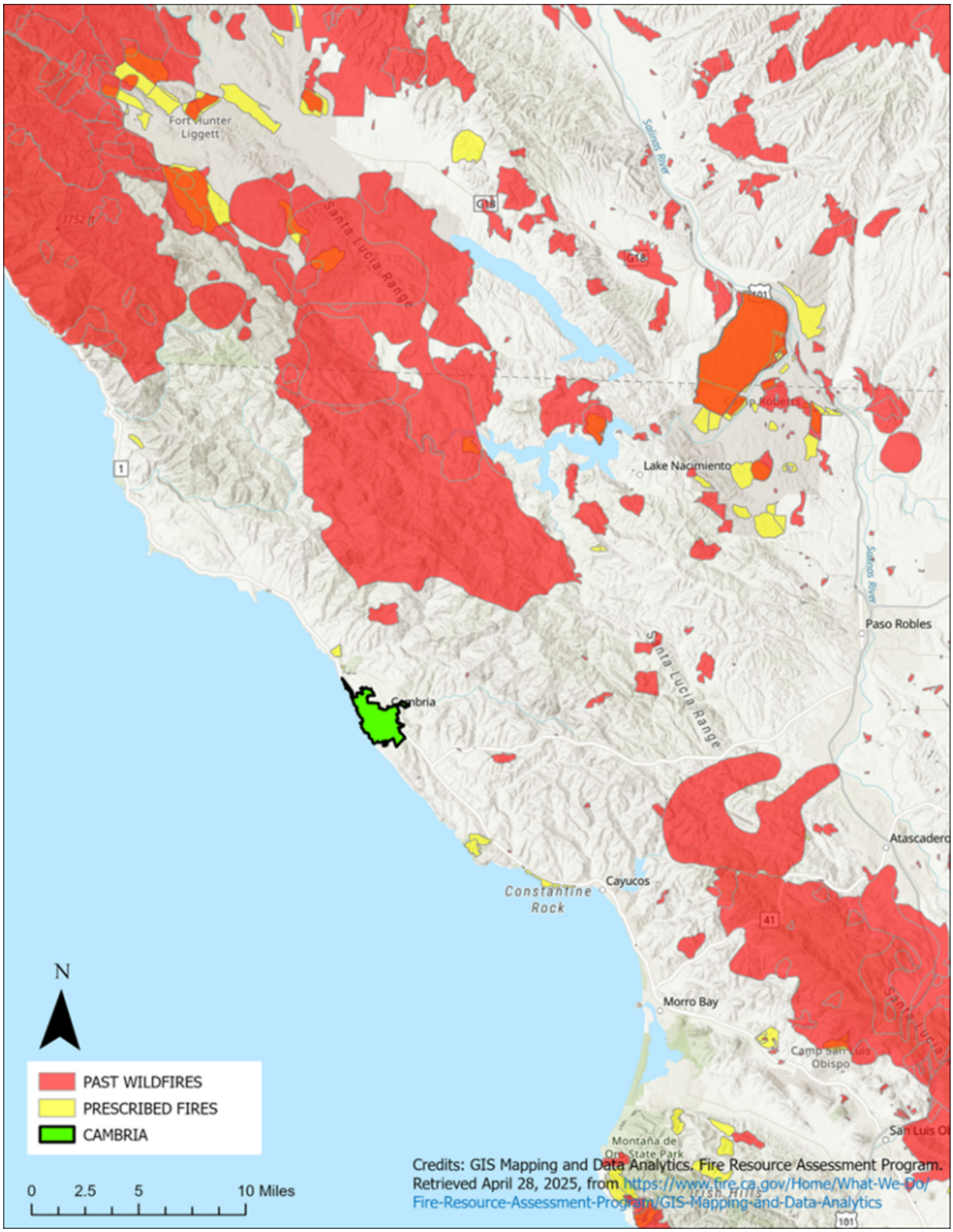


Figure 11: Fire history within 50 miles of Cambria, CA from 1984-2021 (CALFire, 2021).

The most notable historical fire in Cambria, The Great Fire of 1889, underscores what can happen when fire risk is underestimated. On October 1, 1889, a fire ignited behind the Proctor Hotel and quickly spread, destroying much of the town's business district and multiple homes. At the time, firefighting capabilities were extremely limited. In the aftermath, the community responded by improving water infrastructure to enhance fire suppression capabilities. While Cambria has come a long way since then, the absence of a major modern fire event should not create a false sense of security. Instead, it should be interpreted as a warning sign: the longer fire is absent from fire-adapted landscapes, the more likely it is that a future fire will be severe, fast-moving, and damaging.

This historical context reinforces the importance of proactive fuel reduction, home hardening, and emergency preparedness in the present day. Understanding our fire history isn't just about looking back, it's about forecasting the risk ahead and taking decisive steps to reduce it.

Potential Ignition Sources

A variety of ignition sources pose wildfire threats to the Cambria area, many of which are human-caused and preventable. Key ignition risks include:

- Utility Infrastructure: Downed or sparking powerlines are a leading cause of wildfires, particularly during high-wind conditions.
- Vehicles: Fires caused by engine heat, electrical issues, or accidents—including dragging chains and parking on dry grass—can quickly ignite roadside vegetation.
- Natural Causes: Lightning strikes, though less frequent, remain a potential ignition source during dry storm conditions.
- Recreational and Residential Activities: Campfires, barbecue grills, bonfires, and lawn mowing during hot, dry weather can ignite nearby fuels.
- Indoor Ignitions with Outdoor Impact: Structure fires originating from cooking accidents, candles, fireworks, or other household activities (e.g., gender reveal parties) have the potential to escape into adjacent wildland areas.

Given the community's wildland-urban interface and dry summer conditions, these ignition sources represent significant risks that require active education, regulation, and enforcement.

Figure 12: Downed powerlines and trees in Cambria, CA due to a storm.

Figure 13: Vehicle fire on highway 46, East of Cambria, CA.

Potential Fire Behavior

Fire behavior in Cambria varies significantly depending on weather conditions. Modeling simulations demonstrate stark contrasts between normal and extreme scenarios:

- Under Normal Conditions (Figure 14):

Ignition can be seen around the West Village Area of Cambria, CA. Wildfire spread is concentrated and does not spread to far south under normal conditions, giving firefighters critical time to respond. Evacuation efforts can be more targeted and localized, reducing disruption to the broader community.

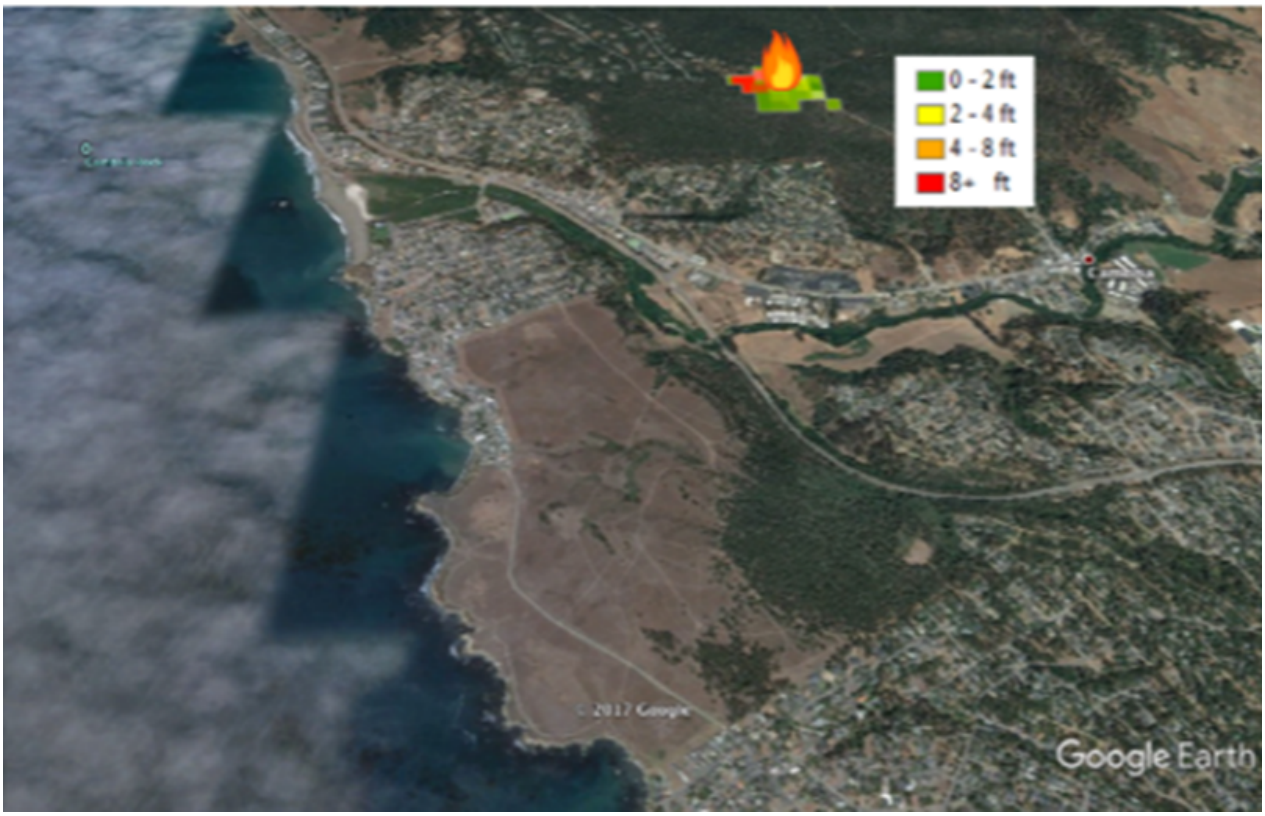


Figure 14: Fire behavior in Cambria, CA, simulated in FARSITE under normal conditions: 66°F, 10 mph northwest wind, 5-hour burn period.

- Under Extreme Conditions (Figure 15):

Under the extreme fire conditions we see the fire spreading south-west from the ignition point in West Village. It engulfs the entire city with a majority flame length of 0-2ft due to brush fires. Fire spreads rapidly and uncontrollably, overwhelming suppression efforts. In such cases, the entire community of Cambria may require full-scale evacuation, and fire containment becomes unlikely without substantial external resources.

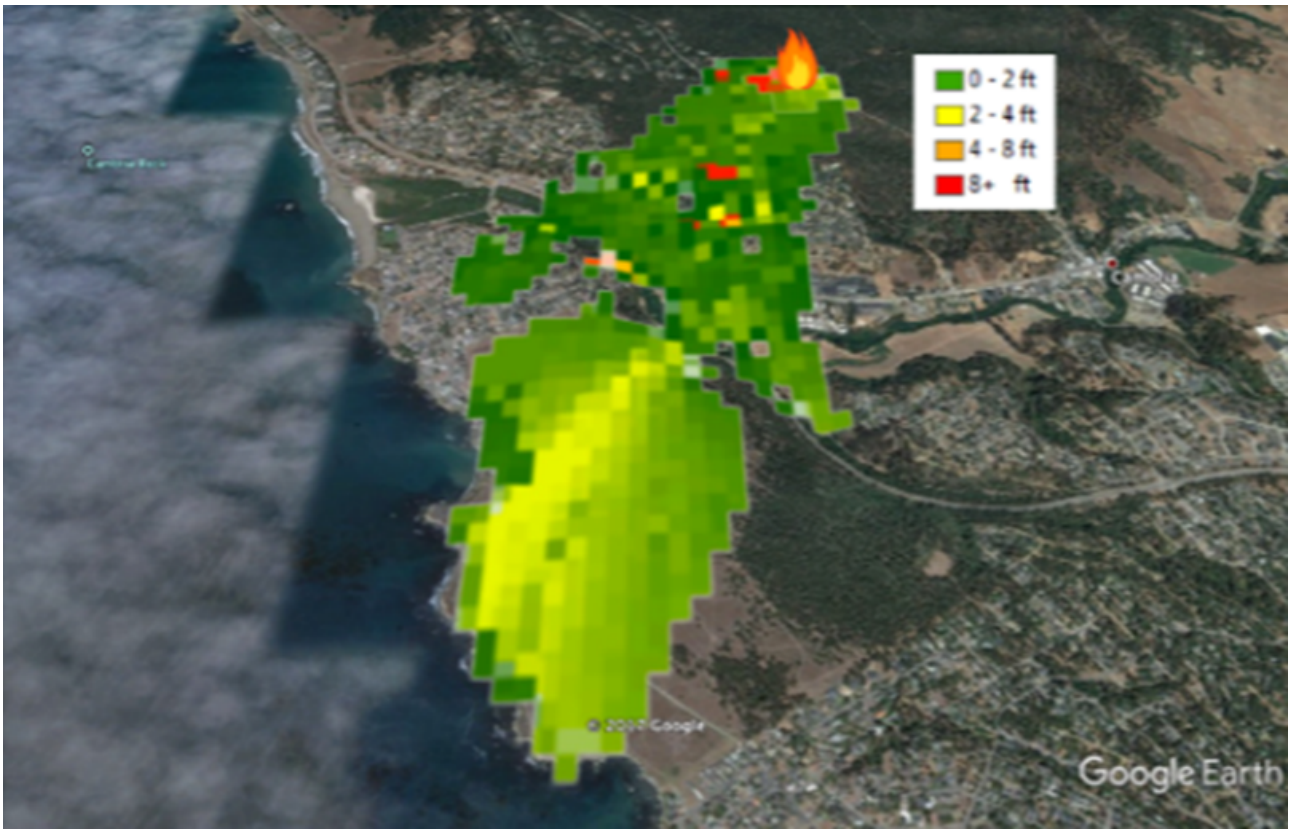


Figure 15: Fire behavior in Cambria, CA, simulated in FARSITE under extreme conditions: 92°F, 20 mph northeast wind, 5-hour burn period.

These simulations highlight the urgent need for proactive mitigation, defensible space compliance, and clear evacuation planning to prepare for high-risk fire days.

4. Assets at Risk

Built Environment

Within the project area of Cambria, there are many assets at risk. In which risk is the potential for damage. Leading to the focal points of assets at risk after determining hazards. Thus, looking towards those potential losses from hazards and threats are in natural environments and built environments within Cambria.

Table 1: Built assets at risk with the overall risk (High, Moderate, or Low), consequences of loss of each asset, and priority (Critical or Essential).

Built Assets at Risk			
Assets at Risk	**Overall Risk**	**Consequences of Loss**	**Priority**
Homes	High	Structure loss, cost of recovery, endangerment	Critical
Senior Living Centers	Moderate	Structure loss, cost of recovery, endangerment	Essential
Hotels	Moderate	Structure loss, loss of jobs, economic tourism loss	Essential
Schools	Moderate	Structure loss, loss of jobs	Essential
Downtown/District	High	Structure loss, loss of jobs, economic tourism loss, cost of recovery	Critical
Roads	High	Difficult evacuation, costs of recovery	Critical
Highways	High	Difficult evacuation, costs of recovery	Critical
Bridges	Low	Less evacuation routes, costs of recovery	Essential
Cell Towers/Powerline	High	Loss of communication	Critical
Trails	High	Possible endangerment, loss of habitat and recreation	Essential

Assets at risk in the built environment include critical infrastructure within the community (Table 1). The critical infrastructure in Cambria includes homes, senior living centers, hotels, schools, the downtown/district, roads, highways, bridges, cell towers/powerlines,

and trails which are highlighted in figure 16. There are a total of 2,858 homes in Cambria, over 20 hotels, 7 schools, Highway 1 and Highway 46, and many trails throughout the area. These all provide Cambria with important economic growth, shelter, and transportation. The homes, downtown, roads, highways, powerlines, and trails all contain a high risk because of having some sort of major vulnerability. Homes, the downtown area, roads, highways and power lines hold a critical priority.

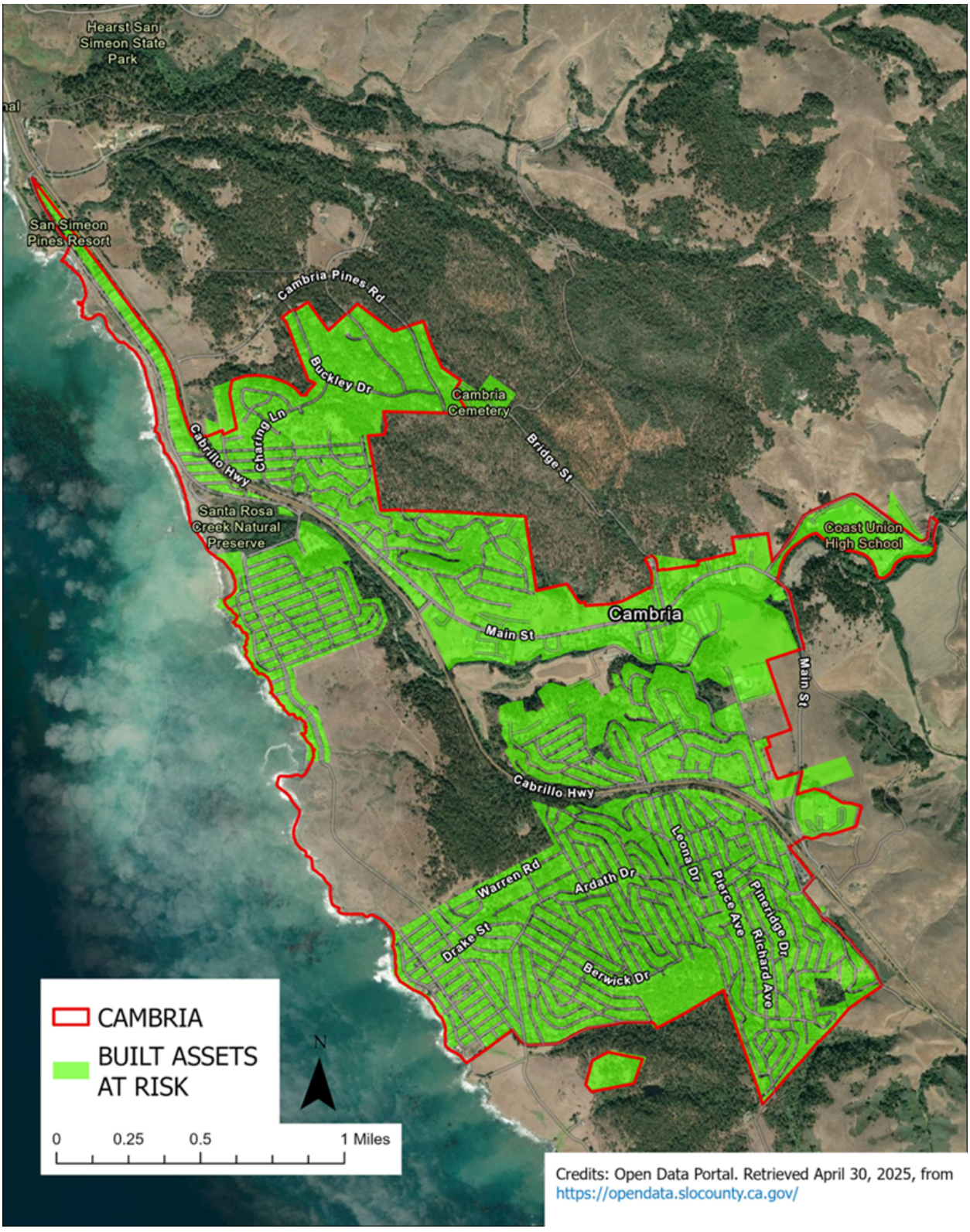


Figure 16: Built assets at risk in Cambria, CA.

Natural Environment

The next assets at risk include the assets in the natural environment. The natural environment includes critical habitat, threatened and endangered species, water courses, and any valuable natural resource (Table 2).

Table 2: Natural assets at risk (High, Moderate, or Low) with the location/specific, overall risk, consequences, and the priority (Critical or Essential).

Natural Assets at Risk				
Assets at Risk	**Location/Specific**	**Overall Risk**	**Consequences of Loss**	**Priority**
Ranches & Preserves	Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, Covell Ranch, Strawberry Canyon, Rancho Marino	High	Loss of recreation, loss of habitat, loss of jobs	Critical
Campsites	San Simeon Creek, Washburn Campground, Camp Ocean Pines, Camp Yeager	High	Loss of recreation, loss of habitat, loss of jobs, loss of tourism and economic benefit	Critical
Coastal Creeks (Water Supply)	Santa Rosa Creek	High	Decreased water quality, loss of habitat, increased endangerment to species	Critical
Agricultural	N/A	Moderate	Loss of food, loss of jobs	Essential
Threatened & Endangered Species	Red legged frog, Pacific Pond turtle, Tidewater goby, Steelhead trout	High	Loss of habitat, loss of resources, endangerment	Critical
Habitat for Native Fauna & Plants	Monterey pine, Deer, Blue herons, Cooper's hawks, etc.	High	Loss of species, loss of habitat, loss of resources, endangerment	Critical

Within Cambria, these natural environmental assets include Ranches and Preserves, Campsites, Coastal Creeks, Agricultural lands, threatened and endangered species within the area, and the habitat for native fauna and plants. The most important ranches and preserves are Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, Covell Ranch, Strawberry Canyon, and Rancho Marino. These areas are full of biodiversity, but many sources of fuel. The most notable

Campsites include San Simeon Creek, Washburn Campground, Camp Ocean Pines, and Camp Yaeger. These campgrounds are surrounded by natural resources and provide places of enjoyment for tourists. The main source of water supply for Cambria is the Santa Rosa Creek, which is a natural asset at risk that can impact water quality for agriculture and habitat for threatened and endangered species.

The high-risk and critical priority areas include Ranches and Preserves, Campsites, Coastal Creeks, Threatened and Endangered species, and Habitat for Native Fauna and Plants shown in figure 17.

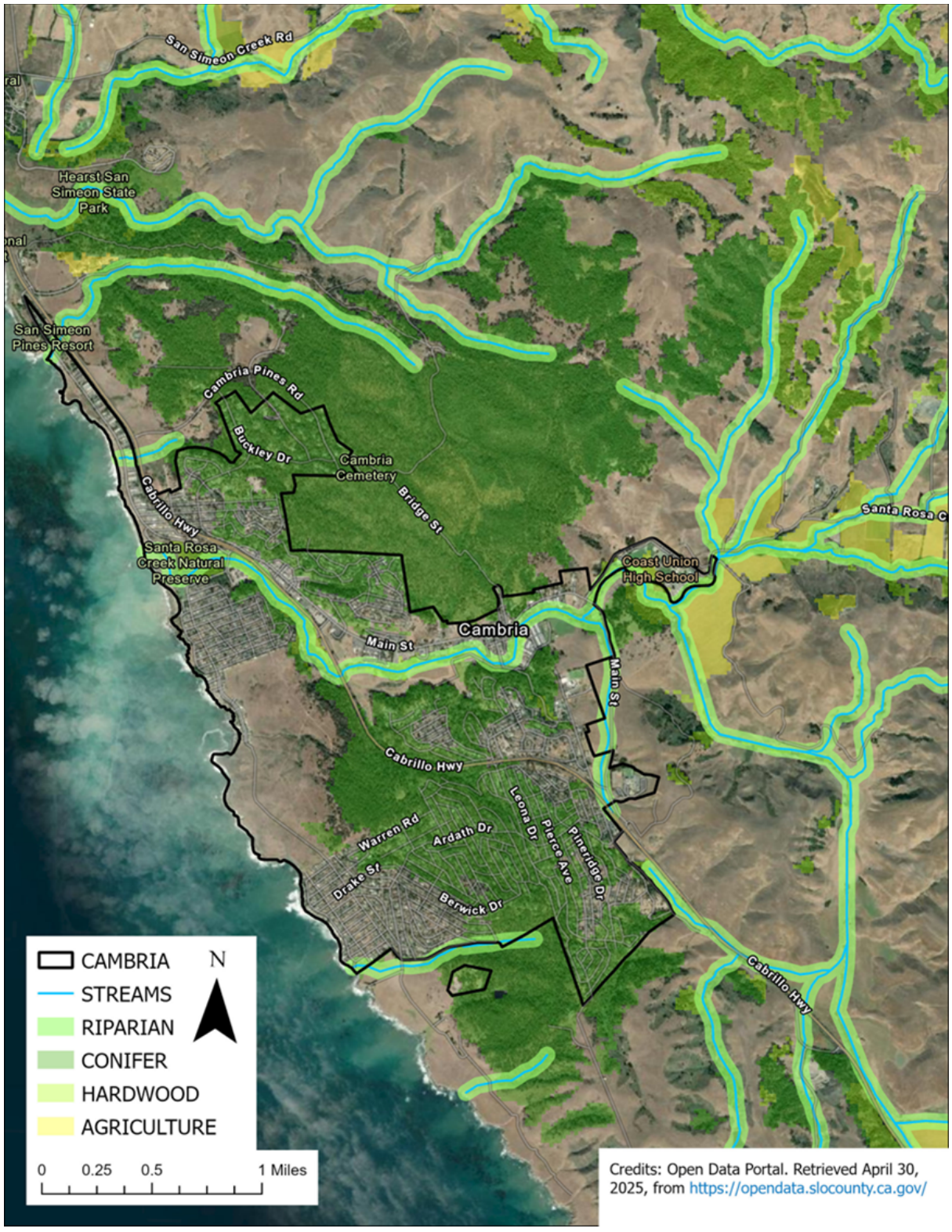


Figure 17: Natural assets at risk in Cambria, CA.

5. Prioritized Fuel Reduction

Fuel Mitigation Needs and Locations

Cambria is in critical need of targeted fuel reduction efforts to lower wildfire intensity and improve the community's overall defensibility. Over time, the accumulation of dead, dying, and overgrown vegetation has increased the risk of high intensity fires, particularly in areas with dense tree cover and limited maintenance. Strategic fuel mitigation involves not only the initial removal of hazardous fuels but also long-term vegetation management to sustain reduced fuel levels. This ongoing maintenance is essential to prevent rapid fuel accumulation and to support healthier, more fire resilient forest ecosystems.

Several areas within and around Cambria have been identified as top priorities for treatment based on fuel load, proximity to homes, and risk to public safety. These have been categorized based on fuel treatment type in figure 18 to correspond with areas posing the greatest risk and that have received little to no treatment. Surrounding forested areas such as Covell Ranch and Strawberry Canyon are especially concerning due to the presence of mature Monterey pine stands with significant understory buildup. These forests have not experienced natural fire cycles in decades, leading to conditions that could result in dangerous crown fires. Similarly, nature preserves like Fiscalini Ranch Preserve, while ecologically valuable, require sensitive vegetation management that reduces fire risk without compromising habitat integrity or biodiversity.

An area of unique concern is Burton Drive just South of Santa Rosa Creek. This area features steep terrain with dense vegetation in close proximity to homes. This area is at a great risk of vehicle caused ignitions and would provide very little time for the fire department to respond before structures are lost.

Roadside corridors also represent a key focus for fuel reduction. Overgrown vegetation along Highway 1 and other primary access routes not only elevates ignition risk, especially from vehicles and powerline activity, but can also block critical evacuation paths during emergencies. Keeping these corridors clear improves visibility for drivers, ensures safer and faster evacuation, and enhances access for emergency responders. Together, these fuel reduction efforts across forested areas, preserves, and transportation routes will significantly enhance Cambria's ability to withstand and respond to future wildfire events.

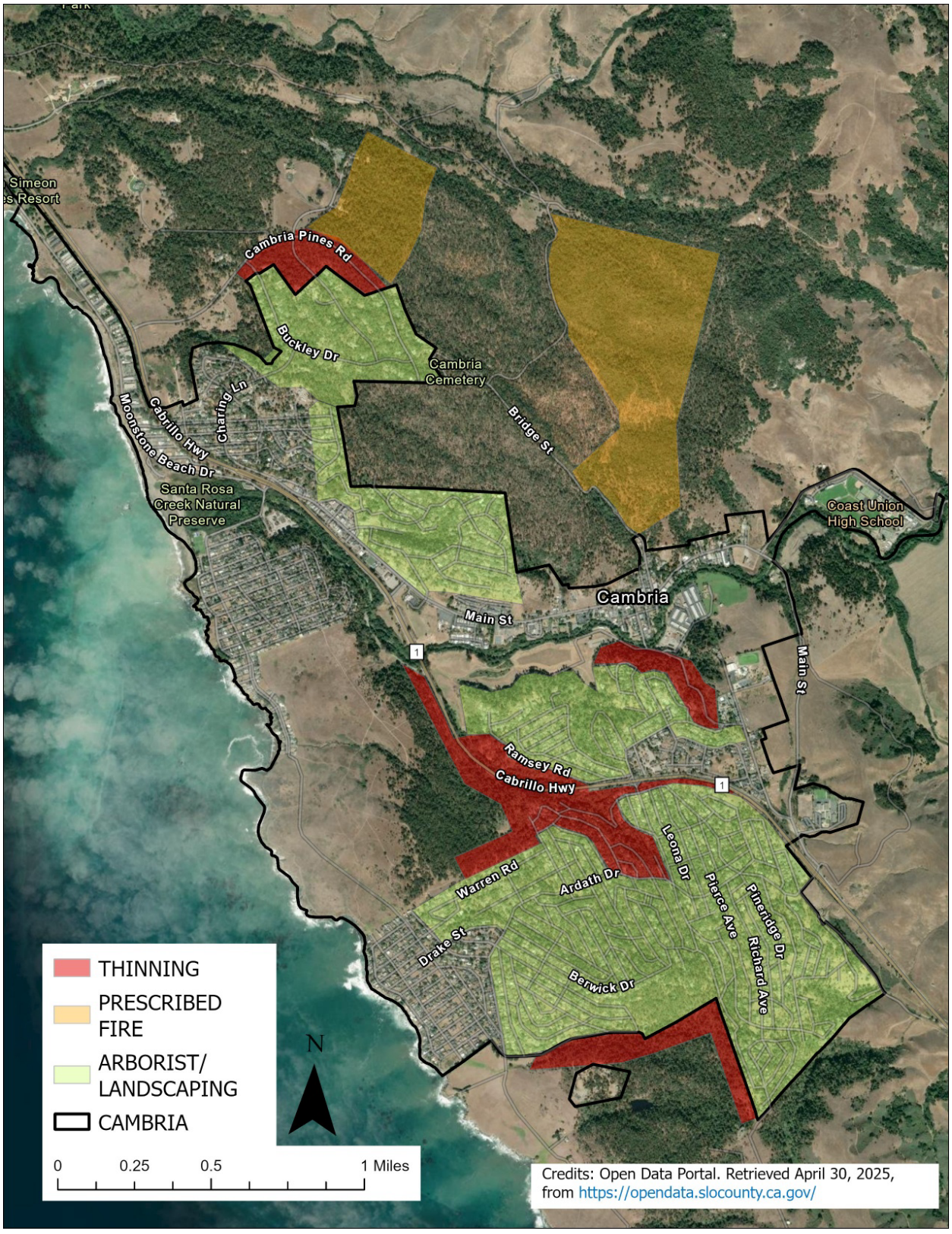


Figure 18: Recommended treatment types and locations for Cambria, CA.

Recommended Treatment Methods and Actions

To effectively reduce hazardous fuels and enhance wildfire resilience in Cambria, a comprehensive combination of treatment techniques should be applied across priority areas. One of the primary methods is mechanical thinning, which involves the use of equipment such as masticators, chainsaws, and brush cutters to selectively remove ladder fuels, dense understory growth, and small diameter trees that contribute to vertical fire spread. This method is particularly effective in reducing fuel continuity and making forested areas more defensible.

In addition to mechanical thinning, prescribed burns and supervised pile burning are essential tools for safely eliminating accumulated surface fuels. These controlled fire treatments not only reduce the buildup of combustible material but also promote healthy ecosystem regeneration by mimicking natural fire cycles. Prescribed burning is most effective when carefully planned under the right weather conditions and in collaboration with trained fire personnel.

Other essential strategies include arborist treatments to identify and remove dead or structurally compromised trees, especially in residential zones and along evacuation routes where falling trees could block emergency access or pose safety hazards. Fuel breaks should also be developed and maintained along key transportation corridors such as Main Road and Cabrillo Freeway. These strategically cleared strips of land help slow fire progression and improve accessibility for firefighting crews. Lastly, shaded fuel breaks, created by thinning vegetation beneath existing tree canopies, offer a balance between fuel reduction and ecological preservation by reducing surface fuels while maintaining canopy coverage to suppress fire intensity.

When applied in combination and adapted to the unique conditions of each landscape, these treatment methods will significantly reduce wildfire hazards, increase the effectiveness of suppression efforts, and provide vital protection for both natural and built environments in Cambria.

6. Measures to Reduce Structural Ignitability

Prevention Measures

A multi-faceted approach to wildfire prevention is essential for reducing ignition risk in Cambria. These efforts span across technological, sociopolitical, biophysical, and economic dimensions:

- **Technological Prevention**
    - Implement Public Safety Power Shutoffs (PSPS) during periods of extreme weather, such as high winds and low humidity, to reduce the risk of electrical ignitions from power lines.
- **Sociopolitical Prevention**
    - Conduct ongoing fire safety education campaigns to inform residents and visitors about fire-safe behaviors, defensible space requirements, and emergency preparedness.
- **Biophysical Prevention**
    - Mitigate ignition sources by identifying and addressing sparking hazards such as power tools, vehicles, and equipment near dry fuels. Encourage safer land use and equipment practices, especially during fire season.
- **Economic Prevention**
    - Offer grants and incentives to assist property owners with fuel reduction, home hardening, and vegetation management.
    - Enforce fines and penalties for non-compliance with defensible space and weed abatement regulations to encourage timely mitigation efforts.

Together, these prevention strategies create a comprehensive and enforceable system aimed at minimizing human and environmental ignition sources while promoting a culture of preparedness.

Mitigation Measures

Long-term wildfire risk reduction in Cambria requires strategic interventions across physical landscapes, social systems, and policy frameworks. Key mitigation measures include:

Biophysical Mitigation

- **Fuels Management**: Regular thinning, prescribed burns, and defensible space enforcement to reduce fuel loads across high-risk areas.
- **Fire-Resistant Construction Materials**: Promote or require the use of non-combustible roofing, siding, ember-resistant vents, and other building materials that reduce structure ignitability.

Figure 19: Wood piles following thinning, to pile burn in Strawberry Canyon.

Mitigation measures regarding fuels management and fire-resistant construction materials are major factors in risk reduction for wildfire occurrence in Cambria. Fuels Management in the city of Cambria would include continuing the removal of fuels in Covell Ranch and Strawberry Canyon such as thinning, fuel breaks, prescribed burns, and pile burns. Landscaping around homes in the surrounding Covell Ranch and Strawberry Canyon include Leimert Estates, Happy Hill, Lodge Hill, Pine Knolls, West Village, and East Village. These areas would especially require defensible space to maintain property hygiene by removing easily ignitable plants, having fences away from the homes, and using mulch. Throughout the city, Weed Abatement Ordinances to remove any fuels along homes would be an efficient and effective management to create defensible space and incorporate community involvement. Mitigation measures regarding Fire-Resistant Construction Materials includes following and enforcing those in the Chapter 7A Building Code relating to using tempered glass windows, fire treated wood, house sprinklers, and using materials that would be more fire resistant. In doing so, Cambria would benefit greatly from these

biophysical mitigations that could reduce the risk of wildfire spreading in the neighborhoods of Cambria.

Sociopolitical Mitigation

- **Land Use Planning**: Integrate wildfire risk maps into community planning to guide development away from Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ).
    - **Incentives**: Offer financial or permitting incentives for property owners who implement home hardening and defensible space practices.
    - **Policy & Zoning**: Establish local ordinances that support fire-safe community design and restrict high-risk development.
    - **Enforcement**: Strengthen inspection protocols and penalties to ensure compliance with fire safety regulations.

Figure 20: Cambria home in the Lodge Hill community without defensible space.

Sociopolitical mitigation measures regarding land use planning include incentives, policy and zoning, and enforcement. Incentives would be a beneficial way to increase the community involvement and proper hygiene for homes throughout the community by providing property tax breaks for those abiding by home hardening and putting effort towards helping their community by following the policies and regulations put in place. This leads into the policy and zoning which would include weed abatement ordinances being put into order and highly enforced in certain zones and communities and supporting safe designs in the community that follow policies regarding proper property hygiene. However, enforcement throughout Cambria is needed in order for these mitigation measures to be effective, so enforcing new and existing policies would need to take place. Enforcement of these policies and regulations will help support incentives and lead into community involvement in home hardening and provide property tax breaks along with doubling fines for those not following regulations, which will ultimately help mitigate risk.

Altogether, these measures work together to reduce the likelihood of structure ignition, improve survivability during fire events, and ensure that development aligns with fire-resilient design principles.

Preparedness Measures

Existing Suppression Infrastructure

Cambria's current fire suppression capabilities are anchored by CAL FIRE Station 10 and the Cambria Community Services District Fire Department, which provide primary emergency response for the area. These local resources are critical given the community's isolation and high wildfire risk.

The town is equipped with 369 fire hydrants, shown in figure 21, though their condition and distribution vary. Some hydrants are aging or located in areas with limited accessibility, which could hinder effective suppression during a major wildfire event.

While Cambria benefits from dedicated local responders, additional firefighting resources from surrounding jurisdictions could take 30 to 40 minutes to arrive, depending on fire severity, regional availability, and traffic conditions. This delay underscores the importance of maintaining robust local infrastructure, enhancing water supply systems, and ensuring that all hydrants are regularly maintained and clearly accessible.

Investments in backup water storage, hydrant upgrades, and improved dispatch coordination will be essential to increasing suppression effectiveness in future fire events.

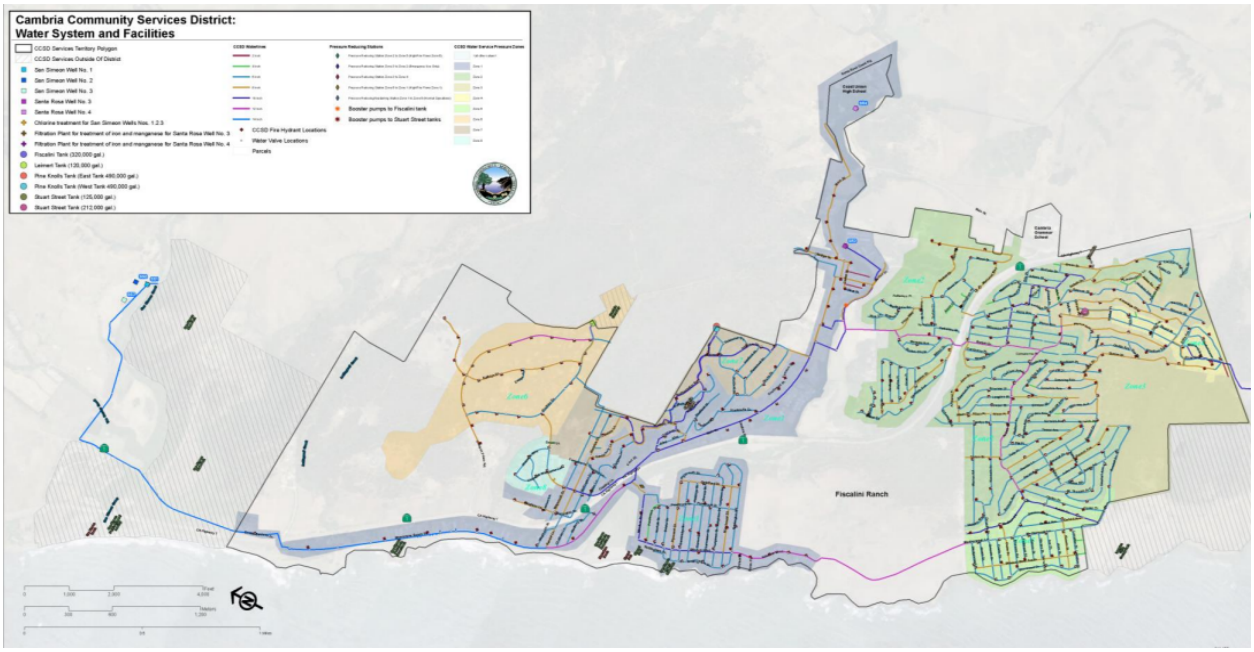


Figure 21: Cambria Community Services District water system and facilities.

Existing Ingress/Egress

Cambria's evacuation network, shown in figure 22, relies on a series of interconnected roads that serve as vital routes for both emergency access and community evacuation. Key ingress and egress routes include:

- **Burton Drive**
  A major east–west corridor running through central Cambria, connecting several neighborhoods to Main Street and Highway 1. It plays a central role in facilitating lateral movement during evacuations.
- **Main Street**
  One of the community's primary evacuation routes. It runs through the town center and connects to both Highway 1 and Bridge Street, providing essential access for residents and emergency personnel.
- **Ardath Drive**
  A curved residential road that links with Burton Drive and channels traffic toward coastal evacuation routes. It serves as a key connector for multiple neighborhoods.
- **Charing Lane**
  Located in the northern Cambria Pines neighborhood, this road provides inland access and connects to Cambria Pines Road and Highway 1, helping residents in outlying areas evacuate more efficiently.
- **Marine Terrace Trail**
  A critical coastal access route for the Marine Terrace neighborhood. It connects to Drake Street and Warren Road, which feeds into Highway 1 and supports evacuations along the blufftop areas.
- **Cambria Pines Road**
  Offers northern ingress and egress for residents in Cambria Pines. It connects to Buckley Drive and Highway 1, supporting both emergency response and outbound evacuation during wildfire events.

Maintaining the accessibility and condition of these roads is essential to ensure safe and timely evacuations. Identifying potential chokepoints, improving signage, and expanding capacity where feasible will further enhance emergency mobility.

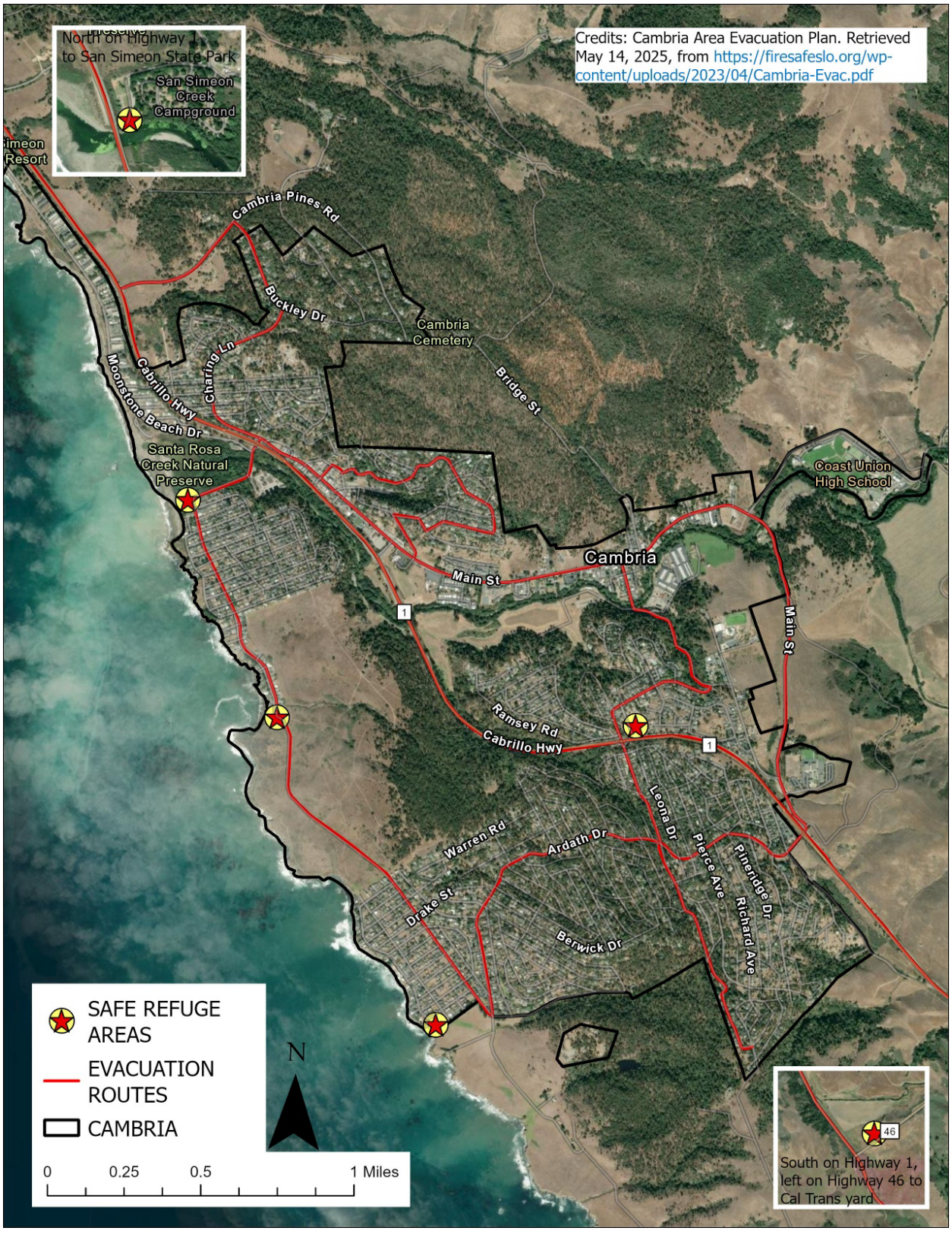


Figure 22: Existing evacuation routes and safe refuge areas for Cambria, CA.

Planned Residential Response

Cambria's residential response strategy emphasizes community preparedness through public education and volunteer-based emergency training. At the core of this effort is the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), a program coordinated by the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD).

CERT is designed to train residents in essential emergency skills to support first responders and assist fellow citizens during large-scale incidents like wildfires, when professional emergency services may be overwhelmed. Volunteers are educated and trained in the following areas:

- Fire Safety
- Small-Scale Search and Rescue Operations
- Team Organization and Incident Coordination
- Disaster Medical Operations, including basic first aid and triage

The Cambria Community Services District supports CERT through structured training, coordinated exercises, and public outreach. By cultivating a trained network of local volunteers, CCSD ensures there is a reliable line of support ready to respond during emergencies.

This residential response plan enhances local resilience by empowering community members with the knowledge and tools needed to act effectively during the initial phases of a disaster. It helps during evacuation efforts as they can also support with traffic, which is convenient because local citizens who are in CERT are familiar with the roads around Cambria.

With a limited evacuation route, Highway 1, it is important to understand that congestion of traffic may become an issue during a wildfire. This is why it is important to construct more egress roads to help facilitate the evacuation process. Having multiple egress roads would help with the congestion of traffic, and provide insurance as it provides another exit just in case a road gets blocked off by an object like a fallen down tree, powerline, or flipped car.

It is important to make sure that the community understands the risks and is willing to cooperate in a community- wide fire drill where they practice drills such as evacuating to an area where they can take refuge. Making sure that the community understands which safety zone is closest to them so that they can flee there during an emergency. It is also important to consider the demographic of senior citizens in Cambria as it may be difficult for most to move around. With this in mind, carpooling is another effective strategy to implement as it makes others aware of the people around them and prompts people to

check up on one another during emergencies. This helps facilitate evacuation because by helping the elderly evacuate it gives first responders more time to focus on important tasks.

Agency and Residential Training

Emergency preparedness in Cambria is supported by a combination of professional agency training and community-based programs that work together to strengthen the town's overall emergency response capacity. A central component of this preparedness effort is the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), which supplements emergency services through structured, skill-based training. Members of the CERT Fire Rehab Team are specifically trained to assist the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) Fire Department during emergency incidents, particularly structure fires. Their training includes ICS-100 (Introduction to the Incident Command System), NIMS 700 (multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional coordination), initial awareness and performance drills, and ongoing refresher exercises designed to maintain readiness and adapt to evolving threats. As a volunteer-based unit, the CERT Fire Rehab Team plays a critical role in extending the capacity of local emergency responders, especially during prolonged or complex incidents.

Classes include:

Class 1 focuses on a general overview of an earthquake emergency and provides introduction into how to prepare for situations like this. It also teaches people how to prepare and hazard awareness to further mitigate problems in an actual situation.

Class 2 introduces techniques on how to handle small fires by familiarizing the people on disaster fire suppression as they learn the basics on how to operate and handle a fire extinguisher followed by lessons on hazardous materials and even terrorism.

Class 3 focuses more on the emergency medical service that one can provide during a disaster such as triaging patients, which is vital in determining who gets priority care. It teaches disaster medicine, how to care for minor injuries, and the thought process of how to react to the situation you are in.

Class 4 is focused on basic search and rescue techniques and considered to be for "lighter" rescues. This is where a citizen can perform a rescue without being put in further danger or make the situation worse.

Class 5 ties it all together by mixing up materials learned from each class and participants will put emergency medicine, "light" search and rescue techniques, and even perform "lift and carry" techniques used to help transport patients into practice. This helps members learn how to work as a team and how to work together during a disaster.

Beyond fire protection, CCSD fire department personnel are cross trained to manage several essential community services that become critical during and after wildfire events. These include water and wastewater system management, emergency fire response, street lighting and power safety coordination, and oversight of public facilities, open spaces, and recreational areas. This comprehensive training structure ensures that Cambria maintains a resilient and integrated response system, capable of addressing a broad spectrum of emergency needs while supporting effective community recovery.

7. Recovery Measures

Community Recovery

Following a wildfire event, effective community recovery requires a coordinated and compassionate response that addresses both infrastructure and human needs. Key recovery actions include:

- **Debris Removal**
  Initiate large-scale efforts to clean up hazardous debris, fallen trees, and damaged structures to ensure safety and prepare for rebuilding.
- **Road Repair**
  Restore damaged roads, bridges, and evacuation routes to enable safe access for residents, emergency services, and reconstruction crews.
- **Restoration of Utilities**
  Expedite the restoration of power, water, sewage, and internet services to reestablish critical infrastructure and community function.
- **Reestablish Communication**
  Repair and enhance communication systems to improve coordination among agencies and ensure residents receive timely updates and support.
- **Support for Vulnerable Residents**
  Provide targeted assistance for elderly, disabled, low-income, and displaced individuals to ensure equitable recovery and long-term stability.
- **Rebuilding Homes**
  Support the reconstruction of homes with an emphasis on fire-resistant materials and compliance with Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) building codes.
- **Temporary Shelter and Housing**
  Offer short-term shelter and transitional housing options for those displaced by the fire while long-term housing solutions are developed.

A proactive recovery framework will help Cambria rebuild more safely and sustainably while ensuring no residents are left behind in the process.

Mitigation of Secondary Disasters

While the primary disaster concerns wildfires, it is important to think of the secondary disasters that will follow post-fire. The concerns are regarding the possibility of landslides caused by erosion, air pollutants in the air, city-wide power outages and sedimentary runoff in nearby water sources like the Santa Rosa Creek.

Air quality post-fire is an important factor to take into account, especially considering the majority of Cambria's community is mainly on the older side and will have trouble breathing. It is important to monitor the area with thermal imaging cameras to find any potential gas leak or infrared flames as a result of chemicals that could have burned in the fire. Having Cambria's local fire department or Cal Fire's department run lead on detecting these potential threats would be beneficial because the engines carry a thermal- imaging camera that helps with structural fires by showing fire activity.

Landslides pose a dangerous threat to Cambria's infrastructures built on slopes. Since fire impacts the soil's retention, making them more hydrophobic post-fire, this causes problems afterwords during rainfall as it makes the community susceptible to floods and landslides. It also impacts the soil's health as landslides cause nutrients to get flushed as organic matter and duff gets removed. To help mitigate this issue it is important to start replanting immediately rather than wait for natural regeneration because it is important to prevent the soil from eroding and causing further damage to infrastructure.

Power outages are important to think about considering the majority of powerlines around the community. Putting into place an emergency backup generator would provide insurance for power to be available post- fire for work needed.

Sedimentation runoff is an important issue to address because if water quality in areas like the Santa Rosa Creek diminishes, you will lose not just species, but ecological functions as well. Similar solution to landslides would involve planting vegetation targeted around the buffer of the creek so that sedimentation runoff is decreased. This way plants that surround the creek will act as a barrier protecting debris and sediments from falling in.

8. Conclusions

Summary of Major Recommendations

Short-term

In the nest year, Cambria should focus on implementing various biophysical and sociopolitical strategies to reduce wildfire risk and improve emergency readiness. On the biophysical side, establishing a community fuel reduction program would allow residents to safely dispose of vegetative debris and maintain defensible space more effectively. Additionally, constructing a gate to connect Green Road with Highway 1 would provide an essential alternate evacuation route, improving egress options during emergencies. Holding regular community meetings, particularly including testimonies from wildfire survivors, can strengthen public awareness and motivate residents to take preparedness seriously.

From a sociopolitical perspective, Cambria should create a formal program for reporting vegetation encroachment on powerlines to prevent ignition from utility infrastructure. Public education and training should also be expanded to prepare residents for Public Safety Power Shutoffs during high-wind events. Finally, to enforce compliance with defensible space and weed abatement requirements, the community should adopt a policy of doubling fines each year for non-compliant property owners. These efforts can be initiated immediately and sustained through year 1, as they build on existing policies and require relatively low-cost implementation focused on outreach, coordination, and enforcement.

Green Road to Highway 1

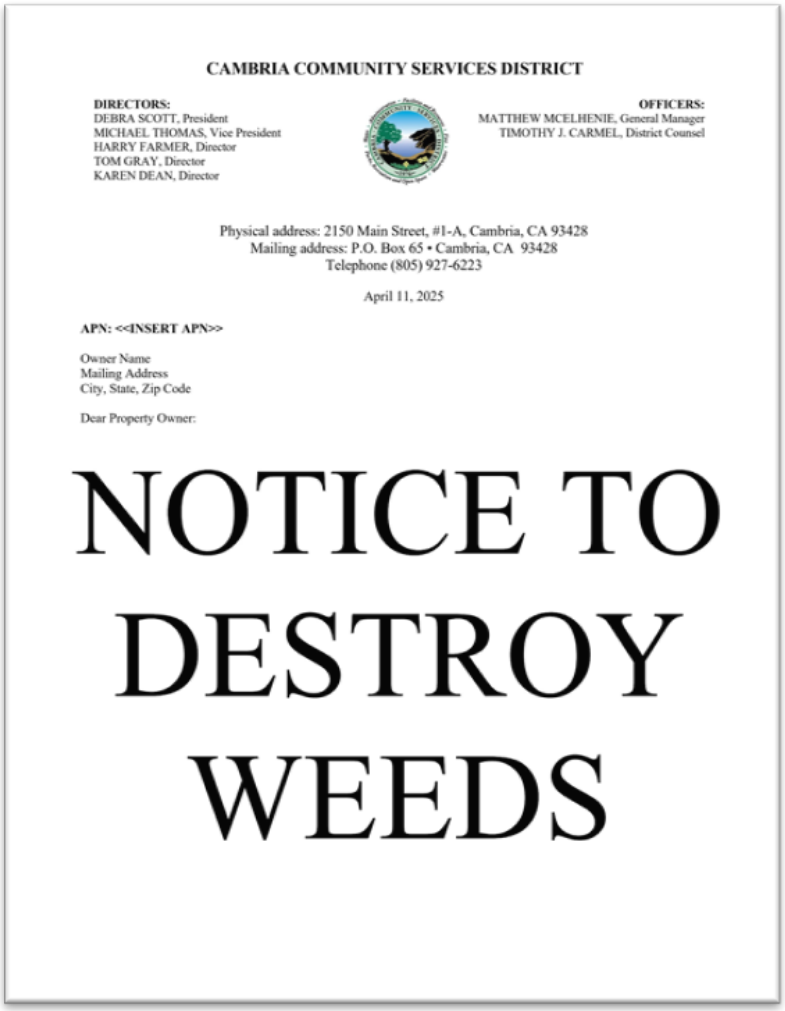
One of the most impactful and immediately actionable infrastructure improvements for Cambria's wildfire evacuation readiness is the development of an emergency egress route connecting Green Road to Highway 1. Currently, less than a quarter mile of dirt ranch road separates Green Road from direct access to Highway 1, presenting a unique opportunity to create a secondary evacuation route with minimal construction. The route follows an existing dirt road that runs between fenced sections of private property, requiring only minor access agreements to move forward and adding a single gate where the road reaches Highway 1. Opening this connection would provide vital relief to Ardath Drive and Burton Drive, two of Cambria's most heavily used residential evacuation routes, which are at risk of becoming overwhelmed during a large-scale wildfire event. Immediate implementation of this project would significantly improve traffic flow during emergencies, reduce bottlenecks, and enhance the overall safety of evacuation operations.

Figure 23: Map of proposed Green Rd egress.

The project would require coordinated collaboration between the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD), Caltrans, and the adjacent private landowner(s) to secure access rights and complete necessary grading and signage. Because the route already exists as a dirt road, improvements could be made quickly and cost-effectively with minimal environmental disruption. With the appropriate agreements and basic infrastructure enhancements, this critical evacuation link could be completed within year 1, offering an urgent and high-impact upgrade to Cambria's emergency response and evacuation network.

Double Fines Annually

To strengthen enforcement and incentivize compliance with fire safety regulations, Cambria should adopt a policy that doubles fines each year for property owners who fail to meet defensible space and weed abatement requirements (Figure 24). While such policies already exist, they are often underutilized due to limited awareness and inconsistent enforcement. By escalating penalties for ongoing non-compliance, this change to fines should motivate timely action from residents and reduce hazardous vegetation around structures, a critical step in preventing structure loss during wildfires. Importantly, revenue generated from these fines could be reinvested into community-wide fire prevention efforts, including costly fuel reduction treatments such as thinning in high-risk areas, thus increasing their long-term value.



CAMBRIA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

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Telephone (805) 927-6223

April 11, 2025

APN: <<INSERT APN>>

Owner Name
Mailing Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Property Owner:

NOTICE TO DESTROY WEEDS

Figure 24: Notice to destroy weeds paper from CCSD.

Implementation would require collaboration between the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD) and CAL FIRE, ensuring proper inspections, documentation, and notification processes are in place. Public education campaigns would be essential to inform property owners about the updated enforcement structure and the importance of defensible space. The program should launch in year 1 and continue on an ongoing basis, serving as both a compliance tool and a funding mechanism for broader wildfire mitigation efforts. This will incentivize compliance and prevent residents from simply choosing to pay the fine as several years go by.

Long-term

In the long term, Cambria must focus on both physical landscape management and community-oriented policies to build lasting wildfire resilience. On the biophysical side, ongoing fuel thinning should be prioritized in high-risk areas such as Strawberry Canyon

and Covell Ranch, where dense vegetation presents a significant wildfire threat. Additional thinning efforts should target zones south of Santa Rosa Creek near Burton Drive, an area adjacent to residential neighborhoods and critical infrastructure. Alongside vegetation management, Cambria should promote widespread home hardening by encouraging or requiring upgrades such as tempered glass windows, ember-resistant vents, and non-combustible siding. To further strengthen evacuation capacity, the town should develop overpasses at key intersections along Highway 1 and widen main evacuation routes, reducing congestion and improving access for emergency responders during large-scale incidents.

From a sociopolitical standpoint, Cambria should pursue long-term grant opportunities and alternative funding sources to support fire safety infrastructure, public education, and mitigation programs. To incentivize individual homeowner participation, the community can implement property tax breaks for residents who maintain defensible space and comply with fire-safe building practices. Additionally, conducting a community-wide survey would provide valuable insight into resident concerns, evacuation readiness, and the perceived effectiveness of fire mitigation strategies. These long-term measures, implemented over a 3–7 year timeline, will require sustained collaboration among local agencies, community members, and regional partners to achieve meaningful wildfire risk reduction and lasting community resilience.

Burton Drive Shaded Fuel Break

One of the most critical long-term fuel reduction projects for Cambria is the creation of a shaded fuel break along Burton Drive, an area identified as high-risk due to its proximity to Santa Rosa Creek, residential neighborhoods, and frequent vehicle-caused ignitions. The presence of an unhoused population along the creek also elevates the likelihood of accidental fires. The proposed fuel break (Figure 25) spans approximately 22.2 acres and is designed to reduce surface and ladder fuels while preserving overstory canopy to limit wind-driven fire spread and preserve some aesthetic value and cooling properties.

The project is divided into two strategic phases. The first phase will involve grazing with goats to thin out grasses and small shrubs, an effective and low-impact method of fuel reduction in terrain with limited accessibility. Due to the steep terrain and low impacts to habitat, goats provide a cost-effective initial thinning, making the second phase less time consuming. The second phase will consist of manual removal of shrubs and trees with a diameter at breast height (DBH) of less than 6 inches by a trained hand crew, allowing for precise vegetation management without disturbing mature trees or root systems. Special consideration will be given to the steep terrain, the proximity to homes, and the need to reduce human-caused ignition sources.

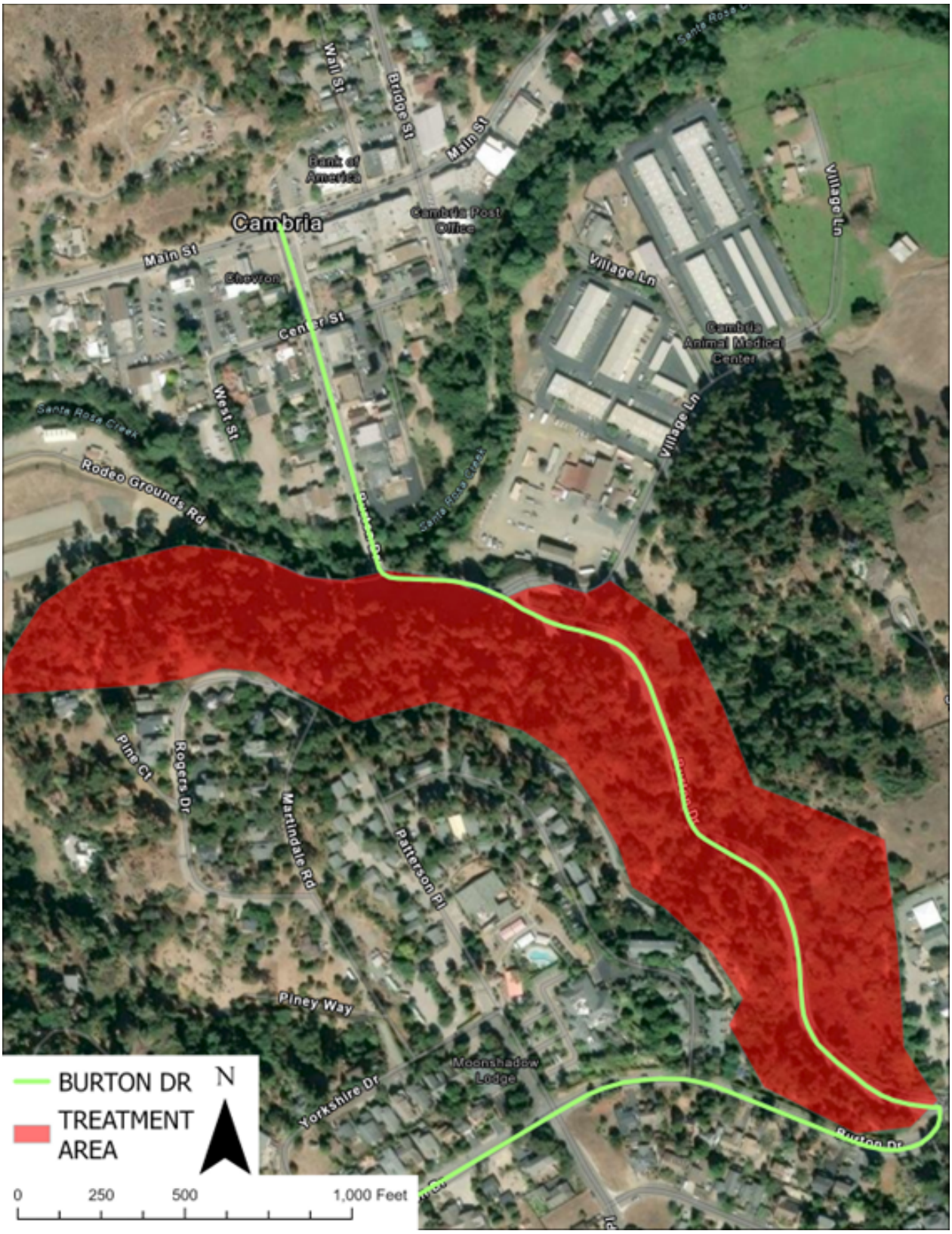

Figure 25: Map of Burton Dr recommended fuel treatment.

Successful implementation will require coordinated planning and permitting with multiple agencies, including the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD), CAL FIRE, and the California Coastal Commission. Given the regulatory oversight and environmental sensitivity of the area, this project is expected to follow a 2- to 5-year timeline, including design, environmental review, and phased treatment implementation. Once completed, the Burton Drive shaded fuel break will serve as a valuable fire break and provide increased protection for nearby residents and infrastructure.

Community Survey

An important long-term strategy for enhancing community engagement and refining wildfire preparedness efforts is the implementation of a recurring community survey (Figure 26). By offering both online and physical surveys to residents, Cambria can gather valuable insights into public perceptions of wildfire risk, evaluate satisfaction with current mitigation efforts, and identify key areas for improvement. The survey would allow residents to rate the town's overall wildfire preparedness, voice their concerns regarding resource allocation, and indicate which types of emergency training they would like to see expanded, such as evacuation drills, defensible space workshops, or home hardening education. This could eventually developing into a more active or live online resource that connects residents to issues they see in their daily observations.

Figure 26: El Dorado community survey for wildfire preparedness.

What makes these community surveys particularly valuable over time is its ability to track changing public opinion and awareness across multiple years. By establishing a baseline and conducting follow-up surveys at regular intervals, decision-makers can assess the effectiveness of education and mitigation programs, prioritize funding, and adapt strategies to meet changing community needs. Given its long term focus, the community survey initiative is intended to start in the near future but**,** with the greatest benefits emerging through continuous participation and data collection over the long term well past 5 years in the future.

Priorities / Timeline of Treatments or Actions

The priority recommendations outlined in table 3 are organized by urgency and estimated timelines to ensure a phased and effective approach to wildfire risk reduction. This structure recognizes that Cambria faces an ongoing and escalating wildfire threat due to fuel accumulation, aging infrastructure, and changing climate conditions. High-priority actions are those that can be implemented within the next one to two years and offer immediate improvements to evacuation access, enforcement, and risk mitigation. Moderate and long-term recommendations are designed to build resilience over time, addressing structural vulnerabilities, funding strategies, and community engagement. By focusing on actions with realistic timelines, the plan ensures that immediate needs are met while also laying the foundation for sustained wildfire preparedness in the years ahead.

Table 3: Priority of recommendations with timeline to complete.

Priority	Recommendation	Time to Complete
High	• Green Road egress • Double fines annually • Create powerline encroachment reporting program • Train residents for public safety shutoffs in wind events • Create a shaded fuel break along Burton Drive	— < 1 year — < 1 year — 1-2 years — 1-2 years — 2-5 years
Moderate	• Home hardening • Seek grants and funding to invest in fire safety • Widening existing evacuation routes • Provide tax break to homeowners in compliance • Community survey • Maintain fuel treatments in Strawberry Canyon and Covell Ranch	— 2-5 years — 2-5 years — 2-5 years — 2-5 years — +5 years — +5 years
Low	• Testimony of wildfire survivor • Establish community fuel removal program • Developing overpasses along Highway 1	— < 1 year — 1-2 years — +5 years

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