

# ANNEX 1.      **SANTA CLARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT CENTRAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

## INTRODUCTION

### ORGANIZATION AND JURISDICTION

The Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD) (also known as the Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District [CFPD]) is not an actual department of the County of Santa Clara government. The SCCFD is a special district governed by the County Board of Supervisors.

The SCCFD is composed of four distinct organizations:

1. Central Fire Protection District
2. Los Altos Hills County Fire Protection District
3. Saratoga Fire Protection District
4. Santa Clara County Fire Marshal's Office

The CFPD and Los Altos Hills County Fire Protection District are dependent special districts (governed by the County Board of Supervisors). The Saratoga Fire Protection District is not governed by the County Board of Supervisors; it is an independent special district with a separate publically elected Board of Directors that contracts with the SCCFD for fire service management and staffing. The County Fire Marshal is a county government function contracted to the SCCFD for management and staffing.

Figure 1.1 shows the jurisdiction for the CFPD.

**Central Fire Protection District** includes both unincorporated areas and incorporated cities. Unincorporated areas include Lexington Hills, Saratoga Hills, Stevens Canyon, and areas adjacent to the east side of Milpitas and San Jose. Cities include all of Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Cupertino, Los Altos and a portion of the City of Saratoga (the balance of the City of Saratoga is protected by the Saratoga Fire Protection District).

**Los Altos Hills County Fire Protection District** includes the City of Los Altos Hills and the unincorporated area west of the city. The Los Altos Hills County Fire Protection District is overseen by a seven-member commission of citizens appointed by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisor from District 5, which are approved by the full County Board of Supervisors. Terms are for four years.

**Saratoga Fire Protection District** is an independent special district governed by a publically elected 3 member Board of Commissioners.

The Saratoga Fire Protection District provides fire protection services to approximately 12 square miles encompassing one-half of the City of Saratoga and sections of the unincorporated areas to the south. Approximately 20,000 people reside within the District's service area.

In July 2008, the District began a contract for fire service management and staffing with Santa Clara County Fire Department (also known as Central Fire).

**County Fire Marshal:** In 1987, the County entered into a contract with the SCCFD for the administration of the County Fire Marshal's Office. The County Fire Marshal's Office is responsible for fire prevention activities in most unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County, however there are a few areas where their responsibilities are shared and/or deferred to other agencies for various reasons.

**Wildland Urban Interface:** The wildland urban interface (WUI) areas in the unincorporated portions of the area protected by SCCFD are also designated by state law as State Responsibility Areas (SRAs) for wildland fire purposes. Therefore, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) shares jurisdictional responsibility for fire protection in the SRA areas. CAL FIRE evaluates SRA areas for wildfire potential and designates them as Moderate, High, and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZs). The majority of WUI in the district is High and Very High FHSZ.

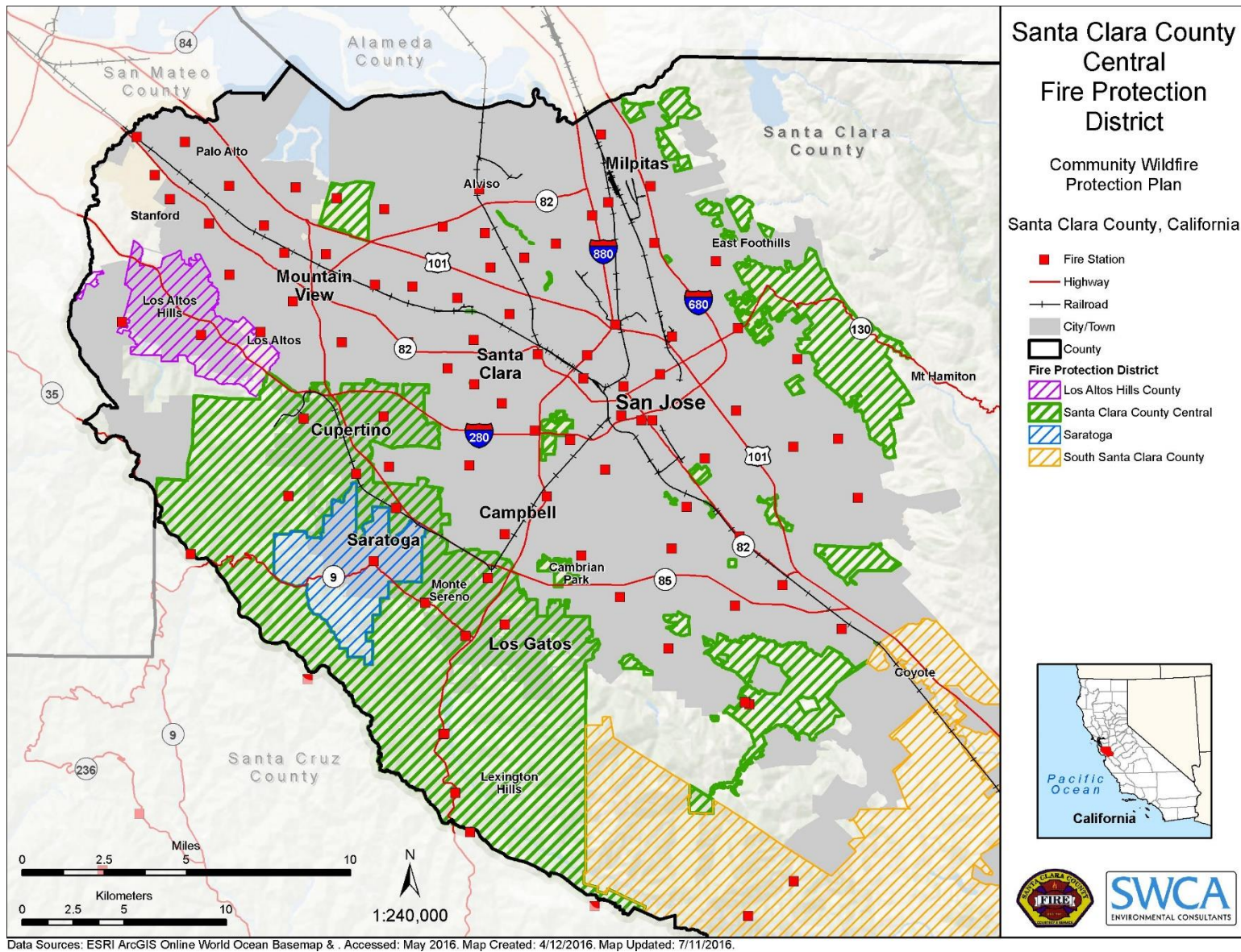
State law excludes areas inside incorporated cities from SRA, therefore. WUI areas inside the incorporated areas are designated Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs) and CAL FIRE does not share responsibility.

## **PLANNING TEAM PARTICIPATION**

The SCCFD has been represented on the Core Team by Chief Kehmna and Deputy Chief Justice and by other members of the SCCFD during community workshops and other outreach events. Community members have been engaged through two rounds of workshops held throughout the County.

This document is broken down into three chapters to represent the different geographic areas of unincorporated lands that the SCCFD protect: Chapter 1 - Lexington Hills, Chapter 2 – Los Altos Hills, Chapter 3- Saratoga Hills (outside of City and outside of Saratoga Fire Protection District), Chapter 4 - East Foothills and Milpitas, and Chapter 5 - New Almaden.

*Santa Clara County Community Wildfire Protection Plan  
Annex 1. Santa Clara County Central Fire Protection District - Introduction*



**Figure 1.1. Fire response jurisdiction.**

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPACITY**

The SCCFD serves and protects Santa Clara County and the communities of Campbell, Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, and Saratoga. Below is a listing of the 17 fire facilities operated by the SCCFD. See <http://www.sccfd.org/about-sccfd/fire-station-locations> for more details.

- Campbell Fire Station
- County Fire Marshall Office
- Cupertino Fire Station
- El Monte fire Station
- Santa Clara County Headquarters
- Los Altos fire Station
- Los Gatos Fire Station
- Loyola Fire Station
- Monta Vista Fire Station
- Quito Fire Station
- Redwood Fire Station
- Saratoga Fire Station
- Seven Springs Fire Station
- Shannon Fire Station/Maintenance Shop
- Sunnyoaks Fire Station/McCormack Training Center
- West Valley Fire Station
- Winchester Fire Station/Maintenance Shop

Additionally, mutual aid fire resources are available from other Santa Clara County fire agencies. CAL FIRE also provides fire officers, fire engines, air tankers, helicopters, and hand crews because the unincorporated area is SRA.

## **PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS**

The SCCFD recognizes and supports the national Ready, Set, Go! program for community member preparedness. The SCCFD provides extensive fire preparedness information and outreach activities for the local community. More information can be found on the website:

<http://www.sccfd.org/about-sccfd/sccfd-overview>

The SCCFD provides representation on the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (<http://www.SCCFireSafe.org>). This organization provides information regarding chipping

programs, defensible space mitigation, forest health issues, and much more. They also offer public meetings and forums to support wildfire awareness.

## **POLICIES, REGULATIONS, ORDINANCES, AND CODES**

- The County of Santa Clara currently uses the 2013 California Building Code that includes required building standards for WUI areas.
- The Fire Prevention Division provides Standard Details and Specifications for fire prevention. The SCCFD carries out fire prevention and defensible space inspections in the area. More information on inspections and standards can be obtained from:
  - <http://www.sccfd.org/fire-resources-services/fire-prevention>
- State Law: The California Public Resources Code (PRC) sections provide standards for development of WUI areas in SRA outside of the city limits. PRC Section 4290 addresses minimum community design standards in designated WUI areas.
- PRC Section 4291 defines and requires compliance with defensible space in SRAs.
- Several other PRC codes address regulations regarding activities in WUI areas.
- The County Planning Department manages the County General Plan, Land Use planning, community design and building permits processes in the unincorporated area. The County fire Marshal provides new construction plan review and inspection in the SCCFD.
- General Plan, land use planning, community design, and building permits processes in the incorporated cities are managed by the respective city council and planning department.

## **IDENTIFY CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITY VALUES AT RISK**

Critical infrastructure is defined as electrical substations and transmission facilities; cellular, television, radio, and telecommunication sites; railroad structures; highway structures; navigation and coordination facilities; and other sites that are crucial to providing and coordinating essential services. Losses are not just the cost of replacing physical facility, but the cost associated with loss of the service, which can be significantly more than the facility costs.

The planning area also includes a large portion of open space including Sanborn County Park, El Sereno Open Space, Rancho San Antonio Open Space, Foothills Park, Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve and other open space holdings. These areas are valued for their natural resources and sensitive wildlife habitat, as well as recreational values. In addition to public open space, there are a number of private ranches in the planning area that are prioritized for protection.

There are a number of commercial businesses within the WUI area including wineries, golf course, small farms and equestrian facilities.

Other community values at risk include life safety, homes and property values, infrastructure, recreation and lifestyle, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and environmental resources.

## **SUMMARY**

The SCCFD contains multiple neighborhoods listed on the Federal and/or California Fire Alliance list of Communities at Risk from WUI fire in Santa Clara County. A large portion of the SCCFD is in SRA and High and Very High Fire Hazard Severity. The area has history of large damaging wildland fires.

Significant development is occurring with building of very large homes on medium sized rural parcels adding to the values at risk. Historical remote small cabin and home neighborhoods like Lexington Hills, Saratoga, and Los Gatos on remote, narrow one-lane roads present a dangerous life safety evacuation problem.

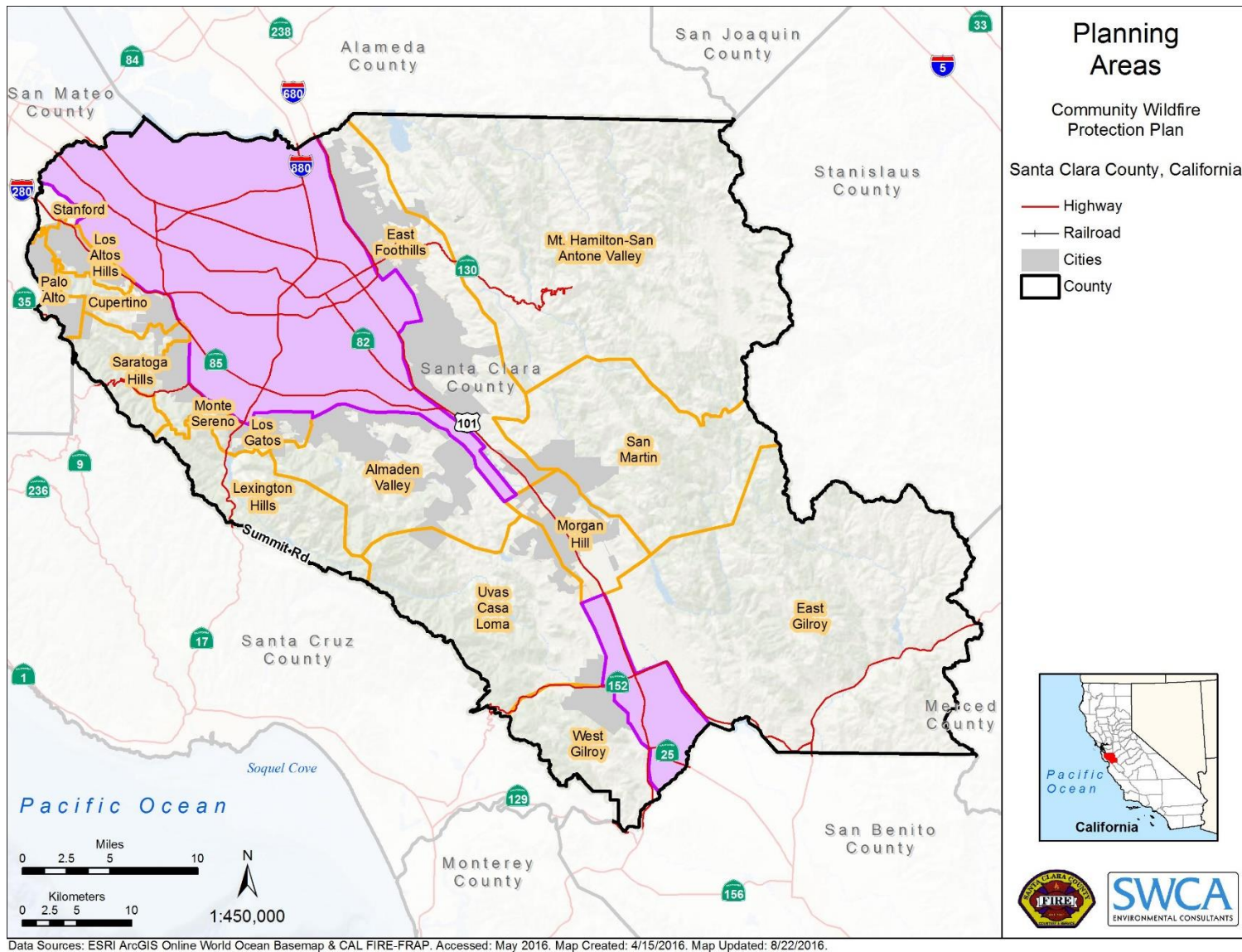
Defensible space maintenance, ignition resistant techniques and building materials, enhanced water supply, and improved access/egress routes are high priorities to mitigate the hazard and risk in the SCCFD planning area.

## **WUI AREA DESCRIPTION**

### ***WUI AREA DEFINED***

The WUI Planning Areas for the SCCFD are delineated in Figure 1.2 below.

The following Chapters discuss five geographic areas of unincorporated lands that the SCCFD protects: Lexington Hills, Los Altos Hills, Saratoga Hills, East Foothills and Milpitas, and New Almaden.



**Figure 1.2 SSCFD WUI planning areas include Lexington Hills, East Foothills, New Almaden, and portions of the Saratoga and Los Altos Hills.**

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