ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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AFG	Assistance to Firefighters Grant (FEMA)
ARRA	American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (U.S., 2009)
BCWMG	Boulder County Wildlife Mitigation Group (Colorado)
BLM	Bureau of Land Management (USDOI)
CERT	Community Emergency Response Teams (USDHS)
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations (U.S.)
CPZ	Community Protection Zone
CSFS	Colorado State Forest Service
CUIF	The Centers for Urban and Interface Forestry (USFS)
CWPP	Community Wildfire Protection Plan
DCA	Department of Community Affairs (Florida)
DEM	Division of Emergency Management (DCA)
DEP	Department of Environmental Protection (Florida)
DMA	Disaster Mitigation Act (U.S., 2000)
DOF	Division of Forestry (FDACS)
EAR	Evaluation and Appraisal Reports (DCA)
EEL	Environmentally Endangered Lands Program (Florida counties)
EMPA	Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance Grants (DEM)
ENSO	El Niño/La Niña Southern Oscillation
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
F.A.C.	Florida Administrative Code
FBC	Florida Building Code
FBPS	Fire Behavior Prediction Systems (computer models)
FDACS	Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
FDC	Fire Department Connection (standpipe/sprinkler connections)
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency (USDHS)
FFPC	Florida Fire Prevention Code
FIFE	Fire in Florida's Ecosystems (DOF educational program)
FLASH	Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (non-profit organization)
FLFRA	Florida Fire Risk Assessment (DOF/SGSF)
FLFRAS	Florida Fire Risk Assessment System (DOF/SGSF)
FLUE	Future Land Use Element (Florida Comprehensive Plan tool)
FLUM	Future Land Use Map (Florida Comprehensive Plan tool)
FMA	Flood Mitigation Assistance Program (FEMA)
FMAG	Fire Management Assistance Grant Program (FEMA)
FP&S	Fire Prevention and Safety Grants (FEMA)
F.S.	Florida Statute
FWC	Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission
GIS	Geographic Information System (electronic geographic information)
GOAL	Greater Okefenokee Association of Landowners (Georgia-Florida)

HFRA	Healthy Forests Restoration Act (U.S., 2003)
HMGP	Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (FEMA)
HOA	Homeowners Association (Florida neighborhoods)
IBHS	Institute for Business and Home Safety (non-profit organization)
IFAS	Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF)
KBDI	Keetch-Byram Drought Index (mathematical model)
LDR	Land Development Regulations (ULDC, Florida local government)
LMS	Local Mitigation Strategy (DMA County plan)
LOC	Level of Concern (FLFRA measure)
LOTE	Living on the Edge in Florida (DOF educational program)
LP	Liquid Propane
MSTU	Municipal Service Taxing Unit (Florida cities)
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration (U.S.)
NASF	National Association of State Foresters (non-profit organization)
NFP	National Fire Plan (USDOI/USFS)
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association (non-profit organization)
NPS	National Park Service (USDOI)
NWCG	National Wildland Fire Coordinating Group (U.S. interagency group)
OSNWR	Okefenokee Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (USDOI)
PDM	Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program (FEMA)
PSA	Public Service Announcement
PUD	Planned Unit Development (Florida development process)
RFC	Repetitive Flood Claims Program (FEMA)
SGSF	Southern Group of State Foresters (non-profit organization)
SRL	Severe Repetitive Loss Program (FEMA)
UF	University of Florida
ULDC	Uniform Land Development Code (LDR, Florida local government)
U.S.	United States
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USDHS	United States Department of Homeland Security
USDOI	United States Department of the Interior
USFA	United States Fire Administration (FEMA)
USFS	United States Forest Service (USDA)
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USDOI)
WFSBAD	Wildland Fire Suppression Benefit Assessment District (local taxing district)
WFSI	Wildland Fire Susceptibility Index (FLFRA measure)
WPMP	Wildfire Prevention and Mitigation Plan (possible development requirement)
WUI	Wildland-Urban Interface

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

Adaptation – Alteration or change in or function of a plant or animal over successive generations that aids it in being better suited to live in its environment.

Aerial Fuels – Live and dead vegetation above the surface and in the forest canopy, including trees, branches, twigs, leaves and needles, cones, vines, and tall brush.

Aspect – A position facing a particular direction; exposure. For example, if a slope faces to the south, you would say that it has a southern aspect.

Canopy – Layer formed by the leaves and branches of the forest's tallest trees.

Chemical Reaction – Change in the nature of a material that prompts a transformation and/or release of energy. For example, fire transforms matter from solid into heat/energy, gas, and ash.

Combustion – A usually rapid chemical reaction in the presence of oxygen that produces heat and usually light.

Conifer – Cone-bearing tree or shrub. Some conifers are evergreens, like pines and cedars, and some conifers are deciduous, like cypress trees.

Convection – The continuous transfer of heat from one place to another, as from a wildfire flame to a building. Also, the circulatory motion that occurs when air heated by wildfire rises rapidly and new cooler air is pulled toward a wildfire. These air convection currents can carry firebrands up and deposit them elsewhere. Convection currents associated with an extreme wildfire can create a firestorm.

Crown Fire – A fire that burns primarily in the tops of live trees, spreading from tree to tree above the ground. Crown fires are almost always ignited by and supported by a surface fire below.

Debris Burning – Fire set for the purpose of clearing land or to burn yard trash (e.g., leaves, trimmings, dead branches). Escaped debris fires are a common cause of wildfire in Florida. Backyard burning of yard trash is regulated by local and state government in Florida and may be banned under high-risk conditions. Burning of household garbage (e.g., plastics, packaging) is illegal in most areas of Florida, as fumes harm air quality.

Defensible Space – A "clean" zone where fuels have been cleared, reduced, or changed to act as a barrier between an advancing wildfire and property to be protected. Defensible space usually is a 30-foot-wide vegetation management zone around a structure, although fuels should be thinned beyond this first zone in high-risk areas.

Dry Lightning – Lightning accompanying a thunderstorm in which little or no rain reaches the ground. Lightning from a dry storm may spark a wildfire since there is no rain to moisten vegetation.

Duff – The layer of decomposing organic material lying above the mineral soil and just below the surface layer of freshly fallen litter (e.g., twigs, needles, leaves). In wildfires that occur during dry times, the duff layer may burn, causing damaging scorching of tree roots and danger to firefighting personnel.

Ecosystem – An interacting system of energy, nutrients, water and other living and non-living components.

El Niño / La Niña – The cyclical warming (El Niño) and cooling (La Niña) of the equatorial Pacific off South America that results in significant changes in weather patterns in North America. In Florida, El Niño results in cooler and wetter weather, which can cause overgrowth of vegetation that can feed wildfires during the next La Niña cycle, which brings warmer and drier weather in Florida.

Endemic – Native to, characteristic of, and restricted to a certain locality or region.

Fire – A self-sustaining chemical reaction (combustion), in the presence of oxygen, heat, and fuel.

Fire-Adapted Ecosystem – An area where periodic fire maintains the natural structure and function of the ecosystem, inhabited by plants and animals that have special adaptations that help them survive fire.

Fire Behavior – The manner in which a wildland fire reacts to conditions of fuel, weather, and topography. Common terms used to describe fire behavior include smoldering, creeping, running, spotting, torching, blowing up, and crowning.

Fire Break – A natural or constructed barrier of limited fuels used to provide a control line from which to work during an active or future prescribed fire or wildfire.

Fire Environment –The surrounding conditions of weather, topography, and fuels that influence wildfire behavior. These three factors simultaneously determine the likelihood of a fire starting, the speed and direction at which a wildfire spreads, the intensity at which a wildfire burns, and the ability to control and extinguish a wildfire. Although weather and topography cannot be changed, the fuels (vegetation) can be modified. Proper fuel management can reduce the risk to life and property.

Fire Exclusion – The act of keeping any and all fire out of a wildland or forest area. Fire exclusion usually is a combination of intentional or inadvertent actions. Intentional fire exclusion is when no fires are allowed to burn in an area (e.g., lack of support for prescribed burning). Inadvertent fire exclusion has resulted from human development blocking fire from its natural movement across the landscape. As more roads, highways, and developments stand in the way of natural fire, it is even more important for land managers to use prescribed fire to reduce fuels and maintain ecosystems in wildlands.

Fire History – The chronological record of the occurrence of fire in an ecosystem or at a specific site. The fire history of an area may inform planners and residents about the level of wildfire hazard in that area.

Fire Return Interval – The average time (in years) between successive fires in an area or ecosystem. For example, the historic fire interval in Florida flatwoods ecosystem is every 3 to 10 years.

Fire Season – Wildfires can occur during every month in Florida, but the highest months of wildfire activity are December through June. During this time wildland fires are most likely to occur, spread, and affect resources and homes.

Fire Suppression – The work of containing or fighting a wildfire, beginning with its discovery and continuing until the fire is extinguished and mop-up is completed.

Fire Triangle – An aid to understanding fire in which the sides of a triangle are used to represent the three factors – oxygen, heat, and fuel – necessary for combustion. Removal or reduction of any of the three factors can help control or extinguish the fire.

Firebrands – Burning embers that float up into the air on the convection currents created by a fire. Firebrands are usually carried ahead of a large wildfire on the wind, and may fall back to the ground to cause spot fires or ignite homes beyond the wildfire perimeter.

Fuel(s) – The dead and living materials in a natural environment that will burn. This includes dead pine needles, grasses, twigs, branches, and trees, as well as living grasses, shrubs (e.g., saw palmetto, gallberry), and trees. At the wildland-urban interface, fuels may also include buildings.

Fuel Management / Fuel Reduction – Manipulation or removal of fuels to reduce the likelihood of ignition and to reduce potential damage in case of a wildfire. Fuel reduction methods include prescribed fire, mechanical treatments (mowing, chopping), herbicides, biomass removal (thinning or harvesting of trees, harvesting of pine straw), and grazing. Fuel management techniques may sometimes be combined for greater effect. Prescribed fire is generally accepted as the most economically and ecologically sound method for treating large acreages.

Fuel Management Zone / Community Protection Zone – A zone of reduced and managed wildland fuels surrounding a community in a high-risk area and designed to protect the community from wildfire.

Grazing – The feeding of livestock on growing plants. Grazing is sometimes used as a fuel reduction method in Florida forests and prairies at risk of fire.

Ground Fire / Muck Fire – A fire that burns in duff (dried muck) beneath the surface of the ground, mostly by smoldering or slow-moving combustion. Ground fires usually occur in dry marshes or swamps during a drought and are ignited by a passing surface fire. Muck fires may burn for days or weeks, creating a smoke hazard and a safety problem for firefighters, because underground pockets of fire can collapse under the weight of humans or equipment.

Herbicide – Any chemical substance used to kill or slow the growth of unwanted plants.

Hydric – Moist or wet. For example, a hydric hammock is an ecosystem that would be wet for a brief time each year and would be moist and shady all year long.

Hydroperiod – The frequency and duration of saturation of an ecosystem with water. When characterizing wetlands, the term hydroperiod describes that length of time during the year that the soil is either saturated or covered with water.

Invasive Species – Species that move into an area and threaten the natural ecosystem by becoming dominant in terms of cover, resource use, or other ecological impacts. Invasive species may be either native or non-native "weeds."

Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) – A continuous reference scale for estimating the moisture content of soil and duff layers, and thus vegetation. KBDI is used for fire management and planning purposes, with a numerical range from 0 (no moisture deficiency) to 800 (maximum drought). The Keetch-Byram Drought Index is posted daily at http://flame.fl-dof.com/fire_weather.

Ladder Fuels – Fuels that allow a fire to spread from the ground level up to the forest canopy, leading to a crown fire. Ladder fuels include vines, hanging branches, shrubs, or an understory layer of small/medium flammable trees, such as young pines. Fuel reduction strategies often focus on reducing ladder fuels first.

Mechanical Treatment(s) – Ways to reduce hazardous fuels for the purpose of wildfire prevention, such as roller chopping, mowing, and crushing. A GyroTrac® mower is often used by the Florida Division of Forestry for mechanical treatments on lands determined to have hazardous fuel levels.

Mesic – Conditions of moderate moisture or water supply. For example, a mesic flatwoods is a moderate flatwoods that is not too wet and not too dry.

Mitigation – The practice of making something less harsh or less severe. In wildfire mitigation, fuels are reduced so that wildfire will be less likely to occur and will be less severe when it does occur.

Noncombustible – Not capable of burning. For example, metal roofing is considered to be noncombustible roofing.

Non-native Species – An introduced species that evolved elsewhere that has been purposefully or accidentally spread by humans. Some non-native species are beneficial (e.g., vegetables) and some non-native species can become invasive species (e.g., melaleuca, air potato). Also called "exotic species."

Overstory – The tree layer of a forest ecosystem, as opposed to the midstory (shrub layer) and understory (ground cover layer).

Prescribed Fire – The planned application of fire to natural fuels in order to accomplish a specific management goal. Like a prescription for forest health, prescribed fire is done according a written plan for weather and safety conditions. Agencies use prescribed fire for many goals including to or reduce hazardous fuels that may increase the risk of wildfire. Prior to ignition, an authorization must be obtained from the Florida Division of Forestry.

Prescription – A plan of specific conditions under which a prescribed fire may be ignited for a given piece of land. A complete prescription must be prepared in advance of receiving an authorization to burn.

Pulpwood – Trees that are grown to be ground into pulp for making paper and other wood fiber products, such as diapers and rayon fiber. These trees are grown on a fairly short rotation, often 15 to 30 years.

Radiation – The transfer of heat by emitting energy in the form of waves or particles. A wildfire may give off enough radiant heat to ignite vegetation or structures from several feet away.

Serotinous – Any plant or plant part that is late in developing or flowering. Pinecones that have a delayed opening stimulated by fire are called serotinous. Florida pines that have serotinous cones include the pond pine and sand pine (Ocala variety).

Slash – Debris left after logging, pruning, thinning, or brush cutting. Slash includes logs, chips, bark, branches, stumps, and broken trees or brush that may be fuel for a wildfire.

Spark Arrester – An approved device installed atop a chimney, flue, or exhaust pipe to prevent the emission or entrance of sparks and embers.

Structural Fire – Fire originating in and burning any part or all of any home, building, shelter, or other structure.

Succession – The gradual replacement of one natural community by another as in the change from an open field to a mature, or climax, forest. In many areas of the eastern U.S., the climax forest is a hardwood forest. In the Southeast and West, however, many of the forests are fire-maintained climax forests of coniferous trees.

Surface Fire – A fire that burns leaf litter, fallen branches and other surface fuels on the forest floor, as opposed to ground fire and crown fire. The majority of wildfires in Florida are surface fires supported by accumulations of surface fuels and vegetation.

Timber – Trees suitable for sawing into lumber or plywood for building construction and other purposes. These trees are grown on a long rotation, often 50 years or more.

Understory – The plants of the lower levels of a forest ecosystem. The understory usually includes grasses, herbs, shrubs, and tree seedlings growing on the surface.

Wildfire – Any fire that is not meeting management objectives or is out of control, and thus merits a firefighting (suppression) response from the Florida Division of Forestry and/or local partners.

Wildland – An area with minimal development as evidenced by few structures and predominantly natural vegetation, and used for conservation, recreation, or agriculture/silviculture.

Wildland-Urban Interface – The zone where structures and other human development meets or intermingles with undeveloped wildland fuels and other natural features.

Xeric – Having very little moisture or dry conditions. The Florida Scrub is a xeric ecosystem.

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