

Grant I 2007 Accomplishments

AWARDED GRANT – WV Firewise in Classroom

■ **Firewise Grant Awarded:**

During the spring of 2007 the WVDOF and EPCF received notification they had received grant support for the establishment of Firewise in the Classroom in West Virginia.

■ **Donation of PCs:**

An EPCF board member, through his company, donated 20 laptop computers it was replacing. This gift of laptop computers provided a base of support for a mobile lab for use by teacher /students in the Firewise in the Classroom project at Hedgesville High School.

Grant I – 2007 Firewise Grant:

1. Research and System Development

GIS System and & Access to Air Photos

1. GIS 4 Schools built a complete GIS system for use in the Firewise Project. The data was downloaded from the WV GIS Clearinghouse. Each data layer has metadata links.

2. Access to Air Photos: Minnesota Firewise uses a special GIS system. That system was reprogrammed to work with the West Virginia data. A special enhancement allowed access to detailed air photos that West Virginia University hosts on their web site. This access allows the WV Firewise project to view air photos for any community in West Virginia.

Grant I – 2007 Firewise Grant:

2. Modification of Minnesota Firewise Curriculum to Meet WV Standards

Adapt Minnesota Curriculum for use in West Virginia Schools

The Minnesota Firewise curriculum is nationally recognized as a leader in getting technology into the classroom. Key to the success of the WV project was to match the Minnesota curriculum to the West Virginia science standards. The entire curriculum was rewritten and adapted to the unique needs of the West Virginia Firewise Program. WVDOF Firewise specialist and a teacher from Hedgesville H.S. attended two custom training sessions in Minnesota to learn the new system.

Curriculum:

11 Lesson Plans (All matched to West Virginia Science Standards)

Teacher DVD:

A special Teacher DVD was produced that included lessons, presentations and videos that teachers could use.

Grant I – 2007 Firewise Grant:

3. Teaching Level 1 Risk Assessment Process

Ken Pekarek from GIS 4 Schools traveled to Hedgesville in the fall to assist in setting up the Firewise project. With the assistance of the Berkeley County School District network specialists and staff at Hedgesville H.S. software and data were loaded on computers donated by the Eagle Promise Charitable Fund for use in the Project. Students were introduced to the program, learned about Firewise and how to conduct a Level 1 Risk Assessment.

Over 90 students in 4 class periods conducted a Level 1 Assessment of all homes visible from aerial photography. Over two class sessions the students coded over 1400 homes in the Woods and another 300 in Sleepy Hollow. In 2009 and 2010 3 other communities were assessed.

Using a special feature in the program, each of the homes can be clicked on to check on the L1 rating assigned to the house.

Spatial Analysis programs processed the Level 1 ratings to create a unique map (Density Surface Model) that high lights “High Risk” areas – yellow circles. This allows Firewise Specialists the opportunity to prioritize areas of a development that need Level 2 Hazard Risk Assessments.

Grant I – 2007 Firewise Grant:

4. Level 2 Hazard Assessments – Two Sections

Field Trips to The Woods for L2 Evaluations: 2008 – 2011

Sun Schoyer, HHS Science teacher assigned students to teams and provided background information on how to use GPS receivers and conduct a Level 2 Hazard Assessment. Students boarded the bus for the 20 minute ride to The Woods. Students recorded the UTM coordinates of each home and completed the WVDOF Hazard Assessment form. Representatives from WVDOF and WHOA Firewise Committee were chaperons provided the students support during the Assessment process. At the end of the field trip the students had a lunch. At the conclusion of lunch a short presentation was made on the value of the students work to the community and thanking them for their assistance.

Results of Field Trip to Section 1 of The Woods

In April, 2008, students assessed **159** homes. The Average Hazard Rating was **72** – High Risk. **34** were low to moderate risk, **110** were high risk and **15** were Very High Risk. The original Community Wildfire Hazard Assessment Reports completed in 2005 did not identified as many homes in the high or very high risk rating. The 2005 Hazard Reports were based on a 10% sample of homes in the section.

Results of Field Trip to Section 2 of The Woods

In April, 2009, students assessed **145** homes. The Average Hazard Rating is **74** – High Risk. **36** were low to moderate risk, **85** were high risk and **21** were Very High Risk and **3** were Extreme. The 2005 Hazard report did not identified any Extreme rated homes.