

WALKER COMMUNITY ACTION ALLIANCE, INC.

WALKER FIREWISE ACTION PLAN

October, 2025



INTRODUCTION:

Walker community, is an unincorporated community located within Yavapai County, Arizona.

Walker Community, formally a mining town located south of the City of Prescott, Arizona. Access to the area is by one of three routes, one of which is paved with all three reaching various areas of Walker through the Prescott National Forest. The area is served by an all-volunteer fire department, managed by the Walker Fire Protection Association, Inc.

Walker is a group of private properties/residences, many of which border National Forest Service Land. The residences are intermingled within the forested terrain and share the same fire shed as the Prescott National Forest in the Yavapai County Bradshaw Mountains. Many parcels within the community are undeveloped. Most property owners are absent and/or part-time occupants of the community.

Walker Firewise is program administered by the Walker Community Action Alliance, Inc., (WCAA) an Arizona non-profit corporation and an IRS 501(c)(3) all volunteer organization. The goal of Walker Firewise is to educate property owners on the 'how and why' to treat and maintain their own properties. To diminish the effects of a devastating wildfire, should one occur, and to save lives and property.

The current Firewise Chairman for Walker Firewise is:

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COMMUNITY LOCATION:

Walker is located about 12 miles, by road, southeast of the city of Prescott, Arizona. The Walker Fire Station is located approximately seven and two-tenths miles south of Arizona State Route 69 at 4980 E Walker Rd. 34 27 22.27N, 112 22 42.42W

OWNERSHIP:

Walker has approximately 752 structured properties residing on about 1230 acres. Most are second homes, summer cabins. Walker Firewise services 2453 total acres, with lots ranging in size from less than ¼ acre to the largest at 138 acres. Most properties are owned by absentee owners and most structures are winterized each fall and reopened in the spring.

Walker is surrounded by the Prescott National Forest.

TOPOGRAPHY:

Walker's elevation ranges from approximately 6,000 feet at the north end to approximately 7,450 feet at the south end. Most properties have moderate to steep slopes and all aspects are present. There are two main drainages. Lynx Creek drains south to north and is a major tributary to the Granite Creek watershed. It is an ephemeral stream that supports a limited riparian corridor of Fremont's cottonwood, boxelder, Arizona Walnut, and willow species. The Hassayampa River originates on the south side of the summit and feeds the Gila River, a tributary to the Colorado River. Walker has terrain that includes draws, chimneys, chutes, and saddles. The slope is 31-40% within 300 feet of most structures.

VEGETATION:

Vegetation consists of overstocked chaparral including species such as manzanita and emery oak at the lower elevations. Douglas fir, white fir, ponderosa pine, gamble oak, aspen and alligator juniper dominate in the higher elevations. Fire suppression over the years has permitted a dense growth of understory throughout.

CLIMATE:

Summer monsoon storms can create severe lightning followed by heavy downpours which fill the streams with rushing water. Lightning strikes cause damage to trees and often fire. Winter brings snow, varying depths depending on the elevation. Snow has occurred as early as October and as late in the season as in May. Most heavy runoff occurs when rain follows a heavy snow, often in December. The driest months are April, May and June and these months are also the windiest months of the year. Fire weather is typically high to extreme during early spring until midsummer with low fuel moisture, low relative humidity, and a predominantly southwesterly wind flow. Fire weather normally decreases somewhat during the late summer and early fall depending largely upon the amount of rainfall associated with summer thunderstorms.

WILDLIFE:

Mammals include bear, mountain lion, ringtail cat, mule deer, raccoon, squirrel, grey fox, coyote, skunk, porcupine, bobcat and javelina. Fowl include the Mexican Spotted Owl, wild turkey, pigeon, raven, bald eagles, cooper hawks, ospreys and many species of smaller wild birds. Reptiles are gopher snake, Arizona black rattlesnake, lizards and horned toads. Amphibians include the Arizona tree frog.

FIRE REGIME AND HISTORY:

The Walker community has been threatened many times historically.

June 2, 1909, the entire business section of the town of Walker burned, not to be rebuilt.

Battle Flat Fire, in the 1970's came very close to the eastern edge of Walker.

Big Bug Fire, 1990, Small fire started by a logger's burning vehicle.

Pine Mountain Fire, within Walker, evacuated citizens in September 2006(?)

Goodwin Fire, another evacuation. July 24, 2017. 28,518 acres.

Crooks Fire, another evacuation, on April 18, 2022, 9,402 acres, 1 mile from Walker.

Bluff Fire, a small wildfire within the Potato Patch Subdivision. May 16, 2018

Treehouse Fire, structure fire in Potato Patch, June 9, 2018

Boundary Springs Fire – Located at about milepost 10 off of Walker Rd.

Walker Fire – Located at about milepost 10 off of Walker Rd.

Midnight Snap Fire – Near Walker Road and Sheldon Road.

Smith Ravine Fire – could have prevented evacuees using Walker Road northbound.

Green Gate Fire – off of Big Bug Mesa Rd., came very close to residential structures.

Cellar Fire – 16 miles south of Prescott. July 14, 2019. Over 7000 acres.

Yankee Doodle Fire, February 9, 2022, 2.6 miles south of Walker near Palace Station.

Lynx Fire – April 20, 2017, East side of Lynx Lake

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE:

Most of the streets and driveways are typically less than 16 feet in width. Most of them terminate without cul-de-sacs or turn-arounds for fire-fighting equipment.

Only subdivisions in Walker have fire hydrants. Potato Patch and possibly Mountain Pine Acres. However, many homeowners have installed water holding tanks and have equipped them with connections compatible with the local volunteer fire fighting apparatus. The Walker Fire Department retains maps of these tank locations.

- Walker Fire Department, administered by the Walker Fire Protection Association, Inc. maintains an ISO rating of 8b.
- Walker is included in the Yavapai County Community Wildland Protection Plan (CWPP).
- Walker is considered one of the highest interface fire hazards in the Southwest by the Ecological Restoration Institute of Northern Arizona University. And is “in grave danger of catastrophic fire”.

- Walker is listed in the August 17, 2001 Federal Register of “Urban Wildland Interface Communities Within the Vicinity of Federal Lands That Are at High Risk from Wildfire”.
- Walker is listed as a high-risk community by the Arizona Department of Fire and Fire Management.

COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Formal “Wildfire Risk Assessments” have been conducted on over 320 individual homesites since Walker Firewise was established in year 2010.

Beginning in year 2011, Walker Firewise through the auspices of Walker Community Action Alliance, has conducted annual community cleanup events. Originally Chipper Days and now multi-week-long Chip and Haul events. This has reduced the amount of slash on the forest floor and around structures in Walker by over 13,662.50 cubic yards (approximately 2,300 tons). The biomass in the form of wood chips is donated to local businesses to use in the production of goods and services.

Walker Firewise is a member of the Prescott Area Wildland/Urban Interface Commission (PAWUIC) aka YavapaiFirewise.org and participates in helping PAWUIC with donations and PAWUIC community events designed to educate Yavapai County residents about fire prevention.

As of September 2025, Walker residents have been reimbursed \$380,870.17 used for wildland fuel abatement and a total of 248.07 acre have been treated.

COMMUNITY PROJECT GOALS:

More than a century of aggressive fire suppression has the forest within and surrounding Walker choked with dense vegetation. This includes downed logs and thousands of dead trees killed by bark beetles along with a heavy layer of pine straw and leaf litter. All of this, compounded with a continued drought and global warming, creates a recipe for a disastrous wildfire scenario.

Walker Firewise plans to continue to seek means to educate and to financially support individual home owners with their efforts to treat their parcels and to create defensible space, dispose excess combustible vegetation and improve forest health overall. Most parcels, due to their limited size and often the terrain, are ineligible for mechanical treatment. It is also impractical to use fire for the same reasons. Utilization of hand crews to perform fuel abatement remains the only viable method of treatment. However, the entire Walker Community resides in the “Critical Habitat” for the Mexican Spotted Owl, a protected species. This fact limits the months of the year that forest operations may take place. Those are the (fall and winter) months when the Mexican Spotted Owls are not nesting. However, those same months when forest operations may take place, happen to also be the same period when summertime residents are not at their cabins and when snow accumulations can disrupt fuel abatement activities.

The Walker Community Action Alliance holds multiple events throughout each year to raise funds to support the Walker Firewise plan. At each event, Firewise related literature is available along with a Firewise representative to field questions and offer advice.

Walker Firewise publishes an annual newsletter each spring and also writes articles in the bi-annual newsletter published by the Walker Fire Protection Association. Firewise related information is also published in the “Potato Patch Post”, a quarterly newsletter published by the Potato Patch Homeowners Association.

Walker Fire Protection Association each year offers space on their property for the community Chip and Haul event. In some years it has supported the Chip and Haul operation with donations to fill any shortfalls. This community effort requires participation of community members and it has proven to be the most cost-effective method to remove large amounts of forest fire fuel from individual properties.

Walker Community Action Alliance has entered into an agreement (Memorandum of Understanding) with the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management to agree to conduct fire prevention management activities as outlined in the “Forest Stewardship Plan” dated September 30, 2019 for Walker. This is a comprehensive plan that is available for review on the Walker Community Action Alliance website.

<http://www.walkercaa.org/Documents/Firewise%20Taskforce/WALKER%20Forest%20Stewardship%20Plan%20V2.pdf>

COMMUNITY INVESTMENT:

Walker Community Action Alliance has generated over \$772,345 to assist homeowners mitigate wildfire fuel within the “Home Ignition Zones” on their properties.

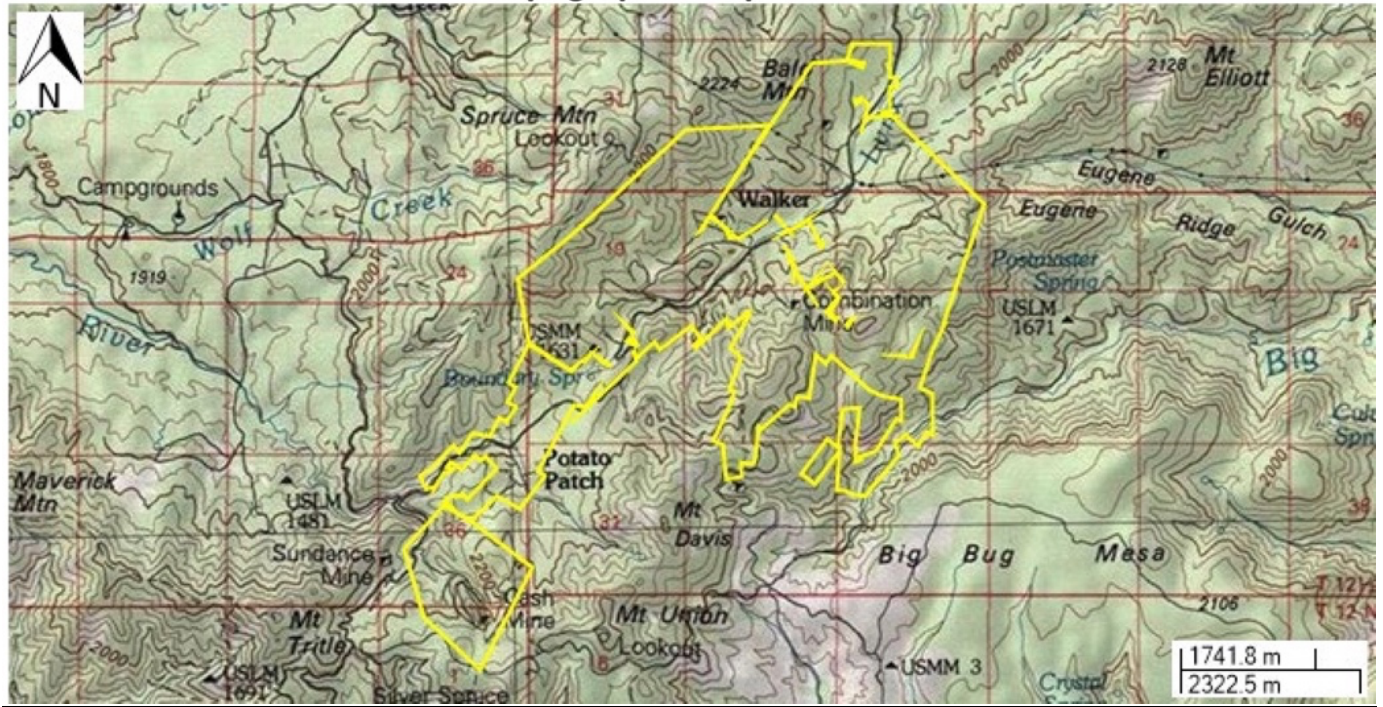
Community members have reported volunteer hours and expenses, averaging \$232,680.98 over the past three years.

COMMUNITY FIREWISE DAY:

A Firewise Day is held annually in Walker. The theme varies each year to attract different interests. Events have hosted speakers such as: Prescott National Forest, Yavapai County Emergency Management, American Red Cross and Large Animal Shelters & Emergency Readiness, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Walker Volunteer Fire Department. Firewise Days are held at the Walker Firehouse.

MAPS AND COMMUNITY PHOTOS:

Topographic Map



TYPICAL CHIP AND HAUL LOAD



GRINDING SLASH – CHIP & HAUL



SLASH PILE

