

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Lee County Public Safety hosts virtual meeting to help the community understand and reduce wildfire risk**

*Meeting offers opportunity to learn about Community Wildfire Protection Plan*

Fort Myers, FL, Feb. 11, 2026 – Lee County will host a virtual public meeting from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 25, about efforts to help the community understand and reduce wildfire risk and provide an opportunity for public input.

Lee County is working to develop the Lee County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), a community-driven planning effort that will assess wildfire risk across Lee County and identify strategies to improve wildfire preparedness, mitigation, response coordination and recovery. The plan is being developed by Lee County in partnership with SWCA Environmental Consultants and incorporates input from local agencies, area fire districts, the Florida Division of Forestry and community members.

Public input will help shape the plan's recommendations for wildfire response, mitigation and community education. Participation is encouraged by homeowners, renters, land managers, fire professionals and those who live, work or own property in Lee County.

To begin the virtual meeting, Lee County Public Safety Director Benjamin Abes will provide an overview of the CWPP planning process, including how the plan is developed, why it is important for Lee County and how residents can participate.

Then SWCA Environmental Consultants will present more specifics about the CWPP. Next, the discussion will move from the plan to information residents can use. This will include wildfire preparedness information relevant to homeowners, such as defensible space concepts and actions that can help reduce wildfire risk around homes and neighborhoods.

SWCA fire experts Mitch Burgard (wildland fire management and planning expert) and Sam Lashley (nationally certified wildfire mitigation specialist and structure mitigation expert) will present key information during the session and be available to answer questions during the concluding question-and-answer segment.

Public participation is a key component of the CWPP. Community feedback gathered during the meeting will help inform plan development. A draft version of the CWPP is anticipated to be released for public review between March 26 and April 3, providing additional opportunities for residents to submit comments before the plan is finalized.

To join the virtual meeting, register using this link: [https://swca.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_1kL6CZz4ReiU8pP11DL-Zg](https://swca.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1kL6CZz4ReiU8pP11DL-Zg)

For more information about the Lee County CWPP and upcoming engagement opportunities, visit [Lee County CWPP HubSite](#).

In related news, Public Safety would like to remind residents that last month Lee County enacted a burn ban for unincorporated Lee County and municipalities due to increasingly dry conditions throughout Southwest Florida. The county's ordinance bans "outdoor burning ignition sources," including campfires, bonfires and trash burning. Grills for food are not included. Officials ask all county residents to be mindful of dry conditions and to use good judgment to mitigate potential for significant wildfires.

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