

Deep Creek Mesa Wildfire Mitigation

Telluride, CO

February 19, 2025

This report is provided to inform the homeowner insurance industry of the collective wildfire mitigation efforts that are taking place in the specific Deep Creek Mesa region of Telluride. Outlined in this document is a summary of key actions, strategies, and best management practices that define a low-risk wildfire community. Utilizing this report will assist the insurance industry when defining risk factors in an effort to stabilize rates, eligibility, and unnecessary cancellations.

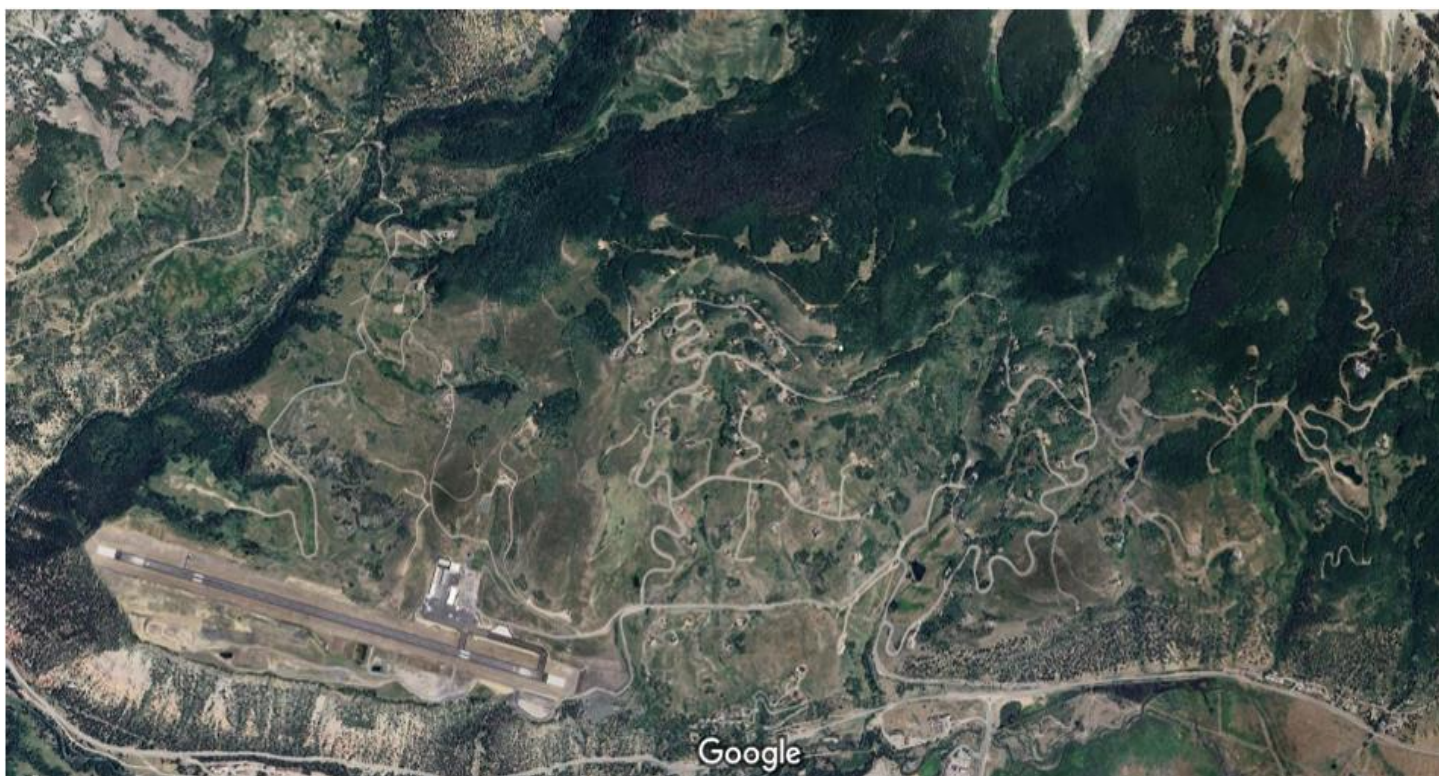
Introduction – Deep Creek Mesa

Deep Creek Mesa is located roughly 9,000 ft in the mountains of San Miguel County, Colorado between 4 and 10 miles West of Telluride, CO and is comprised of over 4,400 acres of low density residential single-family properties, agricultural designated ranches, and a regional commercial airport. The Mesa is bordered on the North by the Uncompahgre National Forest.

The HOA communities are mostly positioned on the South facing open slope Mesa, with homes that are spread out on large lots over many acres. The majority of natural features is made up of large grass meadows, Aspen stands, small groupings of low-growth oak brush, and limited conifers mixed into home landscaping. The airport is geographically and topographically separated from the residential communities on the Mesa.

Many of the HOA's were formed in the early 1990's as low-density, including several subdivisions. Currently, approximately two-hundred and fifty (250) homes are completed, with more than a dozen under construction or in planning for development. The HOA's and homeowners in the area are well organized and highly committed to wildfire mitigation.

The Telluride Regional Airport is situated on the South border of Deep Creek Mesa and is geographically and topographically isolated from the residential communities on the Mesa. As with any airport, it is regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and is mandated to maintain methods and procedures related to fire mitigation, including on-site fire-fighting capabilities for their entire property.



Deep Creek Mesa Regional Map

Deep Creek Mesa Wildfire Mitigation Committee

In early 2024, a group of eleven (11) Homeowner Associations on Deep Creek Mesa created a collaborative community preparedness plan to identify wildfire-related hazards and risks across the Deep Creek Mesa region. The HOA committee will continue to work together in an effort to educate and increase resilience to wildfire throughout our connected communities.

Aldasoro Ranch HOC
Aldasoro Sheep Ranch
Deep Creek Ranches
Diamond Ranch
Golden Ledge
Gray Head

Last Dollar Subdivision
Meadows at Deep Creek Mesa
Sunnyside West
Sunnyside East
Sunnyside Ranch Reserve

County Wildfire Protection Plan

The San Miguel County Wide Protection Plan (CWPP), identifies the largest HOA subdivision on Deep Creek Mesa, Aldasoro Ranch, as “**Low Risk**” for wildfire. The 2009 CWPP is the result of a County-wide planning effort that included extensive field data research and stakeholder meetings resulting in recommendations designed to reduce the threat of wildfire related damages.

The San Miguel County building code standards follow the "[International Wildland-Urban Interface Code](#)" (IWUIC) ignition resistance building materials requirement for single family homes throughout the County. Fire resistant home materials help prevent buildings from igniting due to direct wildfire exposure thereby limiting the spread of structure fires to surrounding vegetation.

HOA Declarations

Each of the HOA Declarations and/or policy require reasonable precautions to protect against wildfire. Standards include prohibitions against open burning except in controlled receptacles, prohibition against flammable roofing materials, proper defensible space planning, and the removal of dead/diseased vegetation.

Telluride Fire Protection District

The Mesa is protected by the Telluride Fire Protection District (TFPD), which operates four fire stations throughout the Telluride Region. The TFPD invested in new wildfire technology by installing four (4) Pano AI cameras in strategic locations throughout the region, including one camera on the Mesa in Gray Head HOA. The Pano AI cameras are capable of detecting smoke for hundreds of miles away 24 hours a day.

Wildfire Mitigation Actions & Planning

The HOA's have met with the [West Region Wildfire Council](#) (WRWC), to facilitate community wildfire risk assessments, educate homeowners on defensible space, and develop best management practices. The HOA's are recommending homeowners conduct individual site inspections to learn more about home hardening, vegetation management, defensible space, home ignition, and safety measures. The HOA's will continue to encourage owners to conduct site inspections and targets a greater than fifty percent (50%) participation by year ending 2026.

Many properties throughout the Mesa have already conducted wildfire mitigation projects by removal of thousands of metric tons of flammable dead and diseased vegetation within the last two years and will continue hazard fuel reduction projects as needed.

The majority of homes in Deep Creek Mesa have state of the art surveillance systems with 24-hour monitoring.

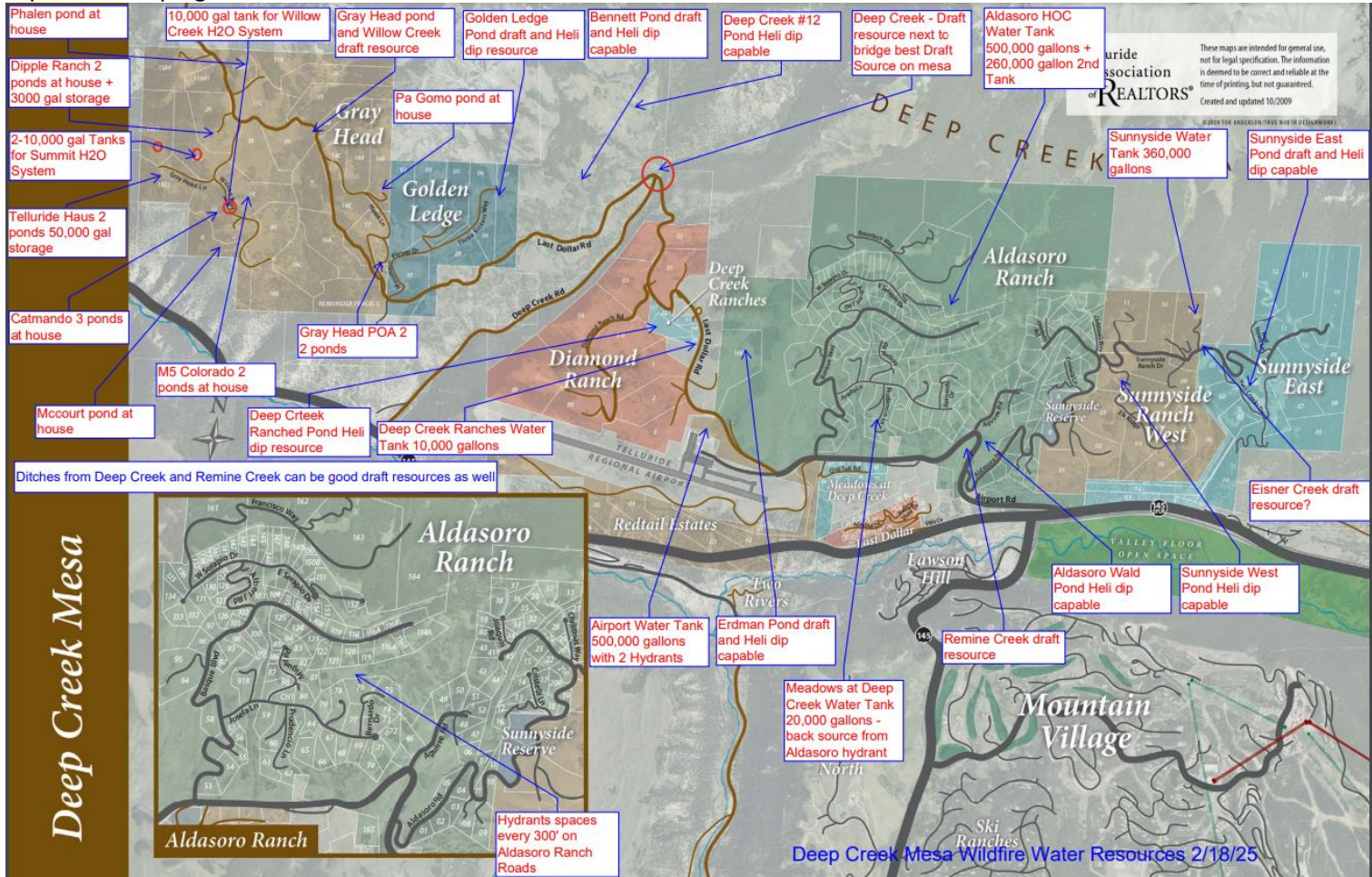
Defensible Space

Most homes on the Mesa maintain anywhere from 30' to 50' of defensible space. The HOA's have authority to mandate removal of flashy fuels or hazard vegetation surrounding residences. Roads also act as a natural defensible space barrier. In Aldasoro Ranch and Sunnyside, roads are paved and constructed twenty-five feet (25') in width allowing for over ten miles of natural defensible fire breaks, including large cul-de-sacs for emergency apparatus turn-around. Each home on the Mesa is required to have address monument signage for clear identification. Certain lots with driveways that are longer than 300 feet have turnarounds and/or pullouts to accommodate apparatus.

Water Availability

Each HOA has independent water systems. The Aldasoro Ranch HOC owns and operates the largest community drinking water system on the Mesa including seventy (70) Fire Hydrants supplied by a high-pressure distribution network. Fire hydrants are spaced less than 300' apart throughout the 1,500-acre community. Aldasoro has one 550,000-gallon water storage tank with a second 260,000-gallon tank being constructed in 2025. The source water is supplied by twelve different wells located in two different areas in the community, with two more high-production supply wells being developed in 2025. Some of the other Mesa HOA's operate pressurized water distribution systems or supplied by individual wells containing water storage tanks ranging in size from 360,000 gallons down to 20,000 gallons.

The Mesa conveys regional headwaters to the San Miguel River. There are multiple tributaries from Deep Creek, Sheep Creek, Summit Creek, Willow Creek, Eisner Creek, and Eider Creek, that include a vast network of irrigation ditches throughout the 4,400-acre Mesa that supply many lakes/ponds with millions of gallons of water that are helicopter dip capable to help fight wildfire.



Deep Creek Mesa - Water Resource Map

USFS Partnership

The HOA's are partnering with the local United States Forest Service (USFS), to identify hazard areas in the neighboring Uncompahgre Forest and the steps necessary to mitigate the risks. There are State and Federal funding initiatives that support hazard fuel reduction projects to help protect local watersheds and build areas of defensible space around entire communities.

Forest Health

The large Aspen stands on the North border of Deep Creek Mesa are rarely a concern and act as a natural fire break. In an effort to promote healthy and sustainable forest conditions, the Aldasoro Ranch will engage a professional licensed Colorado firm in 2025 to study the forest surrounding the community to better understand the forest resilience to fire, insects and diseases. This will enable better understanding as to where comprehensive best forest management practices will be needed.

Long-Term Planning & Mitigation

The HOA's are committed to wildfire mitigation and defensible space management and will continue to encourage and plan vegetation removal and defensible space projects throughout the community on an annual basis to further augment wildfire resilience and firefighting capabilities.

Thank you for taking the time to review the Deep Creek Mesa Wildfire Mitigation strategies and actions to protect our community from wildfire. If you have any questions regarding our programs, please feel free to contact Committee Chair Shellie Duplan, at 970-728-5191, or by email: director@aldasororanch.com.

Best Regards,

Deep Creek Mesa Wildfire Mitigation Committee

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| Robert McMahon | Aldasoro Ranch Homeowners Company |
| Jim Farrar | Deep Creek Ranches |
| Nick Farkouh | Meadows at Deep Creek Mesa |
| Scott Bennett | Golden Ledge HOA & Aldasoro Sheep Ranch |
| Chipper Dippel | Gray Head HOA |
| Dave Shaver | Sunnyside East, West, & Sunnyside Ranch Reserve |
| Brian Wallin | Sunnyside East, West, & Sunnyside Ranch Reserve |
| Bill DeAlva | Last Dollar Subdivision |
| Morgan Smith | Diamond Ranch |