



**NEWS & EVENTS**

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## Our Story

The Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council (OVFSC) was founded in 2000 and over the last twenty years has successfully managed over 26 federally funded grants totaling over \$1.3 Million. The OVFSC has also received state, local and private grants and community donations to fund its work. The projects funded by these grants and donation include:

- Extensive, and effective, vegetation management projects, focusing on high fire hazards.
- Created Countywide Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in 2010
- Elementary, Junior High and High School level wildfire safety education programs throughout the greater Ojai Valley Area.
- Wildfire safety programs for:
  - Agriculture (farmers and ranchers)

- Homeowners
  - Other landowners
  - Landscape Professionals
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- In-home presentations in cooperation with the US Forest Service and VC Fire Dept.
  - Produced videos for wildfire preparedness which are available on our website. Other online wildfire safety resources include Home Wildfire Safety Survey, Emergency Supplies Checklist and Family Safety Plan.
  - Bi-annual Wildfire Safety Fair.

The OVFSC has built effective partnerships with many agencies, organizations and other [community partners](#).

The 2017 Thomas Fire, and the California wildfires since, showed that we needed a level of community capacity to be better prepared for, respond to and recovery from the threat of wildfire. This has resulted in a new focus for the OVFSC—to develop a comprehensive, community-based, community-driven wildfire risk mitigation strategy. This process was begun in 2019 with the preparation of the Road Map.

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Road Map and the Wildfire Risk Mitigation Strategy.

## What We Do

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### **EDUCATION FOR WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS, PROTECTION AND SAFETY**

The OVFSC has developed a wide variety of resources to help Ojai Valley citizens to prepare for wildfire and to protect themselves during a wildfire event. These resources include two online forms – [a Family Safety Plan](#), downloadable form, and a [Home Wildfire Safety Survey](#) that helps homeowners to assess the safety of their home and

property in the event of a wildfire. Other resources are downloadable and useful links are provided.

As the threat of catastrophic wildfires is increasing, the OVFSC is preparing a series of podcasts and presentations to further educate and better prepare the Ojai Valley for this threat.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**RESOURCES**

**HOW TO PREPARE**

## **COMPREHENSIVE WILDFIRE RISK MITIGATION STRATEGY**

The 2017 Thomas Fire demonstrated that the Ojai Valley community was inadequately prepared for such a fast-moving, erratic wind-driven wildfire. While wildfire is inevitable and necessary, the wildfires of 2017-2020 represent an increased risk from wildfires. The nature of the Thomas Fire led to the public safety agencies being quickly overwhelmed and hampered by single points of failure in critical systems. After the Thomas Fire, the OVFSC was approached by key stakeholders, including the County of Ventura, Ventura Fire Protection District, City of Ojai and its Advisory Board, to lead the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive wildfire safety strategy for the Ojai Valley to create the community-level response capacity needed for such catastrophic fires.

The OVFSC accepted the challenge and initiated the process to develop and implement a sustainable, holistic, community-base Wildfire Risk Mitigation Strategy for the Ojai Valley area. The first step was to prepare a [Road Map](#) for development, implementation and funding of this important initiative.

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## **CREATE RESILIENT FIRE-ADAPTED COMMUNITIES**

An overarching goal of the Wildfire Risk Mitigation Strategy is to develop a culture of wildfire safety and resiliency in the Ojai Valley; to become a truly fire-adapted community in a fire-dependent ecosystem. A “fire-adapted community” can be defined as:

A knowledgeable and engaged community in which the awareness and actions of residents regarding infrastructure, buildings, landscaping, and surrounding ecosystem lessens the need of extensive protection actions and enables the community to safely accept fire as part of the surrounding landscape.

*The National Wildfire Coordinating Group, U.S. Forest Service*

A truly fire-adapted community is overall a more sustainable and resilient community. Many of the capacities being developed for the Wildfire Risk Mitigation Strategy also increase the sustainability and resiliency of the Ojai Valley community as a whole. The OVFSC has joined with other agencies and organizations to collaborate and coordinate the development of these resilience strategies.

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# Who We Are

## Staff

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**WAYNE MAYNARD - FIRE CAPTAIN (RETIRED) VENTURA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT**



**NEIL LOKUGE - AMERICAN RED CROSS, DISASTER RELIEF AND RESPONSE**



We need your help

**Support the Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council. Become a member, and help us achieve our mission of promoting wildfire safety across the County through education and action.**

**JOIN US**

***Our Mission is to Promote Wildfire Safety in the Ojai Valley through Education and Action.***

**Our Partners**



Ventura County Fire Protection District

CAL FIRE

City of Ojai

California Fire Safe Council

U.S. Forest Service



County of Ventura



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The Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council is tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). All donations to the OVFSC are tax-deductible to the fullest extent provided by law.

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