# Wildland-Urban Interface Geographic Information System
State Wildland Fire Assessment
Maryland
2005

With the aid of National Fire Plan funding, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service has developed and implemented a geographic information system (GIS) model that assesses the risk of wildland fires and prioritizes all the wildland-urban interface areas of the state. The project also produced the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) GIS Assessment Atlas for field use.
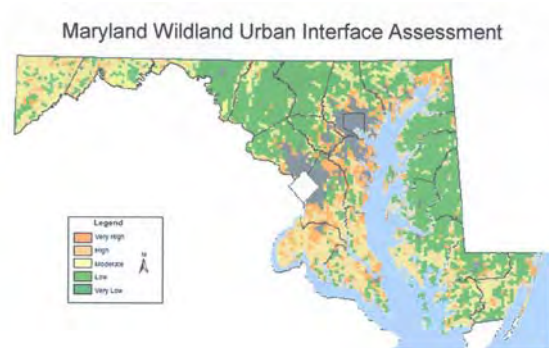
This model of the assessment depicts the WUI areas of Maryland. Photo courtesy MD DNR

The Maryland assessment includes five models that analyze land usage, land cover, population density, firefighter accessibility, and fuels data layers for the state. In each model, the data is analyzed uniformly within a 2.5 km hexagonal grid and the results are displayed on an analysis map. The models are presented in the WUI GIS Assessment Atlas as a series of analysis maps of the state and the individual counties. The models include: Wildland-Urban Interface, Fire Start Potential, Fire Impact Potential, Fuel Hazard Potential, and the Composite Assessment. The maps identify the wildland-urban interface areas and the potential for wildland fire starts throughout the state.

The atlas is used as a field reference guide for prevention and mitigation planning activities, for preparedness activities, and during wildfire incidents. It has been distributed to all volunteer and career fire departments and cooperating wildland fire suppression agencies in the state. In the atlas, each model is summarized and interpreted for field application.

The Maryland WUI GIS State Wildland Fire Assessment supports the National Fire Plan's 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy by providing the state with a baseline assessment to improve fire prevention and suppression activities in the state; to prioritize and mitigate hazard fuel reduction projects; to identify and protect communities at risk from wildland fire; and to support assistance to communities and local governments by state and local fire management offices. In addition the model is key in identifying and prioritizing the wildland-urban interface and communities at risk from wildland fire. The model serves as an effective tool for targeting the development of Community Wildfire Protection Plans, and it provides for ongoing monitoring of the effectiveness of reducing the wildland fire risk to communities.

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