



** This news release from K-State Research and Extension is available online at <https://ksre-learn.com/community-wildfire-defense>

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Three Kansas counties receive \$340K for community wildfire defense

Kansas Forest Service officials say grants will help reduce wildfire risk

K-State Research and Extension news service

MANHATTAN, Kan. – Officials with the [Kansas Forest Service](#) are calling three grants totaling \$340,200 from the U.S. Forest Service “a significant milestone in wildfire prevention efforts across the state.”

The funds, available through the [USFS Community Wildfire Defense Grants program](#), were awarded to Chase, Butler and Leavenworth counties. According to information from KFS, the funds “will be a big boost to helping build the state’s defense against wildfires, particularly in urban areas of the state.”

CWDG grants are available to forest service units across the country and part of the government’s Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

According to KFS, the allocation of these grants follows extensive educational work aimed at raising awareness of the wildfire risk within Kansas communities over the past two years. Through collaboration with national partners, the Kansas Forest Service has successfully highlighted the urgent need for proactive measures to address the wildfire urban interface risk.

KFS officials said the agency will use the funds to work with the three counties in developing and implementing Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

“We hope this plan will be a steppingstone to moving forward with projects that can reduce our wildfire risk, especially for those communities in the urban wildfire interface in our county,” said Keri Korthals, Butler County Emergency Director.

The Kansas Forest Service, an independent agency housed within K-State Research and Extension, has thus far worked with six Kansas counties to build Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

These plans, created as a collaboration between local fire departments, emergency managers, and stakeholders within the community, help communities prepare for wildfire. In the case of Chase, Butler and Leavenworth, the plans were a critical part of their application for CWDG funds.

The U.S. Forest Service reports that it has provided \$1 billion in funding over five years through the CWDG program. At-risk communities, local governments, tribal units, non-profits, and state forestry agencies are eligible to apply.

More information regarding financial aid available for community wildfire protection is [available online from the Kansas Forest Service](#). Agency officials also can be reached by phone, 785-532-3300.

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FOR PRINT PUBLICATIONS: Links used in this story
Kansas Forest Service, <https://www.kansasforests.org>

Community Wildfire Defense Grants program,
https://www.kansasforests.org/fire_management/costshareassistance.html

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Kansas Forest Service
785-532-3300