

# MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES ACTION GUIDE



## COUNTYWIDE PLAN

Mountain Communities Action Guide



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# Introduction

Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village are located northeast of Yucaipa and Mentone and south of Angelus Oaks. Mountain Home Village has a population of about 170 residents and Forest Falls about 1,100 residents. The communities value the local residents, rural atmosphere, and proximity to the natural environment.

In 2016, the County embarked on a planning process to update the fourteen existing Community Plans and create over 30 new plans for approximately 80 unincorporated communities. The strategic system of community planning is called the Community Planning Continuum with a continuum of plan-types to provide planning tools and resources to match local conditions and needs. The plan-types are Detailed, Framework, Foundation and Fundamental.

An online survey was available for five months in early 2018. The survey requested information about communities including Values, Aspirations, Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, local organizations and local history (see the Community Identified Issues section). The survey information was used to create the Community Action Plans for Fundamental communities. The Community Action Guides are a framework of actions identified by the community and supports implementation of the actions by the community.

The Mountain Communities are a Fundamental community. The Community Profile information is from general research as well as survey responses. The word cloud below was created using general information and survey responses about the Mountain communities. The more a word or phrase was identified, the larger the word appears in the cloud.

## Strengths and Opportunities

As part of the survey, participants defined the strengths of and opportunities for their community. The word cloud below was created using the input provided during the Strengths, Opportunities, Values and Aspirations exercises. The word cloud quickly informed participants of key issues and focus areas that could be addressed in the plan. The more a word or phrase was articulated, the larger the word appears in the cloud.



## Values Statement

The Values are those shared assets, principles, standards, mores, and in the judgment of the communities, what is important in the lives of its residents and businesses. A community's values are an important consideration in shaping its aspirations, focus and actions.

The Communities of Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village value:

***Family Friendly Atmosphere.*** The community members of Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village are valued for their desire to help out one another. The community is a safe place for kids to play and grow.

***Mountain Beauty.*** The communities of Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village value the rural atmosphere with clean air, nature, wildlife and the tranquility of the mountains.

***Location.*** The Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village residents value the great location of their communities; close enough and easy to get to but also far enough away that residents can still enjoy the beauty and serenity of the forest.

***History.*** The community members value the history and the distinctive rubble rock architecture as well as the log and stone architecture.

## Aspirations Statement

The Aspirations Statement is a written narrative illustrating how the communities desired look and function once the Community Focus Statements and Action Statements are accomplished. This is a long term view of 10 to 20 years. The Aspirations Statement serves as a foundation for developing Community Focus Statements and Action Statements.

The communities of Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village aspire to have:

### *Improved Services.*

The community members of Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village enjoy cell service and internet connection rather than relying on satellite connections.

### *Opportunities for the Youth.*

The community park offers areas for children to play as well as programs and activities for the youth year-round.

### *Wildland Urban Interface Protections*

Local and federal fire agencies have established minimum requirements to mitigate the risk to life and property from wildland fire exposures, exposures from adjacent structures and to mitigate structure fires from spreading to wildland fuels.

### *Flood Control*

Flood control measures and best management practices mitigate the risk of life and property from flood damage.



# Plan Framework

## Community Focus Statement A: Organize the communities to promote increased access to communication technologies

A

*Action Statement A.1: Promote a petition to demonstrate community desire for expanded communication services (cell and internet).*

*Action Statement A.2: Coordinate with County Supervisor's office for help and guidance on contacting communication providers.*

*Action Statement A.3: Explore the possibility of improving bandwidth to the communities.*

## Community Focus Statement B: Promote a respect for nature and the surrounding environment

B

*Action Statement B.1: Develop educational signage that promotes environmental stewardship and discourages dumping of trash.*

*Action Statement B.2: Educate visitors and tourists about respecting the forest landscape, wildlife, and surrounding community.*

## Community Focus Statement C: Ensure communities are protected from natural disasters.

C

*Action Statement C.1: Follow Urban Wildlife Interface Protections.*

*Action Statement C.2: Follow and promote flood control measures.*



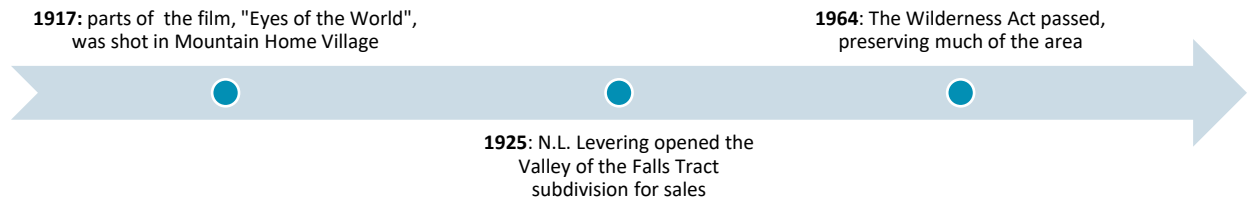
# Community Profile



## Overview

The community profile is a summary of the social, cultural, economic and historic dimensions of the community. The profile presents data collected through secondary sources, together with information gathered from residents during online survey, highlights essential facets and “tells the story” of the Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village communities.

## History

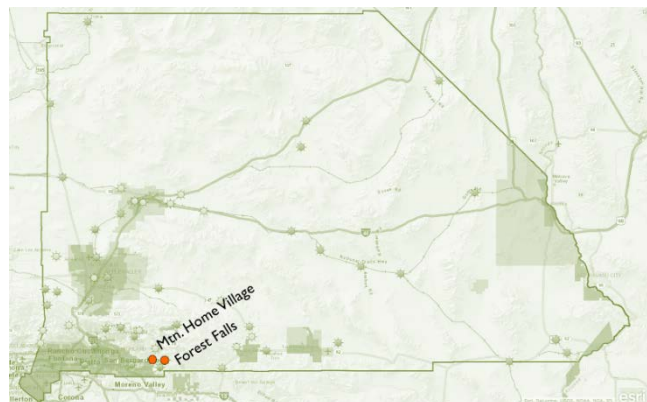


Native Americans were the earliest visitors of the area. Later settlers visited the area. In 1914 the book, “Eyes of the World” by Harold Bell Wright was published, bringing attraction and publicity to the area. A few years later the film based on book was made and parts of it were shot in Mountain Home Village. Soon after, N.L. Levering, a Redlands banker, purchased 640 acres in the area from the Southern Pacific Railroad. He subdivided the land calling it the Valley of the Falls Tract and opened it for sale in 1925. The first fully paved road to Forest Falls opened in 1926 making access easier and opening the area up for further tourism. In 1929 the post office in Forest Falls opened, rebranding the area as Fallsvalle. While the Great Depression slowed growth, the area was still active with visitors. Shortly after the United States California Conservation Corps (CCC) was founded in 1933; the CCC built trails, a campground, and even helped build the Fallsvalle School in 1935. Early visitors envisioned the area as scenic and rural in character and fought to preserve it as such. In 1964 the Wilderness Act was passed, establishing a nationwide preservation system for wilderness areas. This act preserved much of the area which visitors and community members still use and enjoy today.

Source(s): <http://www.vfcci.org>;  
<http://www.forestfalls.com/history.html>;  
<https://www.wilderness.net/nwps/legisact>

## Location & Geography

Forest Falls and Mountain Home Village are located in the southern portion of San Bernardino County. Both communities are within the San Bernardino National Forest area and northeast of the cities of Redlands and Yucaipa. Mountain Home Village is located along Highway 38 and just west of Forest Falls. Both communities are located at the base of the mountains.



Source: ESRI

## Community Structure (Physical Characteristics)

**Residential:** Residences primarily consist of single family residential dwellings that are one story homes set close to the street and are nestled in the forest landscape.

**Commercial:** The few commercial uses are concentrated along Valley of the Falls Drive near the entrance to Forest Falls. This area consists of a mixture of different businesses with parking in front.

**Transportation:** The main thoroughfare in Mountain Home Village is Highway 38 (SR 38) which is also used to access Valley of the Falls Drive, the main road in Forest Falls. Highway 38 is a paved two lane highway with one travel lane in each direction. It has a narrow shoulder with few turnouts. There are no pedestrian or bicycle facilities associated with Highway 38 between Mountain Home Village and Forest Falls. Local roads are paved and lack pedestrian and bicycle facilities. No public transit serves the plan area. The WalkScore for Mountain Home Village and Forest Falls indicates that all errands need to be completed by car.

Sources: Google Earth, County of San Bernardino, WalkScore.com

## Community Amenities

**Parks and Trails:** There are no local parks in Mountain Home Village or Forest Falls, however there is a United States Forest Service park and trail to the falls and other of hiking trails in the surrounding National Forest area.

**Hospitals:** There are no hospitals located within the plan area.

**Schools:** The community is served by the Yucaipa-Calimesa Joint Unified School District and the Redlands Unified School District.

**Fire Protection:** Mountain Home Village and Forest Falls are primarily served by the San Bernardino County Fire Station 99 (PCF #99). The communities

are also served by the Angelus Oaks Fire Station (PCF #98) and the Mentone Fire Station (Station #9).

**Police Protection:** Mountain Home Village and Forest Falls are served by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office out of the Yucaipa Police Station. The station employs 33 safety staff members and 10 professional staff members.

Source: County of San Bernardino Fire and Sheriff Departments, Bear Valley Unified School District, Redlands Unified School District, Wikipedia

## Community Organizations

- Mountain C.A.R.E (Mountain Citizens Acting to Restore Earth)

Source: mtncare.com

## Community Events

- Annual Chili Cookoff
- Annual Firefighters Breakfast
- Annual "Big Falls Day"
- Breakfast with Santa
- Canyon Clean-up
- Search and Rescue Pancake Breakfast

Source: forestfalls.com; vfcci.org; mtncare.com

## Community Identified Issues

### SWOT Analysis

This section contains the results of the SWOT analysis compiled from the community surveys. A SWOT exercise stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is used to help gain insight into the community through local knowledge. In the first part, participants identify their communities' biggest strengths, such as community assets like a library or community center, along with their biggest weaknesses, which could be a lack of open space or high rates of internal crime. Next, survey participants looked at opportunities that the community could take advantage of as part of the community plans process. This builds off of what was identified in the strengths and weaknesses portion. Lastly, participants identify external threats to the community. These are generally concerns that are outside of the control of community members, such as natural disasters or changes in economic conditions.

#### *Strengths*

- Diversity and experience
- People (2)
- Sense of community (2)
- Resourcefulness
- Independent
- Community heritage
- Great support from neighbors
- Community activities
- Safe and friendly
- Quiet and peaceful atmosphere
- Location – remote enough to experience the beauty of the mountains but close enough to the major population areas that you get the benefits of shopping and services
- One of the few places that kids are still able to play in the neighborhood
- Beautiful town

#### *Weaknesses*

- None
- Non-residents
- No central point to coordinate town efforts
- Some “hot heads”
- No public transportation
- No recycling
- Internet, phone and TV service
- Isolated from public services

- Poor infrastructure which causes problems in the winter, especially when people come up for the snow
- Bad and really expensive internet service (2)
- Lack of playground equipment for the kids

#### *Opportunities*

- Pulls together well for central efforts
- Continue to pursue our history and develop our community heritage
- Use the community building for cultural events
- Short-term rentals to introduce others to our community
- Update our internet service to give us opportunities to telecommute and reduce our drive time and pollution
- Better recreational opportunities – county park and more investment in infrastructure
- Open areas that could be developed for affordable housing in the county
- A community park

#### *Threats*

- Non-residents
- Wild Fires (3)
- Floods (2)
- Earthquakes (2)
- Lack of internet/reliable connectivity (2)
- Poor cell and internet



- Visitor traffic, particularly snow players
- Mismanaged recreation by National Forest; no fuels treatment by Redlands/Crafton water boards on their surrounding holdings
- Homeless camps leading to unclean water, fire, theft and insecurity



# APPENDIX A

## How to use this Plan

## Where are the Goals, Policies, and Land Use Map for My Community?

Goals, Policies and Land Use Map will be adopted as part of the County Policy Plan. The content of the Community Action Guide focuses on those actions identified by the community that the community is willing to take to make desired changes to their community. The County Policy Plan and the Community Action Guide will be web-based, with adoption of the Countywide Plan in 2019.

## Relationship of the Community Action Guide to the Countywide Plan

In 2010, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors set out to establish a vision for the future of the county as a whole, and subsequently adopted a Countywide Vision in 2011 after two years of input from the community and the county's 24 cities and towns. Following the adoption of the Countywide Vision, which calls for the creation of a "complete county", the Board adopted the County paradigm and job statements in 2012.

In 2015, the County of San Bernardino launched an effort to go further than any county or city has ever gone with a general plan by creating a web-based comprehensive "complete county" plan. General plans are almost always strictly rule books for guiding development and growth. The County's General Plan update, last updated in 2007, goes well beyond a traditional general plan to become a comprehensive Countywide Plan that complements and informs the Countywide Vision by taking into account all services—not just land-use planning—provided by County Government, and the unique values and priorities of each unincorporated community.

The Countywide Plan serves as a guide for County decision-making, financial planning, and communications. Its web-based format provides a wealth of easily accessible data on how the County operates, and allow independent research using County data and information.

The Countywide Plan includes:

- A County Policy Plan, which serves in part as the County's General Plan for the unincorporated areas and also provides guidance for regional county services. The Policy Plan establishes goals and policies for the entire county as well as specific sub regions and communities.
- A County Business Plan, which contains governance policies and operational metrics that outline the County's approach to providing municipal and regional services.
- A Regional Issues Forum, which is an online resource for sharing information and resources related to issues confronting the entire county.
- A Community Plans Continuum of 35 Community Action Guides, which articulates what is important to each Community; sets out an Action Plan based on community input, and for the most part, would be implemented by the community; and provides a Community Profile. Links will also be provided for maps, goals, and policies in the Countywide Plan.

## The Draft Community Action Guide for Public Review

The final format of the Community Action Guide will be web-based and provided online. This printed version of the Draft Community Action Guide is provided as a courtesy for simplifying community review, but may not be

available once the online version of the guide is finalized. A draft version of the web-based Community Action Guide can be found at [www.countywideplan.com/cp](http://www.countywideplan.com/cp). This printed version includes the information provided on the website under each tab except for the information included under the “Maps and Links” tab. A separate Community Profile can be printed from the website.

This Draft Community Action Guide was created by the community members who responded to the online survey in 2018. If no survey was submitted for a community, County staff researched the community to complete the guide. It is written in the words of those participating in the public engagement process. Therefore, the Community Action Guide retains the voice and future image of the community presented by the community members participating in the public engagement process. However, the implementation of each Action Statement is an opportunity for additional discussion by community members and modification of the statement and action steps may be made by the community and Action Teams.

## How to Use This Community Action Guide

Overall, the Community Action Guides are a framework for communities to create the future character and independent identity, as identified in the online survey as community values and aspirations through completion of community actions. These Community Action Guides are focused on community self-reliance, grass-roots action, and local implementation. Goals, policies, land use, and infrastructure decisions are addressed in the Policy Plan of the Countywide Plan. The County Development Code will still regulate zoning and land development.

The Community Action Guide includes the community’s Values, Aspirations, and Plan Framework, if provided by community members in the online survey. An appendix has a Community Profile with a summary of the social, cultural, economic and historic dimensions of the community as well as the communities online survey responses on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Values – Those shared assets, principles, and in the judgment of the community, what is important to the lives of its residents and businesses.

Aspirations – A written narrative illustrating the community’s desired look and function once the Community Action Guide is fully implemented. This is a long-term view of 10 to 20 years. They are written as if the community’s desired changes have already occurred.

Plan Framework – Outlines clear Focus Statements and Action Statements identified by the community.

- The Focus Statement provides general direction toward realizing the community’s aspirations and helps organize the plan.
- The Action Statement is a measurable statement providing critical information on the program, initiative, or project to complete.

Through the identification of Focus Statements and Action Statements, the community can work toward creating Action Plans and eventually implementing the Community Action Guide.

## How to Implement the Community Action Guide

### Community's Next Steps

Appendix B contains the Action Plan template that can be used to create the Action Plan. You may request a Word version of the document from [CommunityPlans@lus.sbcounty.gov](mailto:CommunityPlans@lus.sbcounty.gov). The Community Action Guide identifies the Focus Statements and Action Statements. The Community may want to meet to identify the top three priority Action Statements to work on first. Some of these may be those actions that the community believes could be completed quickly and easily. Completion of one Action Statement will provide the community and local groups with the motivation to move forward with another Action Statement.

Once an Action Statement is selected for implementation, the community identifies a Champion for that Action Statement to initiate activities, identify those responsible for carrying out action steps, identify and secure resources that will be required, and develop a timeline. The champion is not responsible for completing the action, but serves to facilitate and guide the Action Team.

To initiate Action Statements in the community, the Champion should gather community volunteers, groups and organizations to develop Action Plans and identify the specific steps required to accomplish the Action Statement. Volunteers (e.g., individuals, businesses, property owners, etc.), community groups (e.g., chamber of commerce, non-profits, etc.) and organizations (e.g., scouts, community service districts, churches, schools, etc.) can change for each Action Plan or some groups could work on more than one related Action Plans.

Creating an Action Plan helps better prepare the community by identifying the steps to be accomplished, the resources needed, and who will be responsible for each action step. Some action steps may require guidance by a County department, but the community must take the lead in moving the action forward, scheduling meetings, or requesting information from specific County departments.

The Action Plans should be used to guide community actions and should not be “set in stone”. Each Action Plan is a general set of tasks that can be modified if necessary. If needed, the community can find alternatives and make changes as they progress.

### How to Create an Action Plan

The community should first identify a champion for the Action Statement. The action champion can be an individual or organization that will help oversee the execution of the Action Plan and ensure steps are completed. It is important to note that the champion is not responsible for carrying out each action step, but is responsible for coordinating communications and ensuring the steps are completed.

After the champion is identified, the community or group can develop action steps. The focus should be on what action steps will occur, who will carry out each action step, when it will take place, and an approximate duration. Again, these are guidelines, and may change, but this planning helps identify resources needed, people or organizations that must be engaged or will lead each action step, and manage expectations on how long it will take to implement each Action Statement.



After completing the action steps, resources should be identified. Resources may include governmental agencies needed to help carry out the action, community and external funding sources, and potential assistance from other communities who implemented similar programs.

Reviewing a Detailed or Framework Plan can assist in providing examples of Action Plans and may have similar actions that can be used or modified to meet identified Foundation Plan actions. In addition, the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Planning Division is preparing a Community Development Toolkit with tools on several topics to help local groups make positive changes in their community. When complete, the Community Development Toolkit will be available at [www.countywideplan.com](http://www.countywideplan.com). Other resources and contacts will be provided on the same website.

### **Placing your Action Plan in the Community Action Guide**

Any modifications of the Community Action Guide or Action Plans can be sent to San Bernardino County Land Use Services Planning Division for future updates to your Community Action Guide. The County will provide information on specific contacts for Community Planning assistance. It will be the responsibility of the community to provide requested updates and modifications to the County.

*The following page is an example of an Action Plan from the Helendale Community Action Guide.*

Each Action Statement Champion and Action Team should review and refine the Action Statement and Action Steps before moving forward.



**Community Focus Statement C: Improve public and equestrian safety within Muscoy.**

**Action Statement C.2: Coordinate with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department to establish a Citizen Patrol.**

**Benchmark:** Partner with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department to grow and develop a Citizen Patrol in Muscoy. Recruit qualified volunteers who meet regularly and provide at least eight volunteer hours per month.

**Champion:** Citizens Patrol volunteers

**Estimated Cost:** none

*Members of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department's Citizens on Patrol program. Photo Source: San Bernardino County*

A Citizen Patrol is an approach that involves building closer ties between the County Sheriff's Department and residents and businesses in Muscoy, and seeks to be proactive about preventing crime. Volunteers give law enforcement the opportunity to reduce crime and increase law enforcement services. Citizen Patrol volunteers can identify conditions that contribute to crime and other issues specific to Muscoy. They could also serve as a liaison between the community and the County Sheriff's Department, keeping open lines of communication between law enforcement and Muscoy community members.

Citizen Volunteer Units are utilized to assist the Sheriff's Department in meeting law enforcement objectives during the normal course of operation, as well as in times of disasters and emergencies. Citizen Patrol volunteers must meet requirements set by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, attend the Citizen Volunteer Academy training course, maintain first aid and CPR certification, attend monthly business and training meetings, and donate a minimum of eight hours of time per month. Citizen Patrol members do not take law enforcement action, carry weapons, or make arrests, but instead they report suspicious activity to the local police station.

Residents of Muscoy should be encouraged to join the existing program, so there is a larger Citizen Patrol presence. Existing members of the Citizen Patrol should be visible in the community and make people aware that such a group exists to help keep Muscoy safe. The program can also be advertised to existing community organizations or neighborhood groups to encourage new participants who meet the qualifications to go through training. The Citizen Patrol could partner with neighborhood watch groups (Action Statement C.1) and other safety workshops hosted in the community (Action Statement C.3). As the Citizen Patrol group grows, there will be an opportunity to create more specialized volunteer units to cater to a specific need in the community.

[Case Study: City of Rancho Cucamonga Citizen Patrol Unit](#)

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The Action Statement is a measurable component used to accomplish the overall focus statement.\*

Provides background information on the action that is to be achieved.

The benchmark is a way to measure the success of the Action Statement.\* The estimated cost is an approximate cost to implement the action, if applicable.

\*These should be reviewed with the Champion and Action Team and modified based on current community needs.



# APPENDIX B

## Action Plan Template



**Community Focus Statement:**

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**Action Statement:**

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**Champion:**

**Estimated Cost:**

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Action	Action Leader	Timeline	Resources
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			