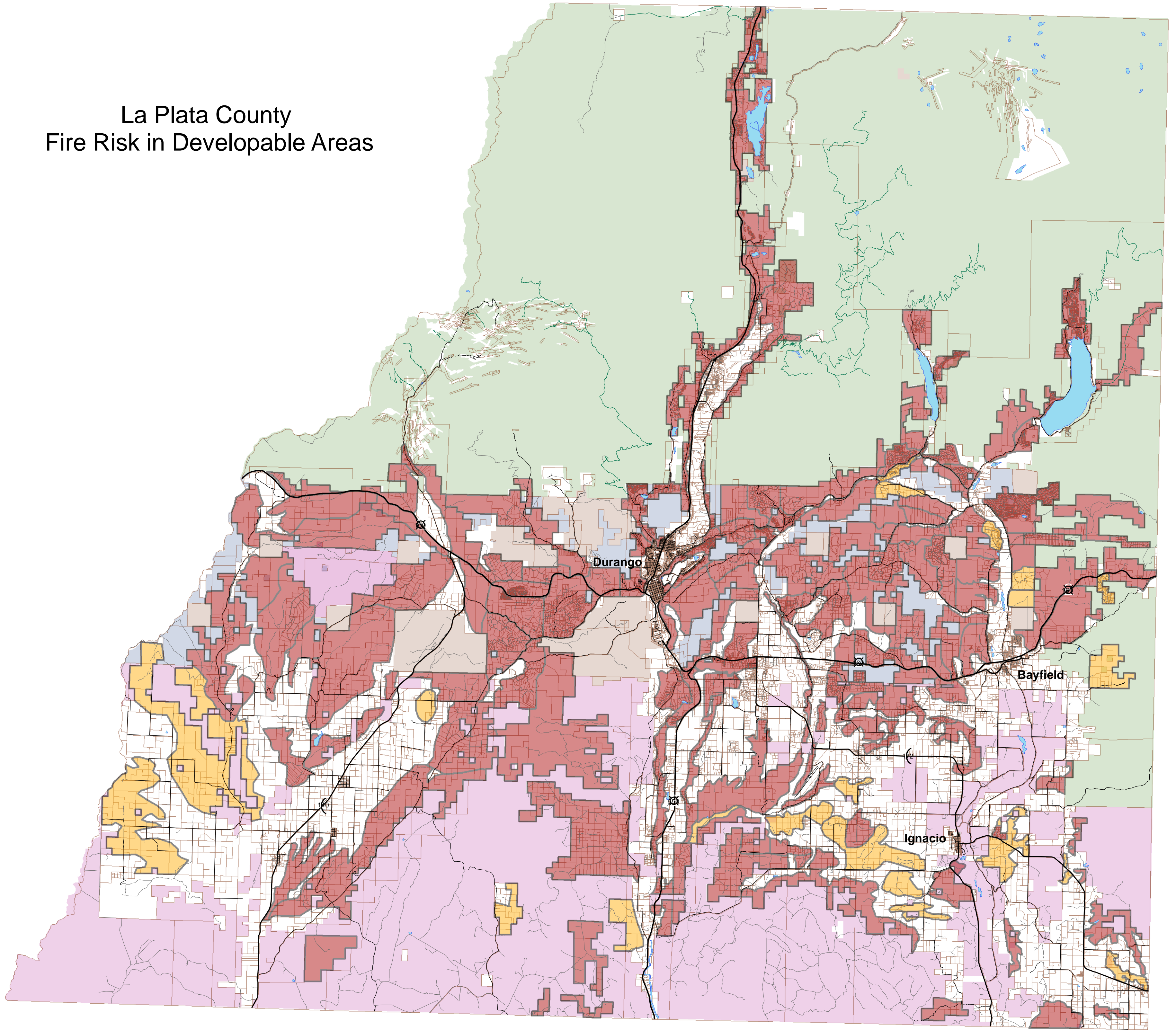


La Plata County Fire Risk in Developable Areas



0 3 6 12 Miles

Public Lands
 USFS
 COLORADO
 BLM
 BIA

Development Risk
 Higher Risk
 Moderate Risk

This map illustrates the relative development risk throughout La Plata County by encapsulating fire-prone zones in colored polygons. Relative risk assessments were based on several factors. Vegetation type and its potential as fuel were determined by using high resolution aerial photography (the County's 1/3 meter color aerial photography completed in 2003 for the majority of private lands and 1 meter black & white digital orthophotography (DOQQs) from the USGS). Topography was utilized by conducting slope and aspect analysis on 30 meter Digital Elevation Models (DEMs) from the USGS. Population density was not as important in the assessment, since an area can have a low population density, but high fire risk. In the event of development, that will lead to higher population. Other factors include emergency access, proximity to water and proximity to potential fuels on adjacent public lands.

The fire risk polygons have been reviewed and revised by the Fire Chiefs or their designated deputies from the Fort Lewis Mesa FPD, the Upper Pine FPD, the Los Pinos FPD, the Durango and Hermosa Fire & Rescue District.

The polygons should be used as guidelines, since none of them are completely homogeneous in terms of vegetation type and density, and topography. It is possible that many of the polygons could contain relatively safe zones. In these situations we err on the side of caution and make an assessment based on the overall average risk of the zone.

Data Sources, Projection & Scale: Parcel, roads, hydrography and structures data; and color 1/3 meter aerial photography were obtained from La Plata County. DOQQs (1 meter) and 30 meter DEMs were obtained from the USGS. The land ownership data is from CDOT. The map projection is State Plane Colorado South, NAD 1983, Feet. The scale is 1:170,000. Created by Fort Lewis College, Office of Community Services, 3/7/05.