



Shelter Bay  
Community Wildfire Risk Assessment  
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Skagit Conservation District  
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## Introduction

NFPA's Firewise USA® program teaches people how to live with wildfire and increase their home's chance of survival through proactive actions, while encouraging neighbors to work together to reduce losses and damage. The community wildfire risk assessment is an important step in the Firewise USA® recognition process. It's a tool to help residents and their community members understand their wildfire risk and engage them in risk reduction efforts.

Research has shown embers (burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation that can be carried more than a mile through the wind) and small surface fires to be the primary source of home ignitions during wildfires.

Residents must prepare their home to withstand embers and minimize the likelihood of flames or surface fire touching the home or any attachments. This can be accomplished by limiting the amount of flammable vegetation, choosing ignition-resistant building materials and construction techniques, along with periodic exterior maintenance within the three home ignition zones (HIZ). These zones include:

- **Zone 1: The Immediate Zone.** This zone is the house/structure and deck plus 5 feet. The focus here is, Be Ember Aware.
- **Zone 2: The Intermediate Zone.** This zone goes from 5 feet to 30 feet minimum. This typically is your yard and garden. The focus here is to provide an area that won't readily burn and to protect the structure from radiant heat.
- **Zone 3: The Extended Zone.** This zone we want to reduce the energy of the wildfire. This goes from zone 2 out to 100 or more feet. This is your unimproved property such as forest or grass lands. The focus here is to reduce the flame length of wildfire when it burns here.



It is not uncommon for home ignition zones to overlap onto adjacent properties. This makes the conditions of neighboring homes and vegetation a part of the wildfire threat. To maximize benefits, it's extremely important that neighbors work collaboratively with each other, and talk with each other, to reduce their shared risk.

The community wildfire risk assessment speaks to the general conditions of the overall Firewise USA® site and does not provide details on each individual dwelling.

The assessment should focus on:

- Vulnerability of homes to embers, surface fire, and crown fire
- Condition of the structures themselves
- Immediate hazards within the HIZ on individual properties
- Concerns presented by common/open space areas or adjacent public lands

Also consider factors that impact risk and influence fire behavior or structure ignitability:

- Structural characteristics (such as roofing, siding, and decks)
- Vegetation types
- Slope and aspect (direction a community faces - north, south, east, or west)
- Housing density

The recommendations provided by the completed assessment will be the board/committee's primary tool in determining action priorities within the site's boundaries, documented in their action plan. The Firewise USA® program requires assessments be **updated at a minimum of every five years**.

## Overview

The assessment:

- Can be completed in a variety of ways, including a walkthrough or a drive-by and does not require each individual dwelling unit to have a home risk assessment completed prior to the community assessment
- Should focus on the condition of vegetation within the participating site's boundary; general landscaping characteristics; and home construction (materials used for roofs, siding, decks, etc.)
- Needs a logical recognized site boundary (HOA, defined neighborhood, street, etc.)

## Assessment Participants

List the principal participants who assisted in data gathering and development of this document (include name, role/organization, phone, and email). This can be your district forester, fire department, Firewise Board members, etc.

Name	Role/Organization	Phone	Email
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## General Site Information

The Firewise USA® program is designed for residential occupancies where residents actively participate in reducing the wildfire risk where they live; it is not a program for every occupancy type (i.e. Hotels), or an entire town, city or county.

- Firewise USA® participation requires a minimum of 8 individual dwelling units and not to exceed 2,500 (for new sites in 2018 or later), within the site's identified boundary.
- For definition purposes, a dwelling unit is a:
  - Household/residence built for occupancy by one person, a family, or roommates, including mobile homes and cabins; and for multi-family residential occupancies (i.e. duplexes, and other types of attached housing)
  - An apartment building with 10 units would be considered ten dwelling units
  - Multiple sites can be located within a single large master-planned community/HOA

### General Site Description

Site name: Shelter Bay

City: LaConner

County: Skagit

State: Washington

Latitude: 48.3823°

Longitude: 122.5152°

### Brief Boundary Description:

The Shelter Bay Community is a homeowners association located southwest of LaConner in western Skagit County on Swinomish Tribal lands, (mailing addresses are LaConner). It is bordered by water on two sides, the Swinomish Channel and Skagit Bay.

Area: 420 acres

Number of dwelling units: 914

Number of residents: 1900 approx.



## Community Assessment

### *Description of Properties within the boundary*

Residential types in your site (check all that apply):

- Single Family                       Duplex             Townhomes  
 Apartment                       Mobile/Manufactured  
 Other: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Types of ownership (check all that apply):

- Private             Common             Public (Tribal)

Lot sizes (check all that apply):

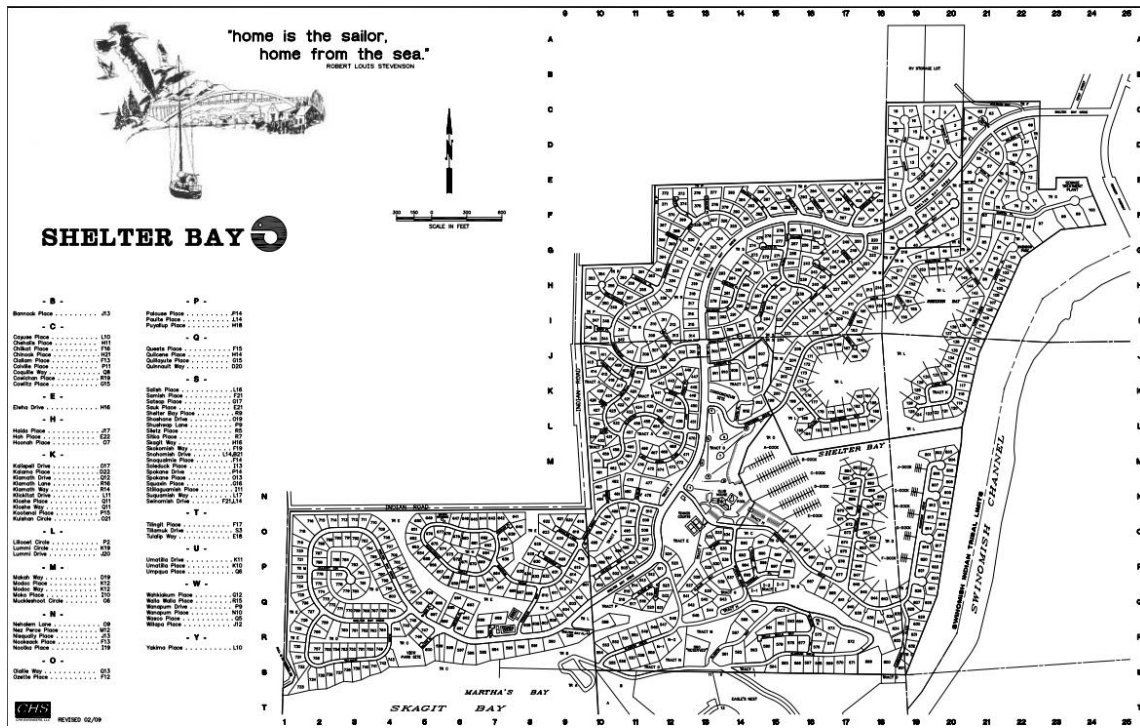
- less than 0.10 acres or 4,356 square feet  
 0.10 to 0.50 acres or 4,356 to 21,780 square feet  
 0.51 to 1 acres or 22,215 to 43,560 square feet  
 Greater than 1 acres or 43,560 square feet

### *Other helpful site information:*

**The Shelter Bay Community is located in an area that has been identified as a high-risk area for wildfire by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources. It has also been identified by the local Fire District 13 Chief as an area of high concern for the department due to the landscape characteristics and residential density. Many of the roads within the community are steep, winding, and narrow. This, combined with the vegetation types and configuration within and surrounding the community, feed this concern. Shelter Bay is definitely in a wildfire environment and so awareness, preparedness, and resilience planning are all crucial for the community.**



## Community Map



### Description of Local Wildland Fire Characteristics

Fire intensity and rate of spread depend on the vegetation type and condition (live/dead), topography, and typical weather patterns. *This information can be obtained from your state forestry agency or local fire department.*

Describe the common vegetation type(s) in your site (i.e., grasses, shrubs, and trees): **The surrounding stand characteristics represent closed canopy Douglas fir, Western hemlock and Western red cedar with an interspersed hardwood component. Dense underbrush is prevalent.**

Describe the topography within your community: **Shelter Bay homes and streets wind through a maze of steep and hilly topography. The numerous winding roads throughout the community include many dead end spur roads without turnarounds. Homes are situated on slopes facing all directions.**

Describe common summertime wind directions: **Being on the waterfront, Shelter Bay experiences wind coming mostly from the west and south. However, large weather systems out of the north can cause eastern winds as well.**

### History of Wildfire:

- Area with history of fire occurrence
- Area with no history of fire occurrence
- Unknown

*General comments of fire history:*

Based on data collected by the Washington Department of Natural Resources, in the last 35 years this community and its' surrounding area have experienced approximately 26 fires, some of which were human caused and some caused by lightning. Human-caused fires are a matter of concern and should be considered in the community action plan.

The construction of Shelter Bay has been designed so that there are interspersed housing tracts and greenbelts. Fuel models range from grass & dense brush to heavy timber. The heavy fuels throughout the greenbelts are of concern. Enough ladder fuels are present to cause single-tree and group-tree torching that could result in ember showers on adjacent homes. During episodes of extreme fire weather, combined with long-term regional drought conditions, the likelihood of extreme fire behavior is high. Directly adjacent to the Shelter Bay Community is forested reservation land consisting of very heavy fuels. This puts the community at a higher risk due to the proximity of these fuels and because fireworks are legal on reservation land. Fireworks are often the culprit for starting fires. Being that fire knows no boundaries, the fact that Shelter Bay is so close to heavily fueled areas where fireworks are legal increases the necessity of awareness.

**FIREWISE USA® SITE OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS****Home Ignition Zone Observations**

*The observation section is broken down by the characteristics of homes and the vegetation management within the home ignition zones and common areas*

**Zone 1 – Immediate Zone**

**Home:** General building construction (are the homes made from ignition resistant building materials?)

**Roofing Materials:** composite shingles, metal, cement tile and clay

- Greater than 75% of homes have metal, tile or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
- 50 to 75% of homes have metal, tile or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
- 25 to 50% of homes have metal, tile or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles
- Less than 25% of homes have metal, tile or Class A asphalt or fiberglass shingles

**Observations:** A very high majority of homes in Shelter Bay have composite shingles, with a few metal roofs and even fewer tile/clay roofs. Very few cedar shake shingle roofs were observed, but it's very possible that many were missed during this assessment.

**Recommendations:** Encourage any homeowners without composition, metal, or tile roofing to upgrade to one of these fire-resistant materials.

**Leaf litter, pine needles, or debris on roof or in gutters**

- Greater than 75% of homes have cleaned and maintain their roof and gutters





- 50 to 74% of homes have cleaned and maintain their roof and gutters
  - 25 to 50% of homes have cleaned and maintain their roof and gutters
  - Less than 25% of homes have cleaned and maintain their roof and gutters
- Observations:**  
**The majority of homes observed had cleaned and maintained their roof and gutters; however, enough homes had not done this to be of concern.**  
**Recommendation:** Encourage community members to clean roof and gutters prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> and at least one more time during wildfire season, (April – October).

**Gutter type:**

- Greater than 75% of homes have metal gutters
- 50 to 74% of homes have metal gutters
- 25 to 50% of homes have metal gutters
- Less than 25% of homes have metal gutters
- Unknown type of gutters

**Observations:** Gutters observed were all metal and in good condition.

**Recommendation:** Continue to encourage homeowners to maintain gutters in good condition.

**Soffit vent:** *a screened vent in a house soffit that allows air to flow to the attic or the space below roof sheathing.*

- Greater than 75% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
- 50 to 74% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
- 25 to 50% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
- Less than 25% of homes have non-combustible soffit vents with mesh or screening
- Unknown

**Observations:** Soffits on individual homes was not looked at in detail as part of this assessment.

**Recommendations:** Have individual home risk assessments to inspect this aspect of home hardening.

**Siding:** stucco, masonry products, plaster and cement

- Greater than 75% of homes have non-combustible siding
- 50 to 74% of homes have non-combustible siding
- 25 to 50% of homes have non-combustible siding
- Less than 25% of homes have non-combustible siding
- Unknown

**Observations:** Many homes have siding made from combustible material.

**Recommendations:** When feasible, replace combustible siding with a non-combustible material. If not feasible to replace all siding, focus on the first 3' above the ground.

**Windows:** *Multi-paned windows can withstand radiant heat better than single paned windows.*

- Greater than 75% of homes have multi-paned windows



- 50 to 74% of homes have multi-paned windows
- 25 to 50% of homes have multi-paned windows
- Less than 25% of homes have multi-paned windows
- Unknown what type of windows exist (single-pane vs. multi-pane)

**Observations:** This assessment did not look at this aspect in great detail. However, based on the age of most homes and common building practices, it is expected that most homes have double paned windows, at a minimum.

**Recommendations:** Have individual home risk assessments to inspect this aspect of home hardening.

**House skirting:** *material used around the bottom of homes.*

- Greater than 75% of homes have skirting underneath
- 50 to 74% of homes have skirting underneath
- 25 to 50% of homes have skirting underneath
- Less than 25% of homes have skirting underneath

**Observations:** Due to the closed foundation building method on most homes, skirting is not necessary in most instances.

**Recommendations:** Encourage homes with open foundations, pillar and post, to enclose with fire-resistant skirting materials.

**Attachments:** *are raised floors and decking outside the house. These may be built with wood or non-combustible materials. Examples of non-combustible materials include decks made with wood-plastic composites, higher density tropical hardwood, or fire-retardant treated decking materials; Wood attachments made from 2" material is more resistant to fire than 1" material. Fences that use metal or masonry when attaching fences directly to the siding of a home.*

- Greater than 75% of homes have NO wooden attachments
- 50 to 74% of homes have NO wooden attachments
- 25 to 50% of homes have NO wooden attachments
- Less than 25% of homes have NO wooden attachments

**Observations:** The high majority of homes have either a deck or fence attached to the home; in many cases, both.

**Recommendations:** None given at this time. Have individual home risk assessments to further evaluate decks and fences.

**Skirting/enclosed raised floors and decks:** *material used around decks to protect the underside from exposure from embers and heat.*

- Greater than 75% of homes have skirting underneath raised floors/decks
- 50 to 74% of homes have skirting underneath raised floors/decks
- 25 to 50% of homes have skirting underneath raised floors/decks
- Less than 25% of homes have skirting underneath raised floors/decks

**Observations:** Skirting was only observed on a couple of decks.



**Recommendations: Install skirting around raised decks to prevent embers from getting underneath. Fully enclosing or using 1/8" screen is recommended in these areas. If fully enclosing, it is important to install air vents, and these vents should have 1/8" screen installed to further prevent ember intrusion.**

**Fences:** *Wooden fences can act as a "wick" carrying fire to structures. Wooden fences should not be in Zone 1.*

- Greater than 75% of homes have NO wooden fences
- 50 to 74% of homes have NO wooden fences
- 25 to 50% of homes have NO wooden fences
- Less than 25% of homes have NO wooden fences
- Unknown

**Observations: It was difficult to ascertain an accurate percentage of homes with or without wooden fences, although many were observed.**

**Recommendations: Have individual risk assessments to better evaluate wooden fences.**

**Ground Cover:** *This area is focused on the structure and decks out to 5 feet. Is there dead vegetation, dried leaves, pine needles and ground debris near foundations?*

*Has hardscaping been used around perimeters to keep them free of litter/debris. Concrete, stone, or gravel walkways?*

*Have wood mulch products been replaced with non-combustible such as crushed stone/gravel options?*

*Are there trees/shrubs next to the home? Are there branches overhanging the roof, touching the siding, or within 10 feet of chimneys?*

- Greater than 75% of homes have non-flammable mulch and fire-resistant plants in Zone 1.
- 50 to 74% of homes have non-flammable mulch and fire-resistant plants in Zone 1.
- 25 to 50% of homes have non-flammable mulch and fire-resistant plants in Zone 1.
- Less than 25% of homes have non-flammable mulch and fire-resistant plants in Zone 1.

**Observations: During this assessment, most homes observed had some type of vegetation within 5' of the structure. Plant types and species were not noted.**

**Recommendation: Replace burnable mulch, (such as beauty bark), with non-burnable material, (such as soil or rock). Remove all dead material from this area every year prior to wildfire season. Replace highly flammable plants, such as those that frequently shed leaves/needles or are susceptible to drought desiccation, with plants that have fire-resistant properties. Consult the following resource for guidance:**

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/default/files/documents/lommena/fire-resistant-plants-for-home-landscapes-111423.pdf>



## Zone 2 - Intermediate Zone

5 to 30 feet from the furthest exterior point of the home. This area uses landscaping and breaks (areas of non-combustible materials such as dirt, cement, or rock) to help influence and decrease fire behavior. The goal for this zone is to protect structures from the radiant heat created in a wildfire. This area is typically people's yard, garden and driveway.

- Are there fuel breaks such as driveways, walkways/paths, patios, and decks?
- Are lawns and native grasses maintained (general recommendation is a height of 4 inches)?
- Is vegetation in this area spread out? It is recommended that trees and shrubs should be limited to small clusters of a few each to break up continuity; trees should be spaced to a minimum of 18 feet between crowns.
- Have ladder fuels (vegetation under trees) been removed so a surface fire cannot reach the crowns? Have trees been pruned? General recommendations are up to six to ten feet from the ground; for shorter trees do not exceed 1/3 of the overall tree height.
- Are plants, trees, and lawns watered to keep them from becoming dry?

- Greater than 75% of homes have a low chance of fire spread in zone 2.
- 50 to 74% of homes have a low chance of fire spread in zone 2.
- 25 to 50% of homes have a low chance of fire spread in zone 2.
- Less than 25% of homes have a low chance of fire spread in zone 2.

**Observations:** Due to green belts and vegetation used as privacy screens between lots, there is a high chance of fire spread in the intermediate zone for most homeowners.

**Recommendation:** Have individual risk assessments completed. Create this zone around the garages and outbuildings as well. If an unattached building catches fire, it can become an ignition source for the home.

**Outbuildings:** Outbuildings can ignite and provide long duration heat that can ignite vegetation and structures. Outbuildings need a HIZ zone around them just like the home.

- Greater than 75% of homes have outbuildings
- 50 to 74% of homes have outbuildings
- 25 to 50% of homes have outbuildings
- Less than 25% of homes have outbuildings

**Observations:** This number is based on "windshield" observations. It was not possible to see the backyards of many residences and so this number may be much higher.

**Recommendation:** Have individual risk assessments completed. Create the non-combustible zone around the garages and outbuildings as well. If an unattached building catches fire, it can become an ignition source for the home.

## Zone 3 - Extended Zone

30 to 100 feet, out to 200 feet (where applicable). This area is considered to be the area that is not regularly maintained, typically it has many names which could be wildlands, forest lands or the area outside your yard and garden. Generally, this area focuses on managing the vegetation to influence fire behavior and spread. The goal here is not to eliminate fire, but to



interrupt fire's path and keep flames smaller and on the ground. Instead of having flames of 50 feet it is desirable to have flames less than 10 feet in length. At these distances property lines may overlap, presenting the opportunity and need to work collaboratively with neighbors. Items to consider:

- Are there heavy accumulations of ground litter/debris?
- Is there dead plant and tree material that should be removed?
- Are storage sheds and/or other outbuildings in this zone clear of vegetation?
- Do mature trees have small conifers and brush growing between them or is the space maintained?
- Do trees 30 to 60 feet from the home have at least 12 feet between canopy tops?
- Is there at least 6 feet between canopy tops of trees located 60 to 100 feet from the home?

- Greater than 75% of homes have thinned vegetation to reduce fire intensity.
- 50 to 74% of homes have thinned vegetation to reduce fire intensity.
- 25 to 50% of homes have thinned vegetation to reduce fire intensity.
- Less than 25% of homes have thinned vegetation to reduce fire intensity.

**Observations: Due to the size and configuration of most lots, this zone extends into neighboring properties and/or greenbelts and/or tribal managed lands.**

**Recommendation: Work with neighbors, as a community, to reduce fuels and fire risk in these areas.**

#### **Common/open space areas or adjacent public lands:**

- Not adjacent to wildlands with accumulated fuels
- Adjacent to wildlands with accumulated fuels

**Observations: Portions of the community border lands that are managed by the Swinomish tribe and are subject to management practices that, in some instances, may not coincide with fuels reduction or thinning practices. In other instances, lots border community greenbelts or other community property that is subject to management practices set forth by the HOA.**

**Recommendations: Engage and work with HOA management to identify and simplify the processes for fuels mitigation work in these areas. Work towards a document framework that would streamline fuels mitigation project applications through the Swinomish Tribe.**

## **Community Assessment**

*This section focuses on the community infrastructure and how it effects fire suppression and escape routes for homeowners. We recommend reaching out to your local fire department for assistance in determining what other safety issues should be addressed.*

1. **Means of Access** – This section focuses on the roads leading to and within the community rather than individual driveways which is under Fire Service Access.

- a. **Ingress and Egress:**

**Observations: There is only one road in and out of Shelter Bay. However, during emergencies there are up to 3 other egresses that can be made**



available to the Pull and Be Damned Road area. Even with these additional points of egress, due to the number of residents and the very few primary roads, evacuation could prove to be problematic. While there are well marked evacuation routes, the signage is for both tsunami and wildfire and can be slightly confusing.

**Recommendations:** Make sure residents are aware of the possible difficulties regarding evacuation. Advise residents to be aware of and practice proper evacuation routes. In the event evacuation is warranted, further advise evacuating early. There are also multiple muster locations where residents can gather safely, (i.e., marina, golf course, park area near community center).

- b. Road Width** – *Roads should be wide enough for two way traffic including fire trucks.*

**Observation:** Most “primary” roads within the community are wide enough for two-way traffic. Most secondary and tertiary roads could prove troublesome for emergency vehicles to navigate during a wildfire response. There are numerous spur roads that dead-end at dense greenbelts where a wildfire is more likely to occur. At most of these dead ends, there is not enough room for a fire truck to turn around.

**Recommendations:** In order for a safe evacuation to occur, it must be organized well in advance of the wildfire event. The local fire district did organize and run a “tabletop” evacuation drill in July of 2024; however, it is the opinion of most in attendance that not enough residents participated or are fully aware of proper evacuation protocol. Advise sharing the proper evacuation routes and protocol through multiple sources to reach many more residents. Also advise considering one or two annual practice evacuations – whether they be of the tabletop variety or actual on the road type.

- c. All Season Road Condition:** *Roads should have a surface that allows rapid movement of vehicles. Paved and maintained gravel roads meet this condition.*

**Observations:** Roads are paved and well maintained. The steepness of some roads could prove problematic during snow or ice conditions. The good news is a wildfire emergency is probably not going to be occurring during these conditions.

**Recommendations:** No recommendations given. Current road conditions are adequate.

- 2. Fire Service Access:** *Fire service access evaluates driveway length and turnaround ability for fire engines which may be as large as a motor home.*

**Observations:** Individual driveways were not assessed in this overview.

**Recommendation:** Prune trees along roadways to 14’ in height. This will allow for safe passage of emergency vehicles.

- 3. Street Signs and home addresses.** *Emergency response crews need to find homes quickly in an emergency. In a large incident non-local crews will be assisting local fire*



crews. These out of area crews may not be familiar with the area. Street signs and individual homes should have 4" reflective lettering.

**Observations:** The community is not difficult to find for emergency vehicles but to find individual residences can be a challenge without proper addressing. Majority of homes have address numbers on mailboxes and the residential structure; however, in many cases these are not highly visible. The numbering system for residences also does not follow standard addressing practices and this could be problematic for rapidly locating a specific address.

**Recommendations:** Addresses for individual homes should be installed with 4" tall reflective lettering that can easily be seen from the road at night. This will ensure timely emergency response. Further, address number on residential structures should be of a contrasting color to the primary color on the structure.

#### 4. Available Fire Protection

##### a. Water Source Availability (On Site):

**Observations:** Multiple hydrants within the community. Community is also bordered on two sides by saltwater. There is also a community swimming pool that firefighting tenders could access if absolutely necessary.

**Recommendation:** Work with local fire district to periodically test hydrants and verify flow rates.

##### b. Organized Response Resources:

**Observations:** Shelter Bay is located in Skagit County Fire District 13, which is a mix of paid and volunteer firefighters. The closest station is the District 13 station located on Snee Oosh Road, 2.1 miles away.

**Recommendation:** Jurisdictional responsibilities are shared by WADNR and Skagit County Fire Protection District No.13. Joint coordination between these two agencies and the community would be of benefit. Pre-attack planning could facilitate good coordination between agencies and the community before a wildfire strikes. Although Shelter Bay has a well-trained fire protection district, it would be under-equipped to deal with a major wildfire emergency. During a wildfire, additional forces may not be able to respond due to the limited access without adequate safety zones near the homes. The worst-case scenario should be addressed in the Community Action Plan. While Fire District 13 will provide structural protection and fire suppression for smaller wildland fires (less than ¼ acre), they do not have the training or equipment to handle wildfires of any significant size.

#### 5. Utilities (Propane and Electric). Are they above or below ground within and surrounding the community?

**Observations:** Electrical utilities are a mix of overhead and underground throughout the community.

**Recommendations:** No recommendations made at this time.



## Recommendations

*It's recommended that residents address hazards at the home first and work their way out into the three home ignition zones. Remember, small things can have a huge impact on home survivability. Use these recommendations to create your site's action plan.*

### Summary of Recommendations:

Many homes in Shelter Bay have characteristics on and near the residences that could be amended to improve wildfire preparedness and safety. Home hardening materials and practices should be the first focus. Strongly advise upgrading to fire-resistant roofing and decking materials, installing 1/8" wire mesh screening where needed, and vigilant maintenance of "nooks and crannies" where leaf litter, needles, and other debris tend to accumulate. Residents should also consider ensuring that at least the first 3' of the home above the ground has non-combustible siding. Recommend removal of bark mulch and other combustible ground covers within the first 5' of the home and replacing with ignition resistant materials such as crushed stone/gravel. Incorporate fire resistant landscaping practices in all three zones with particular focus on the immediate and intermediate zones. The development plan: lot sizes and shapes, street layout, community areas, and interspersed greenbelts has led to an abundance and variety of natural and built fuels. Recommend working with residents to educate and provide resources for mitigating risk and reducing fuels. Particular attention should be paid to removal of vertical ladder fuels as well as creating horizontal breaks between fuels.

Continued outreach and community education events are a must in a community the size of Shelter Bay. There are a number of new residents each year who may not be aware of the wildfire risk. Frequent messaging can help combat complacency from long-term residents and community engagement can foster new relationships that lead to cooperation on community level mitigation projects.

In 2024, Shelter Bay, with assistance from a Department of Natural Resources micro-grant, undertook a sizable fuels mitigation project in their common areas. This project reduced fuels as well as improved access for emergency response vehicles and personnel. Recommend planning for projects of this type on an annual basis. Shelter Bay is subject to regulations around some fuels reduction practices from their own HOA as well as the Swinomish Tribe. Working with the HOA board to amend regulations that are counter to wildfire resilience practices is vital. As is maintaining a dialogue with the Swinomish Tribe to work towards fuels mitigation projects that are mutually beneficial without encroaching on areas of cultural importance.





## NEXT STEPS

This assessment is the final step in re-certification in Firewise USA® for 2024. Advise continued participation and certification every year going forward. The requirements for maintaining Firewise USA® Community status can be found here:

<https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/wildfire/firewise-usa/annual-renewal-information>

The Shelter Bay Community has a Firewise USA® Action Plan that is current through 2027. All of the actions in this plan are still desirable and should be implemented/followed. It does appear that some of the people named in this plan are no longer in those positions, so others in the community may need to step up to fill these areas of responsibility. If feasible for the community, advise formation of a new Firewise USA® Community Board/Committee to begin looking at updating the Action Plan prior to its expiration in 2027.

