

Wildfire and Egress Update

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Eagle River Valley

September 13, 2023



Wildfire and Egress project

Who: 9 community councils (Abbott Loop, Basher, Bear Valley, Eagle River Valley, East Fort, Eklutna Valley, Glenn Alps, Hillside, and Rabbit Creek)

When: September 2022 – January 2023
(Six 2-hour long meetings)

Actions: Mapping of evacuation locations, shelter-in-place, areas with egress issues, and guest speakers



Wildfire and Egress project

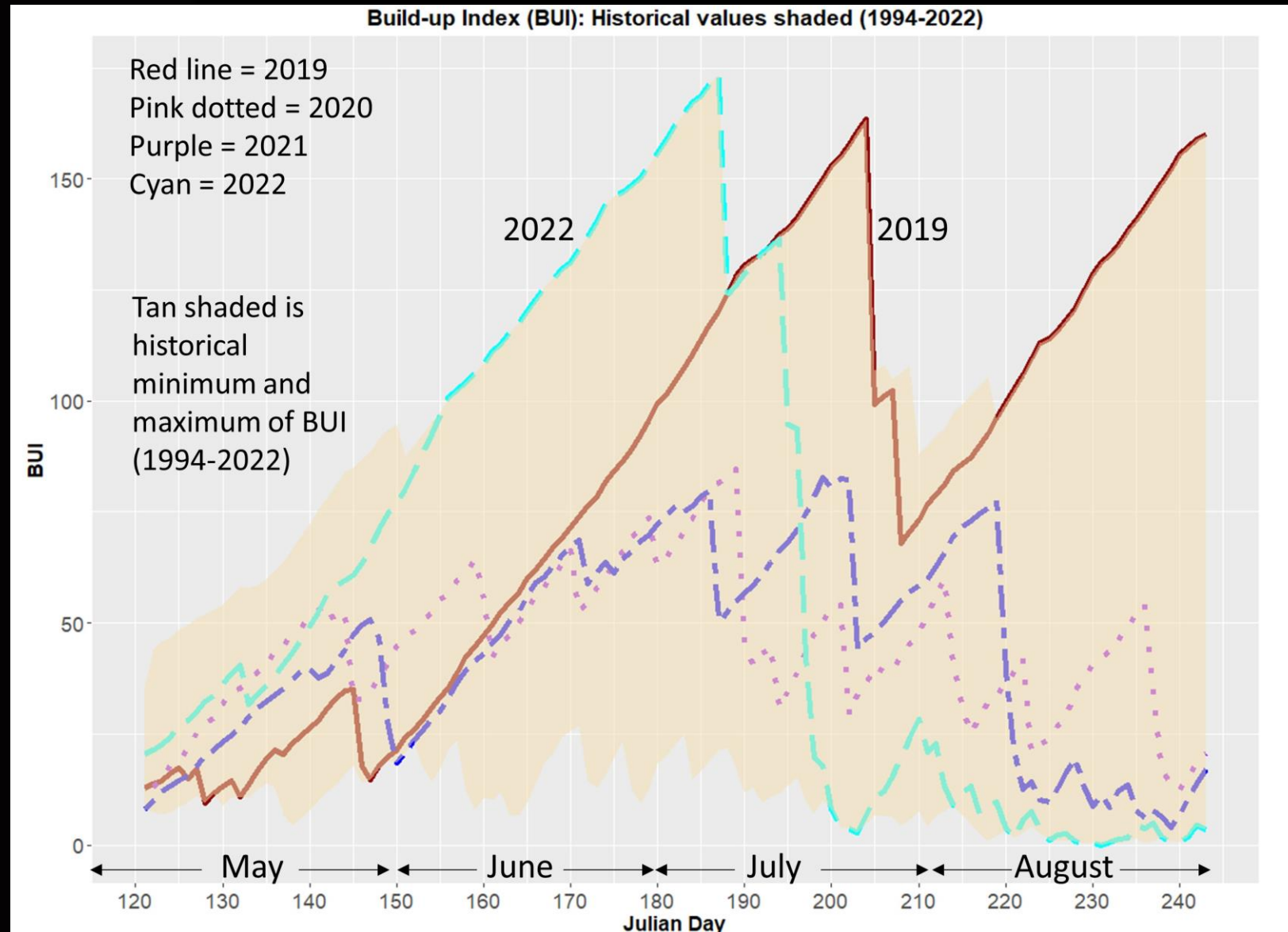
The current Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) plan has recently been designated for review and updating because it is out of date and no longer meets the stringent requirements for requesting/receiving funding for wildfire mitigation projects.

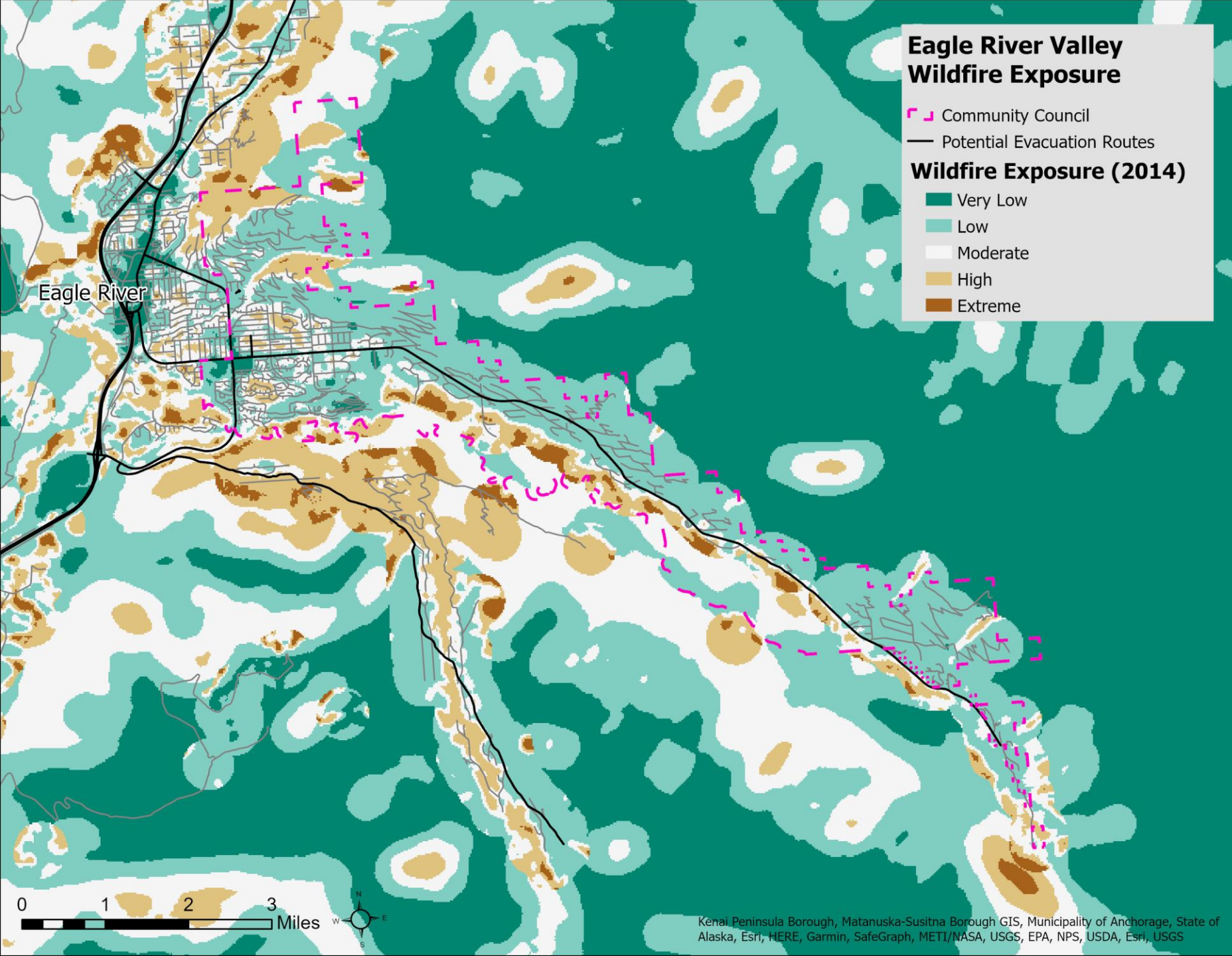
This work was intended to help jumpstart the CWPP process and work towards getting an update.



Fire weather in Southcentral

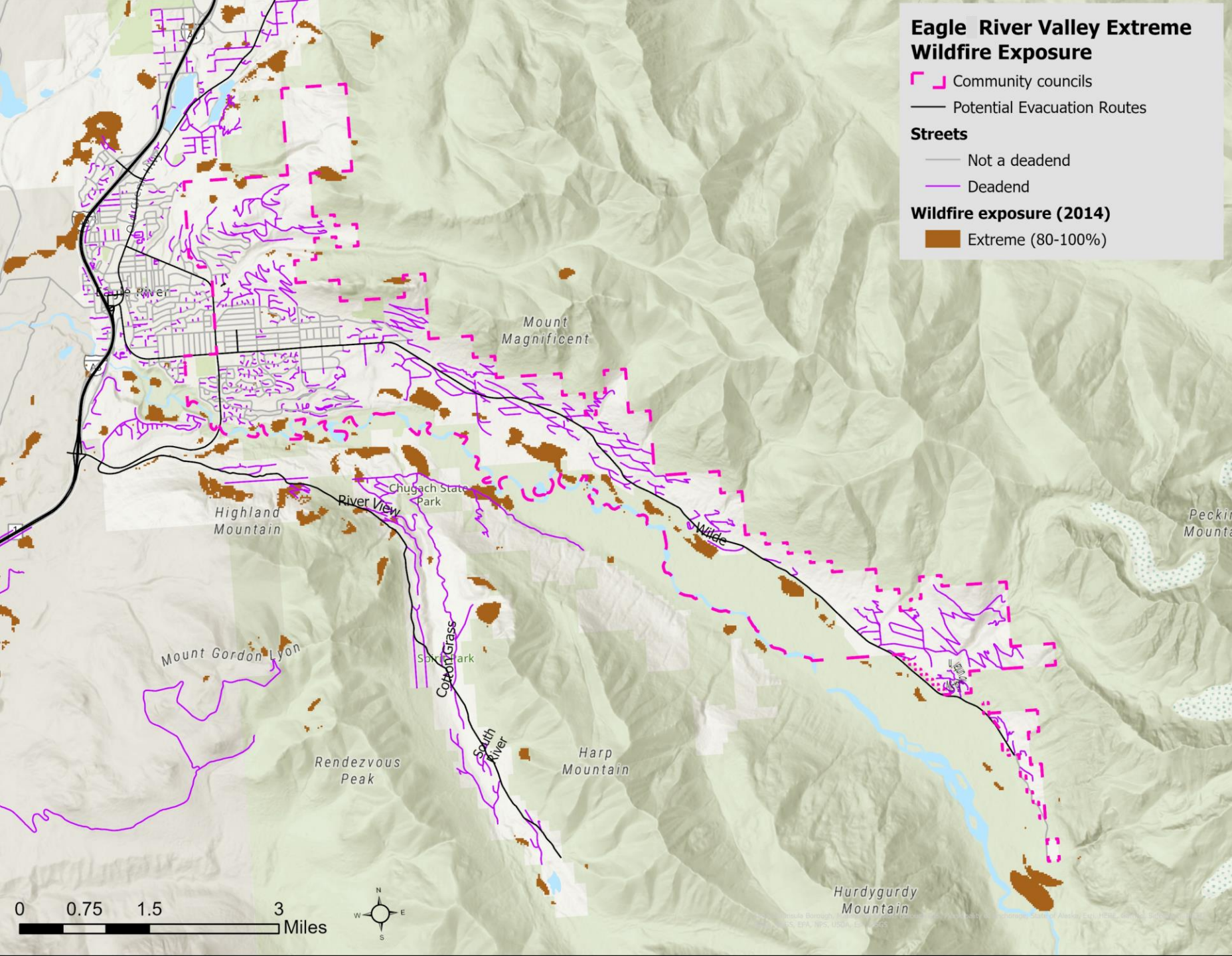
Buildup Index (BUI) is a numeric rating of the total amount of fuel available for combustion.





Wildfire Exposure:

Reflects the potential for wildfire activity. Does not say wildfire will happen or how frequently.



Wildfire Exposure:

- Exposure 80 and above suggest mitigation actions
- Homes in this area strongly recommended to do Firewise

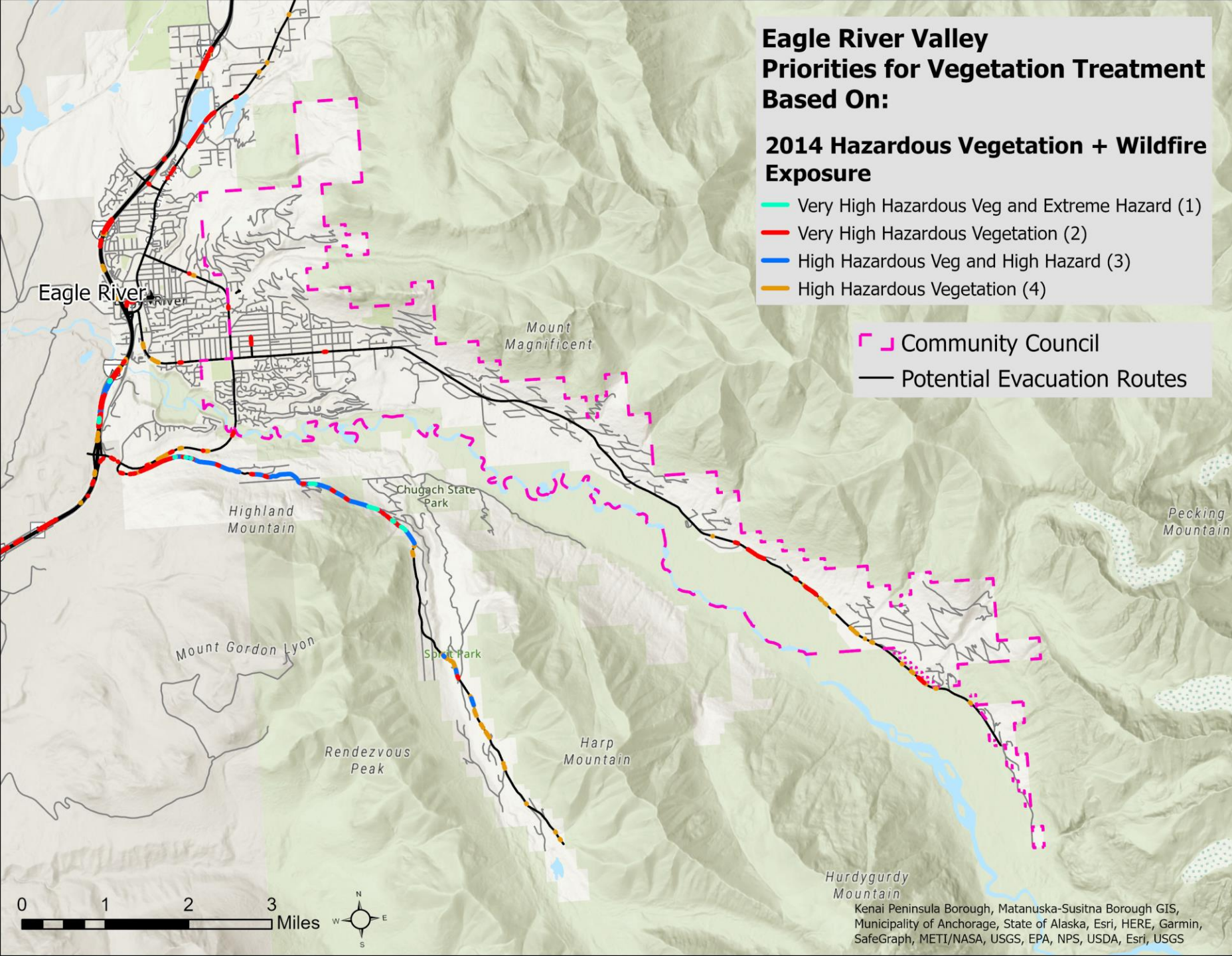


Eagle River Valley Priorities for Vegetation Treatment Based On:

2014 Hazardous Vegetation + Wildfire Exposure

- Very High Hazardous Veg and Extreme Hazard (1)
- Very High Hazardous Vegetation (2)
- High Hazardous Veg and High Hazard (3)
- High Hazardous Vegetation (4)

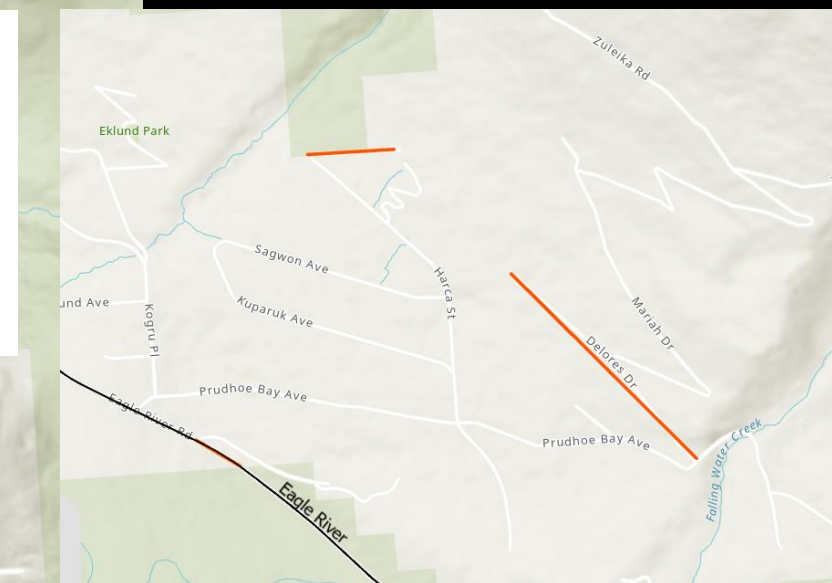
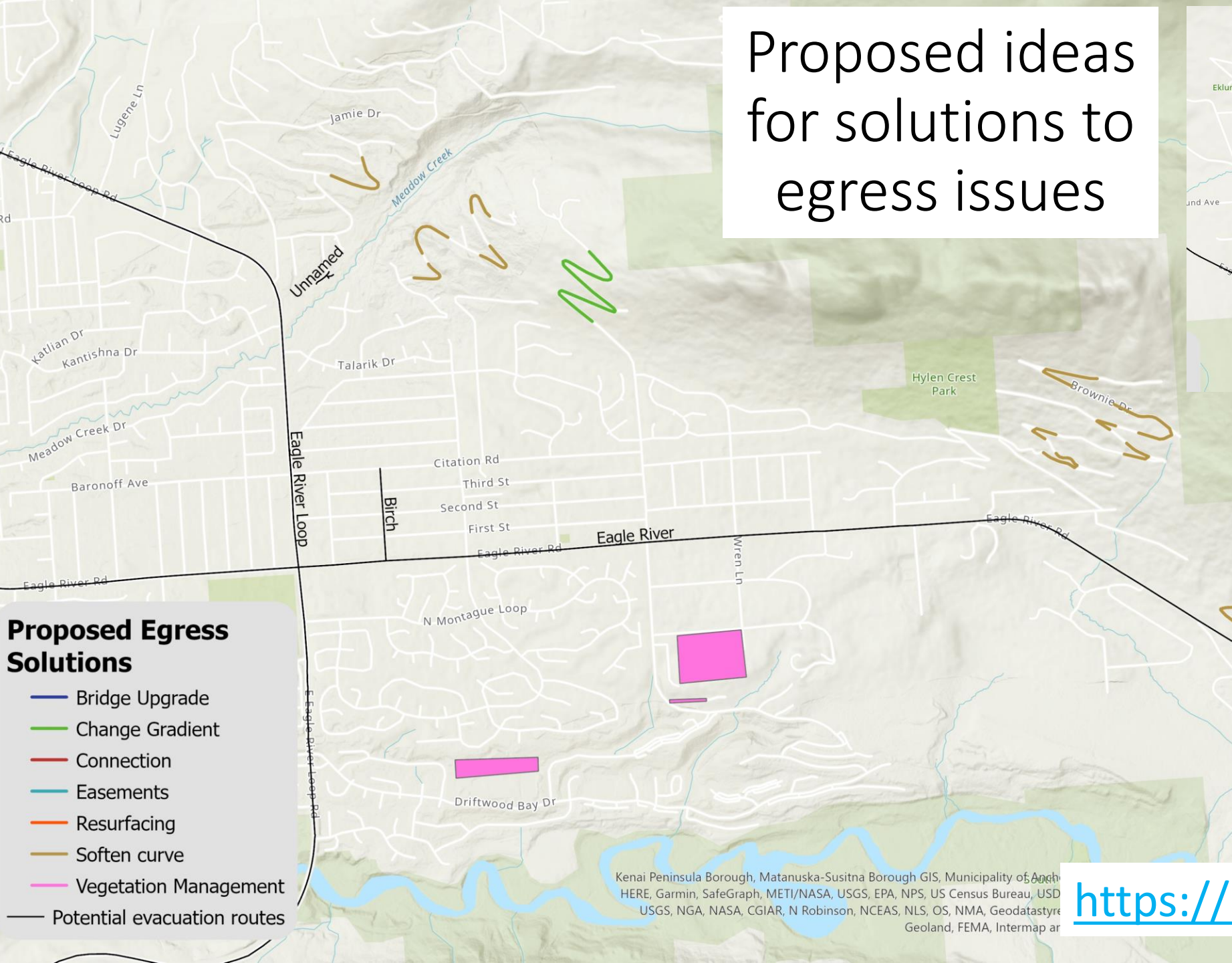
- Community Council
- Potential Evacuation Routes



Evacuation routes identified for vegetation clearing:

Evacuation routes in areas with either high exposure or hazardous fuels.

Proposed ideas for solutions to egress issues

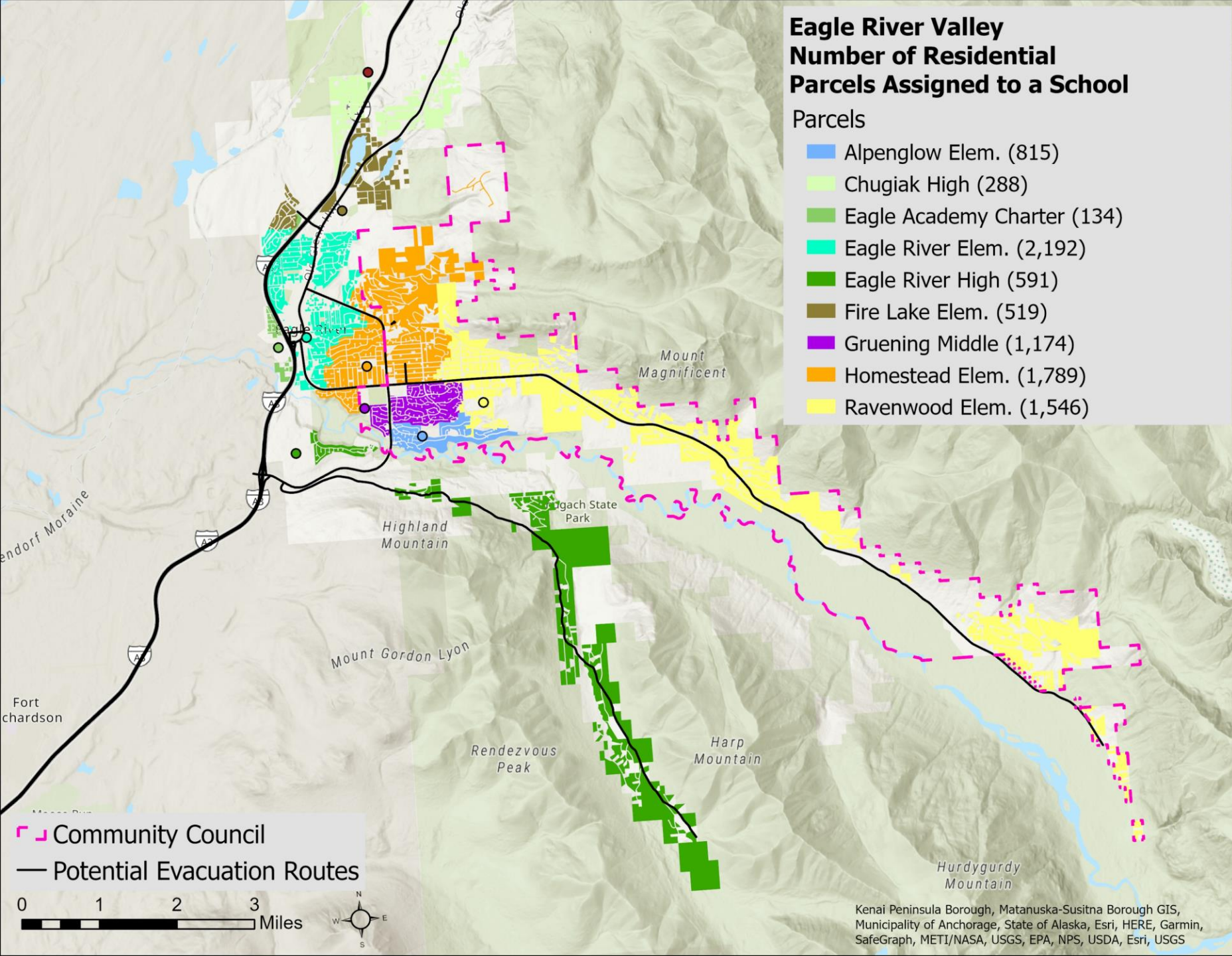


<https://bit.ly/moaegressideas>

Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Borough GIS, Municipality of Anchorage, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDN, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatastore, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap ar

Voting on egress improvement ideas

Types of suggestions	Number of suggestions
<i>Change in gradient/soften curves</i>	10
<i>Major one way in/out</i>	4
Easements (maintain/re-establish)	2
Resurfacing/Upgrade	3
Evaluation or creation of safety zone	4
Wildfire hot (Vegetation thinning)	2
	25

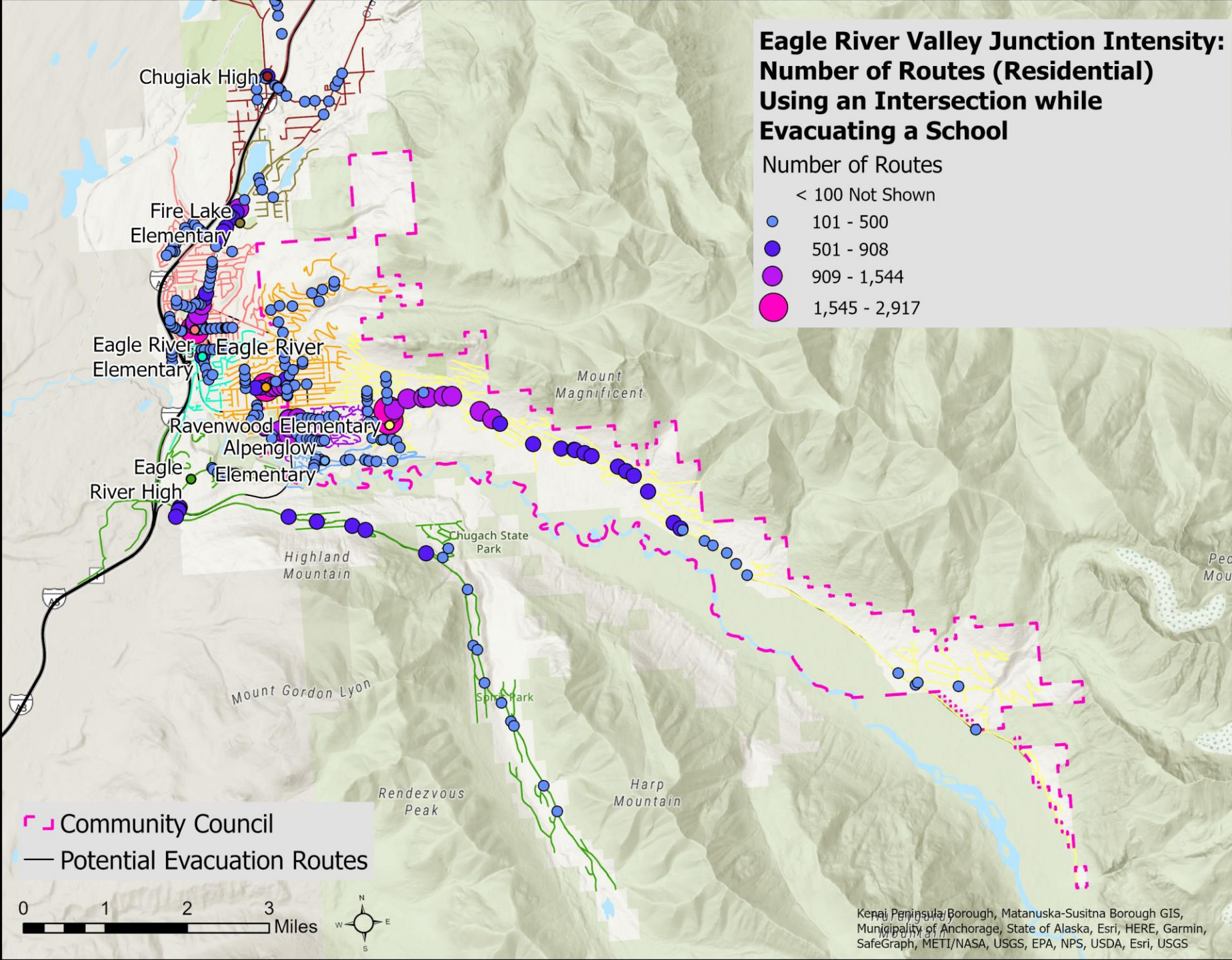


Egress modeling:
Number of parcels (proxy for people) assigned to schools.



Egress modeling:

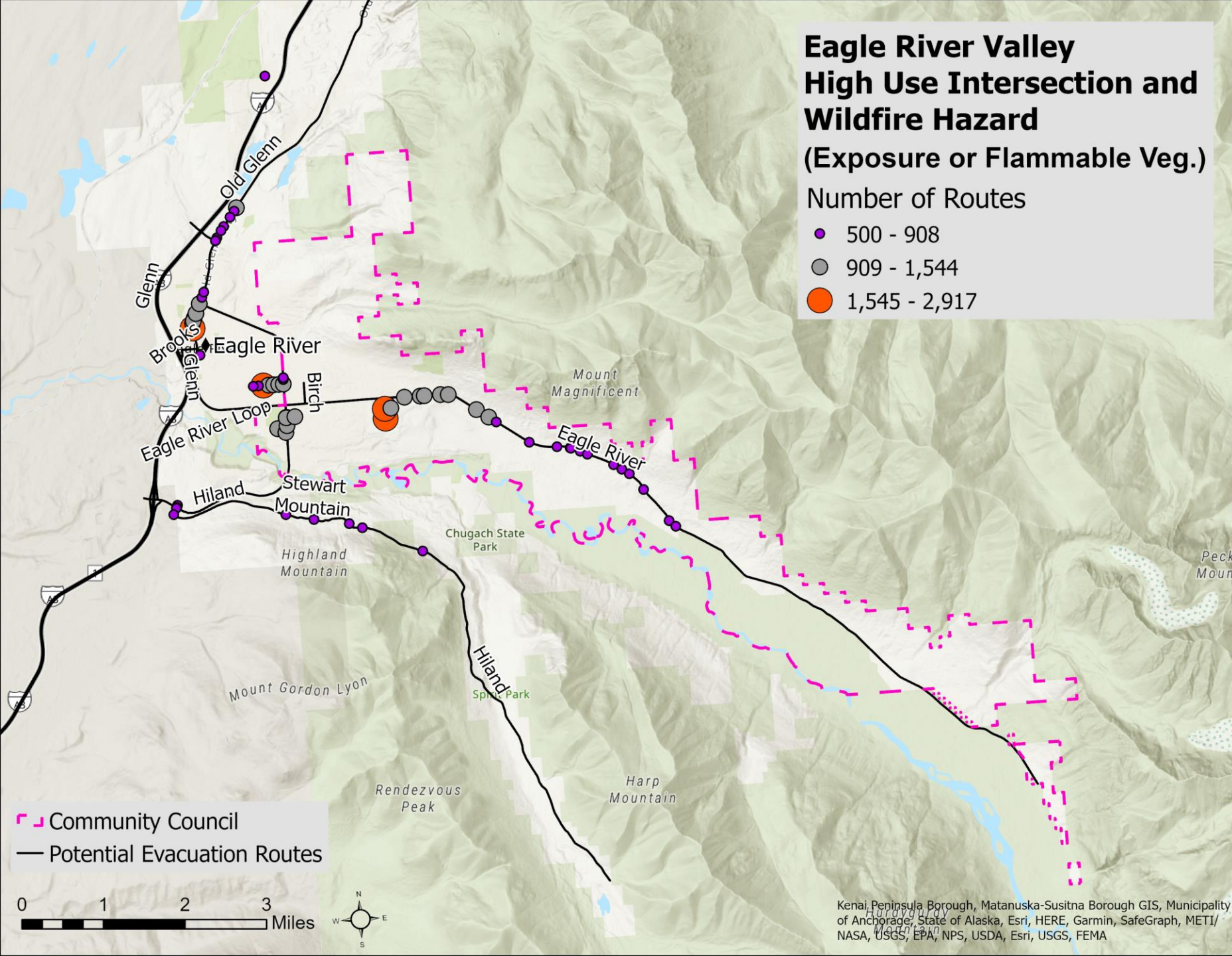
Number of routes connected to parcels (proxy for people) going through an intersection.



Eagle River Valley High Use Intersection and Wildfire Hazard (Exposure or Flammable Veg.)

Number of Routes

- 500 - 908
- 909 - 1,544
- 1,545 - 2,917



Egress modeling:

Number of routes connected to parcels (proxy for people) going through an intersection.



Kenai Peninsula Borough, Matanuska-Susitna Borough GIS, Municipality of Anchorage, State of Alaska, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USDA, Esri, USGS, FEMA

Egress modeling:

Number of parcels (proxy for people) assigned to schools.

Lesson:

- 1) schools have the potential to get overcrowded and traffic is an issue
- 2) Thought needs to be put into where people will go and how
- 3) Work through some realistic scenarios

Egress modeling,
is just a start.
Evacuation
modeling is a
much larger task.

In the end the egress project can help us understand...

- ✓ What is the wildfire risk level where I live? Answer: Refer to **Appendix D:** (Wildfire exposure maps for participating community councils). Find your street and refer to the color code for your property. Some home insurance companies also have rating systems. Discuss your rating with the nearest fire station Captain, on-duty and your Insurance Company.
- ✓ What are some things I should be concerned about for my family's safety if we evacuate? Answer: Refer to: **Firewise Alaska Booklet, Pages 21-22:** [Prepare to Evacuate](#)
- ✓ What can I do to improve the chances of my home surviving a wildfire? Refer to the **Firewise Alaska Booklet, Page 4, Self-Assessment Checklist:** [My Firewise Home](#)
- ✓ Is there any help available to assess my property's risk of a wildfire? Yes, **Contact AFD, Wildfire Mitigation to schedule an inspection:** [Schedule a Firewise Home Assessment](#)
- ✓ Can working with my neighbors help to identify or improve egress routes in my subdivision? **Yes, Refer to Community Fire Planning:** [Community Fire Planning Link](#)
- ✓ If I live in an area that is not part of a MOA fire service area, is my wildfire risk greater? **This may not be an easy question to answer, but generally, your risk is greater if you live outside of a fire service area. Visit your nearest fire station and discuss the issue with the Captain on duty.**
- ✓ Is it important to look for a home with fire hydrants or water sources close by? **Refer to the Firewise Alaska Booklet, Page 14 for Tips on Creating Your Own Water Supply:** [Create Your Own Water Supply](#)



Thank you

- Thank you for your time.
- All of the ideas presented are just that, ideas, that still need to be more widely discussed and then valid ideas vetted by experts.
- Questions or comments: Jen Schmidt 90-786-5497 or jischmidt@alaska.edu
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