

The Importance of Voting ‘Yes’ on the Emergency Access Route Special Election for Genesee Fire Protection District: May 6, 2025

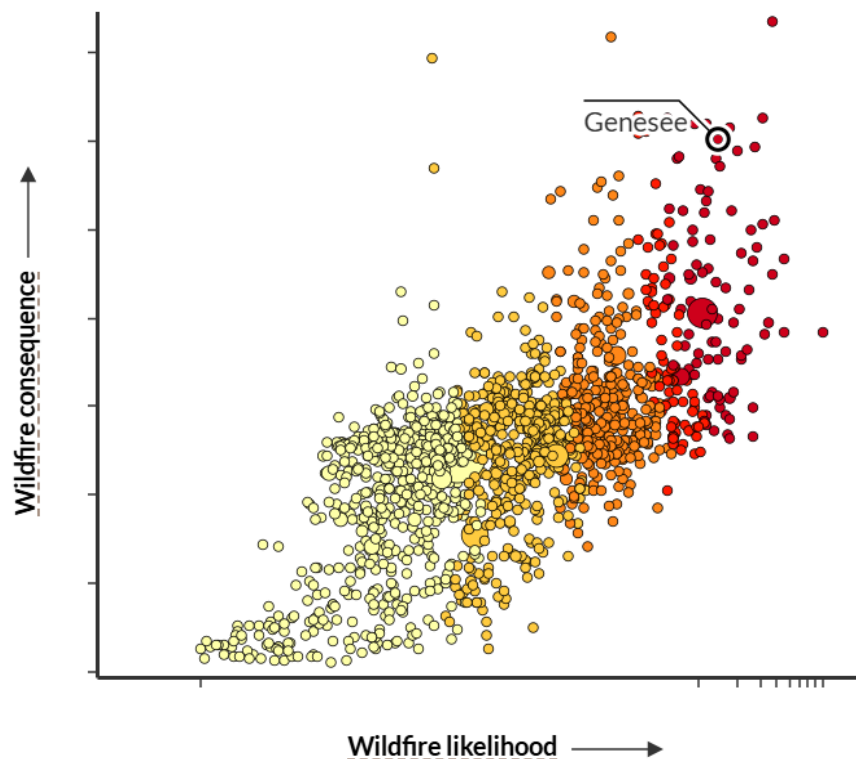
Genesee Fire Protection District will hold a special election on May 6, 2025. Residents will be asked to approve the Fire District raising funds to develop an emergency access route connecting the Fire District to Highway 74. The emergency access route will allow evacuation to the south if northern egress routes to I-70 are blocked and would also allow firefighters from other districts to enter from the south to protect lives and property.

Three years ago, Colorado witnessed the consequences of a grass fire outside of Boulder that spread extremely quickly due to high winds with gusts up to 115mph. That fire, the Marshall fire, destroyed more than 991 structures and became the most destructive fire in Colorado history. 37,500 people evacuated and only two people died because there were multiple evacuation routes.

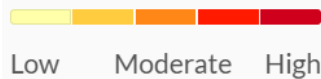
Those high winds are similar to the ones that have recently ravaged the communities in LA. More than 12,000 homes, businesses, schools and other structures have been destroyed by multiple large wildfires. However, the death toll in LA has remained low because of the multiple evacuation routes that 100,000 residents have used to flee the fire, and the ability for firefighters to use those routes to save lives.

The Paradise community in northern California was not so fortunate. In November 2018, the deadly Camp Fire swept through Paradise killing 85 people and destroying nearly 19,000 structures, powered by 35mph winds. Paradise residents did not have multiple evacuation routes to rely on – and trees fell and blocked the few escape routes that did exist. We face the same threat in Genesee with only 2 evacuation routes for residents. The *Fire in Paradise* documentary depicts these facts about California’s deadliest wildfire as residents recount vehicles jammed on the roads as fire burns over them.

Watching the *Fire in Paradise* documentary heightens one’s anxiety about what might happen in our community if a wildfire broke out on a red flag day, when the winds are blowing 30mph+, and the ground is dry with plenty of fuel to burn. Genesee has a very high risk of wildfire according to the U.S. Forest Service (see chart below), with the potential for devastating consequences.



Risk to homes in US

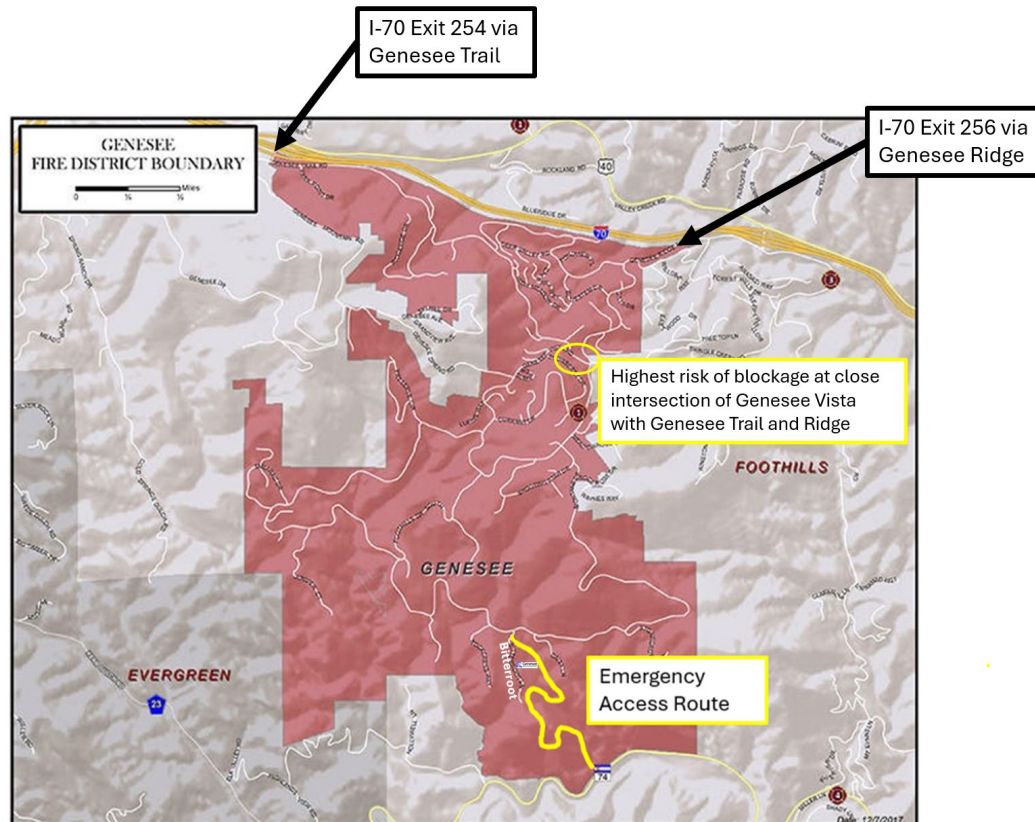


Population



Genesee is similar to Paradise, California, in that it has two evacuation routes, and those two evacuation routes are separated by less than 500 feet (see map below). If access to I-70 is blocked or severely impeded mitigating passage along either of these two routes, survivability is highly uncertain if residents are forced to shelter in place.

The Genesee Fire Protection District (GFPD) has been at the forefront of fire mitigation efforts and those efforts have won accolades from WiRē (The Wildfire Research Team) as the District continues to push innovative ways to keep the district safe. An important approach that the GFPD has been pursuing is to build an emergency access route on the south side of Genesee to assist firefighters facing a wildfire, and to give residents the ability to also evacuate out to Hwy 74, particularly critical if access to I-70 is blocked or severely impeded. The Emergency Access Route (EAR) on the back side of Genesee would give our residents a way to evacuate; it also allows outside fire districts a way into Genesee to defend our homes and help us evacuate. GFPD has received the support for the EAR from Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Evergreen Fire and Rescue, Highland Rescue Team, and State of Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control.



GFPD will hold a special election on May 6th, 2025, giving voters an opportunity to vote in favor of building the emergency access route. A “YES” vote means we will further develop this emergency route at a cost of approximately 8M. Residents will not pay a special assessment – rather, the GFPD will issue a 30-year bond to cover this expense. The bond will be paid via a mill levy increase. The amount of the mill levy increase varies for each household since it will be based on the value of one’s home.

- For planning purposes, the tax increase to homeowners will be approximately \$300 annually for a \$1M home.
- By financing the evacuation route in this way, both current and future GFPD residents share the costs for this critically important project.

We encourage you to **Vote Yes** to build an emergency access route out of Genesee in the May vote – your potentially life-saving route.

If you are interested in learning more about the route or becoming an Ambassador to help spread the word on the importance of building the Emergency Access Route, contact emergencyaccessroute@googlegroups.com or visit <https://geneseefoundation.org/emergency-access-route-2/>.

Emergency Access Route Working Group