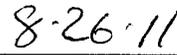
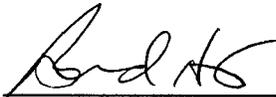


SIGNATURES

Unit Strategic Fire Plan developed for Nevada Yuba Placer Unit

This Plan:

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties, Federal, State, City, and County agencies within the Unit have been consulted and are listed in the plan.
- Identifies and prioritizes pre fire and post fire management strategies and tactics meant to reduce the loss of values at risk within the Unit.
- Is intended for use as a planning and assessment tool only. It is the responsibility of those implementing the projects to ensure that all environmental compliance and permitting processes are met as necessary.



Unit Chief

Brad Harris

Date

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit (NEU) Fire Management Plan is a product of the implementation of the State Fire Plan. The State Fire Plan provides an analysis procedure utilizing, in part, computer based geographical information data that is validated by experienced fire managers to assess fire fuel hazards and risks in order to design and implement mitigating activities. The NEU Fire Management Plan provides background information, fuels and fire data, proposed projects, and individual Battalion reports outlining mitigating activities commonly carried out each year. The NEU Fire Management Plan is our local road map to create and maintain defensible landscapes in order to protect those assets vital to the state.

NEU is one of 21 administrative Units within the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. NEU faces many challenges, not the least of which is two of its counties, Placer and Nevada, are two of the fastest growing counties within the state. Many of the people moving to these mid Sierra Nevada rural counties are coming from urban areas such as the San Francisco Bay, Los Angeles, and Sacramento. This leads to the urbanization of fire adapted vegetation types and ecosystems.

A big challenge facing NEU is one of education. Most of the new residents, and many of the existing ones realize what building houses in the middle of fire adapted ecosystems means. The fire adapted forest types where most of the population exists within NEU are Mixed Conifer, Ponderosa/Shrub, Montane Chaparral, and California Oak Woodlands. Research shows that prior to European settlement, fire return intervals ranged from 2 to 8 years in California Oak Woodlands and 5 to 16 years in the remaining forest types. This equated to low intensity fires at frequent intervals. As of 1900 to 1920, wildfires have been suppressed in these vegetation types. As a result, over the last 80 - 100 years vegetative fuels have increased significantly in tons per acre. Unnaturally high fuel loads have resulted. But, most of the public does not realize this, nor do they understand what this means in terms of fire intensity and their safety. They have come to believe what they see now is “natural.”

Wildfires in these unnatural fuel load conditions are very intense and more difficult to suppress. Overlay the mix of homes and personal property in these areas and suppression is even more difficult. The task at hand is to educate the citizens within these areas as to the dangers of living in these fuels and to induce the public into taking an active role in becoming an informed and appropriate land steward and taking it upon themselves to manage the fuels around their structures. Creating “defensible space” around these structures is the single best thing a resident can accomplish to protect their property. Secondary to the effort of creating the defensible space around their homes is a landowner’s responsibility to apply his or her stewardship responsibility across their entire ownership. The overall effect of each property owner properly managing wildland fuels results in a landscape level fuel reduction and a commensurate reduction in fire intensity. Once this is achieved, the goal of reducing costs and losses to human lives, property and natural resources will be reached.

Priorities and Goals

The State Board of Forestry and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection have drafted a comprehensive update of the Fire Plan for wildland fire protection in California. NEU has reviewed the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan (State) goals in order to develop and incorporate those goals into the Unit Fire Management Plan. The NEU priorities provide the foundation upon which our local goals and objects are built. The NEU priorities and Goals are as follows:

Priorities:

1. To Reduce the Risks to Citizens and emergency responders from Wildland Fire.
2. Develop a “land stewardship” ethic in the residents of the Unit

Goals:

1. Demonstrate methods that individuals and the community can use to properly manage their lands to improve forest health, and reduce the ignitability of structures in the Wildland Urban Interface.
2. Raise citizen and stakeholder awareness of fire risks and enlist their help and participation in risk reduction.
3. Assist local government in developing standards, policies, and plans, which will result in local, and landscape level fuel modifications.
4. Implement local and landscape level projects and programs that decrease fire risk and increase the potential for success on initial attack.

Current Pre-fire Management and Development

Since the implementation of the State Fire Plan in 1996 and its evolution into the current NEU Fire Management Plan, interest by stakeholders has resulted in broad support for community wildfire safety. These groups in cooperation with Cal Fire have taken the lead in promoting fire safe activities. Through these groups and our own personnel, we have initiated and completed a number of fuel reduction projects throughout the Unit. It is likely that one of these projects will help reduce the overall government costs and citizen losses resulting from a costly and damaging fire. We continuously encounter new obstacles in the project implementation stage: agency spending procedures, grant requirements, environmental documentation, etc... However, through the continued effort of our staff and the other stakeholders, fuel reduction and education projects will continue.