

**A: FIRE PREVENTION  
- ENGINEERING & STRUCTURE IGNITABILITY**

The Department's Prevention Services Bureau consists of three (3) Divisions: Health Hazardous Material, Fire Prevention and Forestry Divisions.

The **Health Hazardous Materials Division** mission is to protect the public health and the environment throughout Los Angeles County from accidental releases and improper handling, storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes through coordinated efforts of inspections, emergency response, enforcement, and site mitigation oversight. In 1981, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors established the Hazardous Materials Control Program in the Department of Health Services for the inspection of businesses generating hazardous waste. In 1991, the program merged into the Fire Department and it became the Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD). All Hazardous Material Specialists are sworn Los Angeles County Deputy Health Officers.

The **Fire Prevention Division** is under the supervision of the County's Fire Marshal and the Deputy Fire Marshal. The Fire Prevention Division focuses on educating the community about the benefits of proper safety practices and identifying and eliminating all types of hazardous conditions, which pose a threat to life, the environment and property. The Fire Department covers a diverse and unique area of responsibilities as related to Fire Prevention. Widespread and diverse activities of commercial, industrial and residential development and operations are processed and inspected. New processes and products must be analyzed and codes and inspections kept current. Numerous and widespread fires must be investigated and the information reentered into the system to update and improve the safety of the community and our personnel. The Fire Prevention Division is responsible for conducting plan checks for building, processes and fire extinguishing systems. The Division coordinates with Building and Safety officials, Federal, State, City and County officials the implementation of the building (Wildland Urban Interface and Chapter 7A) and the County Fire code, Title 32.

The **Fire Prevention Special Units Section** is comprised of seven separate specialized units:

Petroleum/Chemical Unit conducts fire safety inspections and issue permits for major plants manufacturing, using and storing hazardous materials and explosives.

Schools and Institutions Unit conducts annual fire/life safety inspections in all public, private, and parochial schools, private and community colleges, child day care centers, acute and convalescent care hospitals, surgery centers, outpatient dialysis clinics, residential care facilities, assisted living centers, adult day facilities, local detention facilities and jails, county detention camps, and organized church and school camps.

Fire Investigation Unit conducts investigations of major alarm fires and other fires to determine the cause or investigate suspected arson. They interview witnesses, collect evidence, write reports, and conduct training programs for Departmental personnel.

Codes & Ordinances Unit conducts research, answers requests for information and maintains the Department's legal and historic library. They propose code changes to the Uniform Fire Code and Uniform Building Code and meet with architects and other government officials.

County Facilities Unit is responsible for plan check and field inspection activity for new construction projects for many of the 36 Los Angeles County Departments. They act as the Department's liaison and/or represent county facilities outside of our jurisdiction, such as the Disney Concert Hall and the LAC-USC Medical Center reconstruction and addition.

The **Fire Prevention Engineering Section** consists of the following:

Building Plan Check Unit has the responsibilities of performing nonstructural fire safety plan review and approving architectural plans for various complex occupancies.

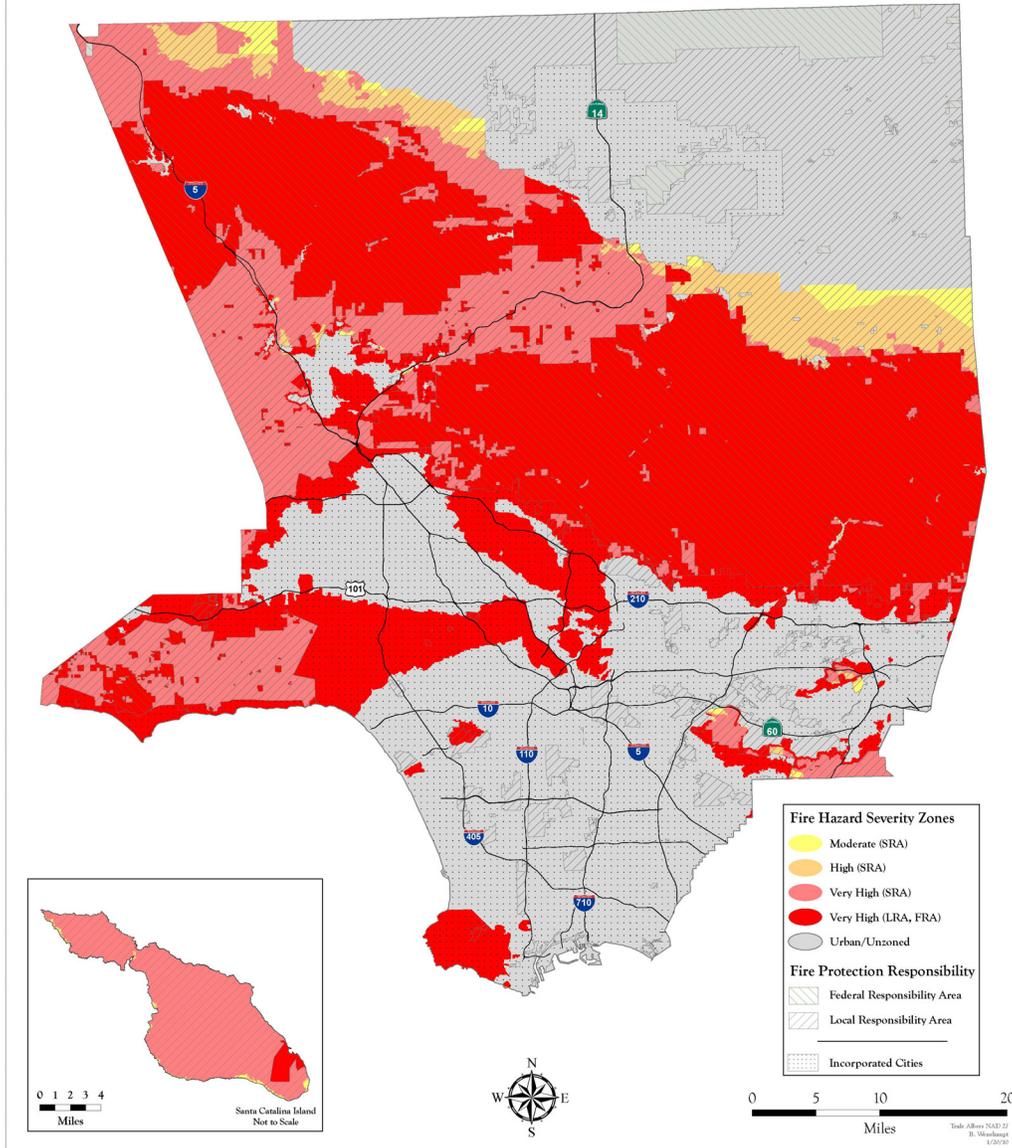
Fire Sprinkler Plan Check Unit is responsible for providing plan review service for all structures requiring an automatic fire sprinkler system, fire pump and on-site hydrants. They also review and approve all types of fire protection systems.

Fire Alarm Unit performs plan review services on all structures requiring a fire alarm or smoke management systems. They review and approve all types of fire alarm systems and assist with on-site inspections and testing of complex alarm and smoke management systems.

State Law requires the use of ignition resistant building methods and materials as a measure to reduce structure ignitability for new buildings located in any Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) within SRA, any local agency VHFHSZ (very high fire hazard severity zone), or any Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area designated by the enforcing agency. The County of Los Angeles Fire Department staff refers to the most current and adopted County of Los Angeles Fire Hazard Severity Zone maps to identify the Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Areas for the unincorporated County



# Los Angeles County Fire Hazard Severity Zones



Fire Hazard Severity Zones in Los Angeles County

The **Forestry Division** Since its inception in 1911, the Forestry Division of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department has been involved in the conservation and protection of natural resources through its forestry programs. The Forestry Division is comprised of three sections: Operations, Natural Resources, and Brush Clearance. The employees of the Forestry Division serve the citizens by using their knowledge to preserve and enhance the environment for the benefit of all residents of Los Angeles County. The Forestry Division is responsible for the review of environmental documents related to development and protection of oak tree resources, development of vegetation management projects, coordination of wildland fire planning, enforcement of the Department's brush clearance program, review of fuel modification plans, support to Fire Safe Councils and implementation of the California Strategic Fire Plan.

The **Forestry Division's Environmental Review Unit** works with the County of Los Angeles Department of Regional Planning in implementing existing environmental ordinances. The unit personnel review all County Oak Tree Permit applications submitted to the Department of Regional Planning and develop recommendations for implementation. Additionally, the unit personnel produce environmental documentation and recommendations such as non-significant impact documents, negative declarations and mitigation measures consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)

mandates for construction projects and developments. The Environmental Review Unit ensures that the statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division are addressed in the project planning phase.

The **Brush Clearance Program** is a joint effort between the County of Los Angeles Fire Department and the County of Los Angeles Department of Agricultural Commissioner/Weights and Measures, Weed Hazard and Pest Abatement Bureau (Weed Abatement Division). This unified enforcement legally declares both improved and unimproved properties a public nuisance, and where necessary, requires the clearance of hazardous vegetation. These measures create "Defensible Space" for effective fire protection of property, life and the environment. The Department's Brush Clearance Unit enforces the Fire Codes as it relates to brush clearance on improved parcels, coordinates inspections and compliance efforts with fire station personnel, and provides annual brush clearance training to fire station personnel.

The **Fuel Modification Unit** objective is to create the Defensible Space necessary for effective fire protection in newly constructed and/or remodeled homes within the Department's Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ). Fuel modification reduces the radiant and convective heat, and provides valuable defensible space for firefighters to make an effective stand against an approaching fire front. Fuel modification zones are strategically placed as a buffer to open space, or areas of natural vegetation and generally would occur surrounding the perimeter of a subdivision, commercial development, or isolated development of a single-family dwelling.

The fuel modification plan identifies specific zones within a property which are subject to fuel modification. A fuel modification zone is a strip of land where combustible native or ornamental vegetation has been modified and/or partially or totally replaced with drought-tolerant, low-fuel-volume plants. The County of Los Angeles Fuel Modification Guidelines can be found at <http://fire.lacounty.gov/Forestry/PDF/Fuel%20Modification%20Plan%20Guidelines%208-10-11.pdf>

The Forestry Division's Fuel Modification Unit provides guidelines and reviews the landscape and irrigation plans submitted by the property owner for approval before construction or remodeling of a structure. The fuel modification plans vary in complexity and reflect the fire history, the amount and type of vegetation, the arrangement of the fuels, topography, local weather patterns, and construction, design and placement of structures.

The Forestry Division's **Fire Plan Unit** is in charge of implementing the California Strategic Fire Plan in Los Angeles County . The State Board of Forestry and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) have drafted a comprehensive document for wildland fire protection in California. The planning process defines a level of service measurement, considers assets at risk, incorporates the cooperative inter-dependent relationships of wildland fire protection providers, provides for public stakeholder involvement, and creates a fiscal framework for policy analysis.

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department is one of six Contract Counties that maintain a contractual relationship with CAL FIRE and utilizes the California Strategic Fire Plan within Los Angeles County as the primary wildland fire protection plan. This is the first statewide fire plan developed in concert between the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and CAL FIRE. The 2010 Strategic Fire Plan builds upon the concept first developed in the 1996 California Fire Plan. The 2010 Strategic Fire Plan is written so that each goal builds upon the previous one. Over time, each supporting objective will have measurement criteria to evaluate accomplishments and related effectiveness. Public Resources Code §4114 and §4130 authorize the Board to establish a fire plan which, among other things, establishes the levels of statewide fire protection services for State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands. These levels of service recognize other fire protection resources at the federal and local level that collectively provide a regional and statewide emergency response capability. In addition, California's integrated mutual aid fire protection system provides fire protection services through automatic and mutual aid agreements for fire incidents across all ownerships.

The most effective way to limit damage and loss due to wildfire is to prevent all but the most blatant ignitions due to arson or unforeseeable circumstances. The focus of the entire Department is on prevention through educational programs, development and enforcement of fire codes and building codes in the Fire Hazard Severity Zones, Pre-Fire Planning, Vegetation Management, Brush Clearance, Environmental Review and Fuel Modification Programs. These programs are focused on awareness and mitigation of fire causes, fire spread potential, total costs and effects of fire damage associated with the protection of life, property and the environment. The Department's Fire Plan Unit coordinates the efforts and activities of these programs with the intent of creating efficient and timely Pre-Fire Management projects.

## - INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

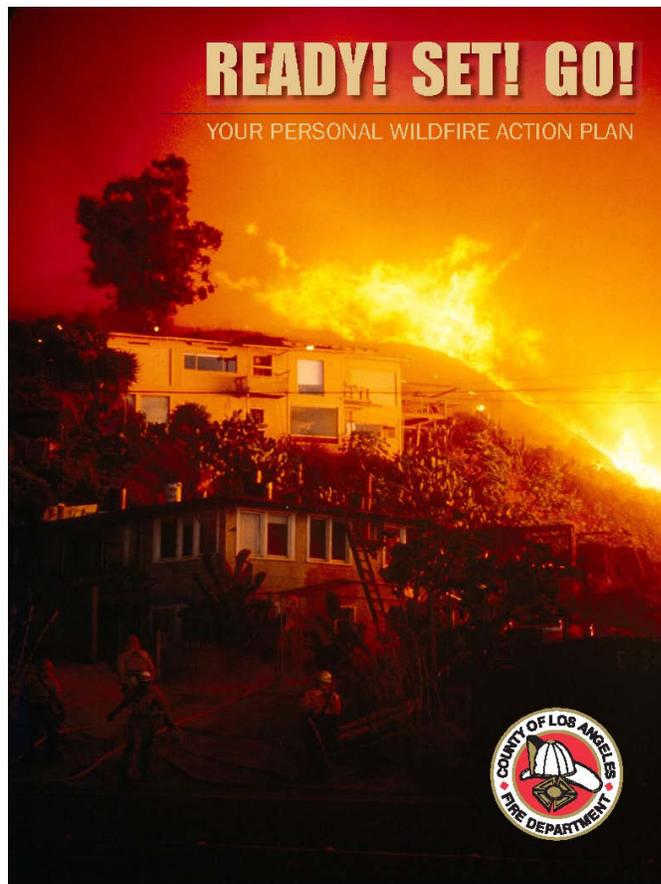
The Public Information Officer develops specific programs, educational materials, and public statements. Ultimately public education is the responsibility of all members of the Fire Department. Each section interacts with the public and is responsible for increasing the public's awareness of wildfire safety and preparedness. Through public involvement and collaboration, positive relationships are fostered throughout the County. The Department uses several publications to provide safety information to the citizens of the County of Los Angeles. Among them are:

Ready! Set! Go!: <http://fire.lacounty.gov/SafetyPreparedness/ReadySetGo/pdf/Ready%20Set%20Go%2009.pdf>  
Arson Watch And Resident Education (A.W.A.R.E.): <http://fire.lacounty.gov/ProgramsEvents/PDFs/A.W.A.R.E.pdf>  
Exit Drills In The Home (E.D.I.T.H.): <http://fire.lacounty.gov/FirePrevention/PDFs/EDITH.pdf>  
Water Awareness Training for Children in the Home (W.A.T.C.H.):  
<http://fire.lacounty.gov/ProgramsEvents/PDFs/W.A.T.C.H.%20in%20English.pdf>  
4th of July Safety Tips: [http://fire.lacounty.gov/PressRoom/PDFs/fw\\_english.pdf](http://fire.lacounty.gov/PressRoom/PDFs/fw_english.pdf)  
Be Flood Aware: <http://fire.lacounty.gov/ProgramsEvents/PDFs/storm.pdf>  
Brush Clearance: <http://fire.lacounty.gov/PressRoom/PDFs/Brush%20Clearance%20Tips.pdf>  
Community Emergency Response Team (CERT): <http://fire.lacounty.gov/ProgramsEvents/PECERT.asp>  
County of Los Angeles Fuel Modification Guidelines:  
<http://fire.lacounty.gov/Forestry/PDF/Fuel%20Modification%20Plan%20Guidelines%208-10-11.pdf>

For a complete list of the Department's public education materials; please visit:  
<http://fire.lacounty.gov/ProgramsEvents/PEPublicEducation.asp>

For a complete list of wildland urban interface fire prevention education materials; please visit:  
<http://fire.lacounty.gov/Forestry/Forestry.asp>

**Additional Wildland Urban Interface information and brochures are available through the Forestry Division's Interpretive Unit at (818) 890-5723**



## **-FIRE PLAN**

### **FIRE SUPPRESSION PHILOSOPHY**

As mentioned in other areas of this document, "initial attack" is the focus of all wildfire suppression activities for the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. With so much emphasis placed on quickly extinguishing all wildfires, it might seem that all fire in the wildland is a bad thing. Quite to the contrary, fire is absolutely a necessary element in the County's ecosystem. Since too many assets are at risk to allow the natural occurrence of wildfire, prescribed or controlled burns must take the place of naturally occurring wildfire.

The human element is always the number one priority for all fire suppression efforts. Many rules and guidelines have been developed to stress firefighter and public safety during wildfires. These rules and guidelines can be helpful for the layperson to understand why firefighters may say or do certain things related to wildfire. Some of these rules and guidelines are: "The Ten Standard Firefighting Orders," "The Eighteen Watch out Situations," "Common Denominators of Fire Behavior on Tragedy and Near-miss Forest Fires," "LCES - Lookouts, Communications, Escape Routes, Safety Zones," "Look Up, Look Down, Look Around." With all wildfires, certain strategic and tactical actions must take place. From the time of alarm to the abandonment or closure of a wildfire, one single unified entity must be in command of the incident. To accomplish this, all fire agencies in the County and in the State, for that matter, use the Incident Command System (ICS). Tactically all wildfires must be anchored, which means that a secure starting point is established from which all other strategic and tactical decision-making can build upon.

Once a wildfire grows beyond the initial attack stage where there are assets at risk, particularly in the wildland/urban interface/intermix, two additional dimensions are added to the already complex nature of wildland firefighting. In addition to anchoring and flanking the fire, to narrow the flame front, firefighting resources must also be committed to protecting assets out in front of the fire and resources must be left to protect assets from residual embers and fire after the fire passes through.

### **THE FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEM**

Although fire is a necessary component of the local ecosystem, in most cases, unchecked wildfire is no longer a viable fire/fuel management option in Los Angeles County. Mostly because of population growth, assets at risk have interfaced and intermixed with the wildlands to such an extent that uncontrolled fires must be quickly extinguished. Therefore, at the heart of the wildfire protection system in Los Angeles County is an aggressive initial attack firefighting strategy.

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department actually has a dual fire protection role. The County of Los Angeles Fire Department provides structural fire protection and rescue services to the Los Angeles County unincorporated areas and contract cities.

### **PRIORITY AREAS**

The fire plan assessment process utilizes weather, assets at risk, fuels and input from the various Regions, Bureaus, Divisions and Battalions to help target critical areas and prioritize projects. Fire plan assessments aside, it is extremely difficult if not impossible to achieve fuel reduction on the ground without community involvement and stakeholders, whether that be in the form of a community fire safe councils, homeowners association or other organized forum. The Fire Plan Assessment with its science-based approach is evaluated in conjunction with other intangibles to arrive at a "reasonable" assessment of the needs and likelihood of accomplishing a project. The current assessment indicates that there is a significant need throughout the foothills, especially in the urban interface areas of Los Angeles County for hazardous fuel reduction.

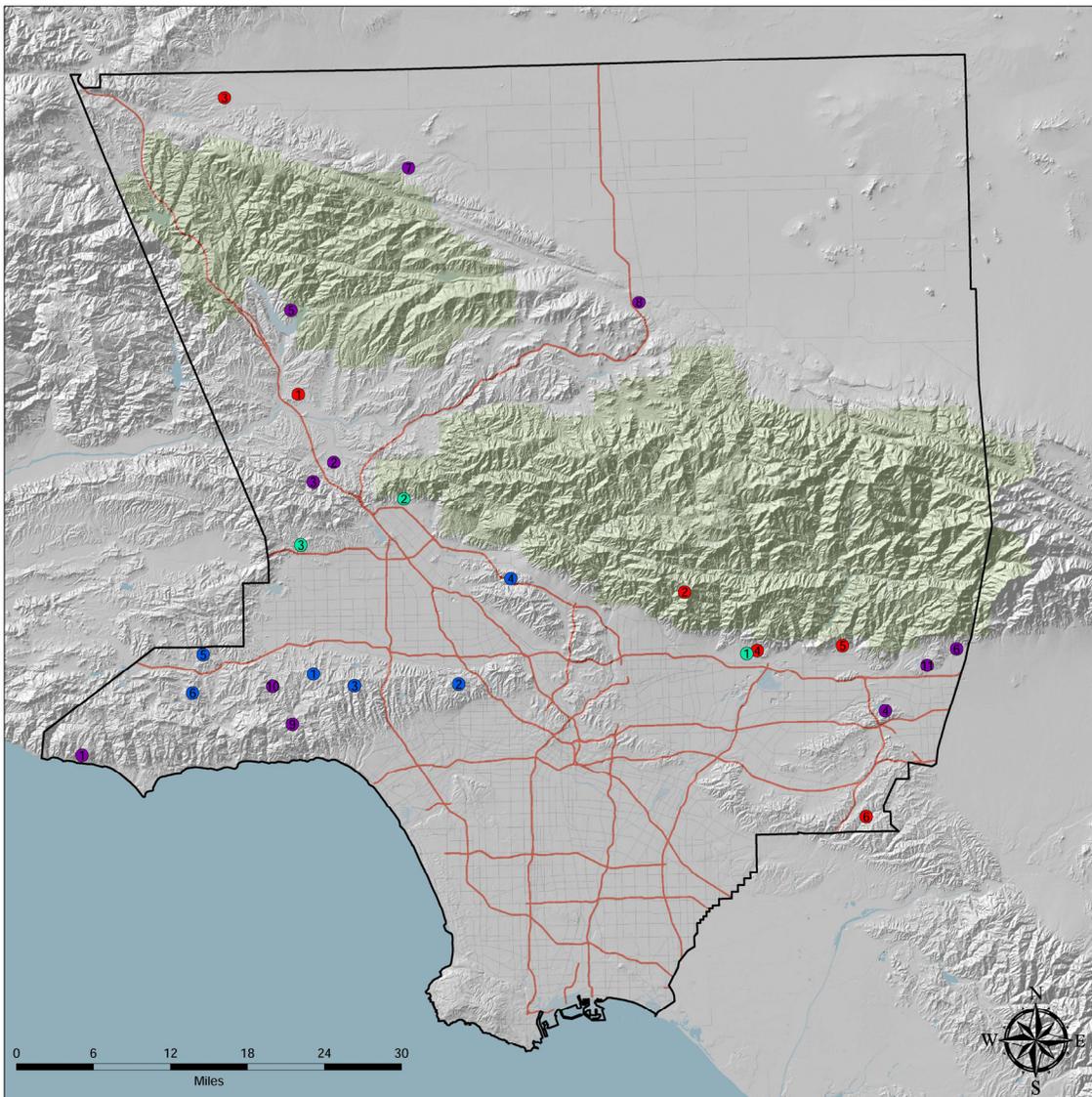
Each of Department's battalions were consulted for pre-fire projects they consider important to achieving their goals of reducing the potential and impact of catastrophic fire. Projects are assigned a relative ranking by the Department's Vegetation Management Task Force. Theoretically, the project with the highest hazard would have the first priority for funding of any given project or other pre-fire program. However, there are a number of circumstances where other than the highest priority would be given preference to a project. Circumstances when this might occur include the following: the Department's current commitment to an existing pre-fire project, community participation necessary to complete a project, preparatory work and ease of instituting the project, project type and match for grant funding and simply sharing the wealth and commitment toward pre-fire projects between the Department and communities. The Fire Plan Unit function is to coordinate countywide projects, and projects occurring between battalions, and provides direction in the planning of pre-fire projects.

## B: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

As the population of Los Angeles County increases, further expansion of residential areas into the Wildland-Urban interface is inevitable. Panoramic views, wildlife, fresh air, and solitude are just a few of the reasons that tempt people to locate in the brush areas of Los Angeles County. The rewards may be numerous, but the increased risk of wildland fires, flooding, and erosion poses a serious threat to life and property.

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department created the Vegetation Management Program in 1979 to develop strategies for responding to the growing fire hazard problem. These include:

- An ongoing effort to analyze the history and effects of wildland fires in Los Angeles County
- Development of Fuel management projects with stakeholders, including cities, community groups, and other agencies; Experimentation with different methods of reducing or removing fuels in fire prone areas as well as the evaluation of the environmental impacts and effects of these practices.
- Vegetation management, as it relates to wildland fire, refers to the total or partial removal of high fire hazard grasses, shrubs, or trees. In addition to fire hazard reduction, vegetation management has other benefits. These include increased water yields, improved habitat for wildlife, reduction of invasive exotic plant species, and open access for recreational purposes. Vegetation Management in the Wildland-Urban Interface of Los Angeles County.
- The vegetation management fire hazard reduction projects in Los Angeles County are implemented countywide.



### VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PROJECTS 2011-2012



#### OPERATIONAL PROJECTS

1. Wayside Spring Drills 2011 NOE  
C, PF - 75 Acres
2. Mount Wilson Fuels Reduction NOE  
C - 49 Acres
3. Holiday Lake Habitat Improvement NOE  
PF - 3 Acres
4. Duarte Eucalyptus Removal NOE  
C - 16 Acres
5. Glendora VMP\*  
B, C, M, PF - 1,640 Acres
6. Tonner Canyon VMP\*  
B, C, M, PF - 1,246 Acres

#### PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT

1. Bradbury-Duarte FEMA Grant  
B, C, M - 145 Acres
2. Browns Canyon VMP  
C, PF - 100 Acres
3. Olive View Eucalyptus Removal NOE  
C - 25 Acres

#### PROPOSED PROJECTS

1. Charmlee Park VMP  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
2. Newhall Ranch VMP  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
3. Stevens Ranch VMP  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
4. Bonelli Park VMP  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
5. Castaic Park VMP  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
6. Claremont Hills Wilderness FEMA Grant  
B, C, M - xxx Acres
7. Fairmont Res. Tricolored Blackbird NOE  
PF - xxx Acres
8. Lake Palmdale Tricolored Blackbird NOE  
PF - xxx Acres
9. Topanga FEMA Grant  
B, C, M - xxx Acres
10. Old Topanga FEMA Grant  
B, C, M - xxx Acres
11. San Dimas FEMA Grant  
B, C, M - xxx Acres

#### INTERAGENCY PROPOSED PROJECTS

1. Santa Maria VMP (LAFD)  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
2. Franklin Canyon VMP (LAFD)  
B, C, M, PF - xxx Acres
3. Encino Res. VMP (LAFD)  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
4. Tranquil Pt. VMP (LAFD)  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres
5. Cheesebro Canyon (NPS)  
C, M - xxx Acres
6. April Road VMP (MRCA)  
C, M, PF - xxx Acres

E. Corbett  
LICAFD  
VMU  
818.890.5720  
012211  
NAD 83

R - Biological  
C - Crew  
M - Mechanical  
PF - Prescribed Fire  
\* - Pending Approval