

SECTION III: VALUES

A: VALUES AT RISK

Assets susceptible to fire impacts are identified in the Fire Plan as air quality, rangelands, recreation, agriculture, structures, timber, water and watersheds, wildlife and habitat, and other resources (cultural, historical and scenic). The focus of this plan and relative importance of each Asset has been determined by reviewing input from local stakeholders and CAL FIRE managers. The Fresno-Kings Unit Fire Plan has been engineered with these issues in mind.

The priority Assets at Risk in the Unit are Rangelands, Forests, Agriculture and Watershed. Cattle ranches encompass hundreds of thousands of acres of rangelands in the Unit while most of the floor of the San Joaquin Valley has various crops. Forests remain valued assets and are critical to the social and environmental well-being of the Unit. Agriculture is a big industry in the Unit. The Agriculture businesses that support the industry are critical to the economic engine that drives the local economy.

There are several major watersheds in the Unit that help provide water for domestic and agriculture purposes and without them there would be devastating consequences for the local economy. The San Joaquin and Kings Rivers in particular have hydroelectric facilities that provide power to the State grid. Large and damaging fires near the San Joaquin and Kings Rivers would potentially cause disastrous effects on the quality and quantity of water available for drinking supply.

B: COMMUNITIES

During the spring of 2001, a field validation process was conducted in the Fresno-Kings Unit to identify and validate communities at risk. This process was conducted based on a request from Congress, through the FY 2001 Appropriation Bill, that called for a list of "...all urban wildland interface communities, as defined by the Secretaries, within the vicinity of Federal lands that are at high risk from wildfire, as defined by the Secretaries". The following criteria were provided to help identify communities at risk:

- *Interface* exists where humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuels.
- *Community* is a defined area where residents live and are provided services such as fire protection, water, law enforcement, etc.
- *Vicinity* of Federal lands is defined as within the range in which fires can travel.

- *High-risk* exists where there is land condition that is characterized by high-risk fire regimes.

After receiving input from the USDA Forest Service and National Park Service, the following communities in Fresno and Kings Counties were identified as *Communities at Risk* and were placed on the National list in the Federal Register.

Auberry	Dunalp	Piedra
Avenal **	Friant **	Pinehurst
Big Creek *	Hume *	Prather
Big Sandy	Lakeshore *	Shaver Lake
Dinkey Creek*	Meadow Lakes	Squaw Valley
	Miramonte	Tollhouse

* *located in Federal Direct Protection Area*

** *Located in Local Responsibility Area*

The significance of a Community at Risk designation has become apparent recently with most Federal proposals for wildfire protection requesting information about Communities at Risk in the area of the proposed project to help rank the proposal.