

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

Fire has shaped ecosystems throughout time; people and ecosystems have evolved with the presence of fire. For many years fire has been aggressively excluded to protect both public and private investments and to prevent what is considered the destruction of forest, savannahs, shrub lands and grasslands.

The Orange County Fire Authority and its predecessor agencies historically have been recognized as a premier wildland fire agency. Through the history of the fire service in Orange County, this agency has been charged with the responsibility to effectively manage wildland fire prevention and suppression activities in an effort to protect life and property, reduce the financial loss to the communities and contain the increasing costs of fire suppression.

This Unit Plan outlines a comprehensive program designed to reduce total government costs and citizen losses from wildland fire in Orange County. To accomplish this OCFA continues to develop processes to address such factors as:

- Firefighter and public safety
- Wildland urban interface issues
- Prescribed fire
- Suppression
- Preparedness
- Protection
- Priorities
- Cooperation

Throughout the process, the plan must:

- Consider and incorporate the cooperative interdependent relationships of wildland fire protection providers
- Provide for public stakeholder involvement
- Create a fiscal framework for policy analysis

Further, the Orange County Fire Authority's Unit Fire Plan will develop and foster partnerships to gain concurrence on plan implementation. The strategy, among other things, will:

- Include alternatives to reduce total costs and increase fire protection effectiveness
- Allow wildland fire service providers to focus on meaningful solutions for identified problem areas
- Identify cost-effective pre-fire management investments to reduce taxpayer and citizen losses from wildland fire.

Key Objectives

- Establish any relationships, partnerships and councils necessary to reduce wildfire ignitions, risks and losses by emphasizing community-level resources and solutions. Leverage partners with common interests/or motivations
- Develop and sustain a portfolio of high-impact, least-cost, stakeholder-driven solutions for reducing wildfire ignitions, risks and losses by creating and sustain new solutions, eliminate low-impact solutions, streamline high-cost solutions
- Develop the Unit Fire Plan, using the key elements identified by CAL FIRE and supporting the county and smaller communities with the development of their local CWPP
- Engage collaborative partners to lead and drive the effort to protect communities from wildfire. OCFA's role is transitioned into a support-oriented role, focusing primarily on active participation, facilitation and evaluation of program results
- Ensure the community understands, accepts responsibility and takes necessary action to mitigate wildfire ignitions and risk, thereby preventing lives and property from being lost or damaged in wildfires
- Develop a regularly publicize motivational performance measurements in order to facilitate change in cultural attitudes, systematic mitigation of risk
- Institute a change in local cultural attitude about wildfire risks from apathy and unawareness to alertness and empowerment through mass marketing and outreach