

UNIT DESCRIPTION

Orange County is located in Southern California and it is the smallest county in Southern California with a total area of 947.98 square miles, of which 789.40 square miles (83.27%) is land and 158.57 square miles (16.73%) is water (refer to Exhibits 1 and 2) .

Orange County is bordered on the southwest by the Pacific Ocean, on the north by Los Angeles County, on the northeast and east by San Bernardino County and Riverside County, and on the southeast by San Diego County. Public lands within or adjacent to the county that play a role in the management of natural resources are the Cleveland National Forest, Camp Pendleton Marine Corp Base, Chino Hills State Park, Crystal Cove State Park and a variety of County Parks. There are several other Federal, State and local government land holdings that do not have a role in this fire plan.

The northwestern portion of the county is within the coastal plain of the Los Angeles Basin while the southeastern end rises into the foothills of the Santa Ana Mountains. Most of the population resides in one of two shallow coastal valleys that lie in the basin, the Santa Ana Valley and the Saddleback Valley.

Vegetation types dominating the open spaces are annual grasses, pine/grass mix, woodland, desert brush, riparian, timber, coastal sage scrub and chaparral. The general condition of the vegetation covers a broad spectrum from healthy to decadent; from new growth to old growth. Approximately 60% of the wildland vegetation has experienced at least one catastrophic fire within the last decade.

Topographically, Orange County rises from sea level along the Pacific Ocean to the Santa Ana Mountains, located within the Cleveland National Forest. The highest peaks within the Santa Ana Mountains are Santiago Peak (5,689 feet) and Modjeska Peak (5,489 feet). Another prominent topographic feature is Loma Ridge that is located west and parallel to the Santa Ana Mountains through the central part of the county; Loma Ridge is separated from the Santa Ana Mountains by Santiago Canyon.

Orange County has an extensive history of large fire occurrence that is concentrated in areas prone to Santa Ana winds that blow during the late summer and fall months. Additionally, immediately following the Santa Ana winds, a strong on-shore flow develops as weather systems pass and the Santa Ana winds dissipate. Areas burned range anywhere from a few hundred acres to tens of thousands

The Priority Landscapes outlined by the California's Forests and Rangelands: 2010 Assessment identifies Orange County has eleven (11) landscapes which are considered immediate priorities. The following were selected that best identify current problems, problem areas and potential strategies (refer to Exhibits 11 through 21):

1. Population Growth and Development Impact
2. Preventing Wildfire Threats to Maintain Ecosystem Health
3. Restoring Wildfire Impacted Areas to Maintain Ecosystem Health
4. Preventing Wildfire Threats for Community Safety
5. Water Supply
6. Water Quality

7. Community Wildfire Planning
8. Conserving Green Infrastructure
9. Managing Green Infrastructure
10. Threats to Forest Carbon from Wildfire, Insects and Disease
11. Threats to Forest Carbon from Development

Orange County Fire Authority's priorities as related to its Fire Plan is the demonstrated in the development of the Ready, Set, Go! (R, S, G) Program. RSG is intended to be OCFA's comprehensive wildfire protection program, incorporating multiple integrated strategies to address wildfire risks. One component of R,S,G is the piloting of a community wildfire hardening project in the unincorporated area of Cowan Heights. This project has been funded in part through a FEMA grant and is expected to last for three years.

UNIT PREPAREDNESS AND FIREFIGHTING CAPABILITIES

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Orange County Fire Authority takes pride in the fact that our 71 fire stations provide a full spectrum of emergency services for 23 incorporated cities, 16 unincorporated communities, Orange County Parks, two (2) State Parks and portions of the Cleveland National Forest Trabuco Ranger District.

Orange County Fire Authority has wildland firefighting apparatus positioned at 26 of the 71 stations. Apparatus consists of Type III Engines, Type IV Engines with CAFS designated as Patrols, Type I I-Zone Engines, Type II Water Tenders and Dozers. Additionally, OCFA has a permanent Handcrew and helicopters with water dropping capabilities. Staffing levels provide for a full complement of personnel 24 hours per day 365 days a year (refer to Exhibits 3-8).

OCFA serves 23 of Orange County's 34 cities. Mutual Aid agreements are maintained with these cities, which include: Anaheim, Brea, Costa Mesa, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, La Habra, Laguna Beach, Newport Beach and Orange. In addition to these Orange County Cities, OCFA maintains Mutual Aid agreements with neighboring agencies such as: State of California, U.S. Forest Service, Long Beach, LA County, San Diego County, Pendleton Marine Base, Riverside County and San Bernardino County.