

Executive Summary

The San Mateo & Santa Cruz Unit's (CZU) Fire Management Plan is an account of our intentions towards reducing the total financial and emotional costs of wildland fires in these two counties.

We develop projects and activities that are designed to protect the community's assets that are at risk by reviewing existing wildland fuel types and locations, the area's fire weather history, and fire "starts" and our success at extinguishing those fires using available Initial Attack resources. CDF, local government, community, and concerned industry participants can utilize specific mitigations customized for each identified problem area. Fuel reduction may be the most advantageous technique in some instances; enhanced enforcement of fire clearance ordinances, establishing fuel breaks, or implementing fire resistant construction standards may be most effective in others.

The four layers of data used to illustrate and support the goals of this plan are Level of Service; Assets at Risk, Fire History, and Fire Weather History (they are further described later in this document). The process of validating this information is ongoing and will be so as long as vegetation continues to grow and development continues to occur in previously undeveloped wildland areas. CZU Fire Planning staff has identified the following concerns:

- Fire Weather History Layer- Local knowledge of actual weather (wind speed and direction, ambient and surface temperature, and humidity) conditions at fire scenes contradicts the available scientific data obtained from our Remote Automated Weather System (RAWS) sites. Repositioning our La Honda and Corralitos RAWS should result in the reporting of more representative conditions.
- Level of Service Layer (LOS) – CZU Fire Planning and Fire Prevention staff are combining efforts with the Unit Emergency Command Center to more accurately plot and illustrate the location of fire starts. This part of the LOS layer will be an essential component of the Unit Ignition Management Plan when considering prevention and education efforts.
- Assets at Risk – Further cooperation with County government and local agencies needs to be applied to the identification of assets process.

Every Battalion in the Unit participates in the implementation of the Unit Fire Management Plan. In most cases, the involvement is centered on the operational and traditional "prevention" activities such as LE38 inspections, community education, and enforcement. CZU Management is working with Pre-Fire Engineering staff to develop enhanced inclusion of field personnel into the development process of the Fire Plan.

CDF staffs, through contract, are the Fire Protection Planners in both San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties. This function has facilitated the initiation and implementation of Urban/Wildland Interface construction

codes in both jurisdictions. The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors has completed the public hearing process required for adoption and the same process should occur in San Mateo County prior to the end of this year. With that behind us, staff can focus on issues in conjunction with County general plan issues.

This plan's development and implementation depends on the continued fostering of the cooperative effort internally within CZU programs and externally with our public and private partners. The work that we are able to accomplish now will certainly enhance the safety of our communities.

John E. Ferreira, Chief
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