

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) and local government fire departments have come to recognize that the expansion and excessive buildup of flammable vegetation within “ wildland urban interface “ has created a potential for devastating loss of life, residential, commercial property and forest resources.

The San Mateo & Santa Cruz Unit has developed the Fire Management Plan (FMP) to implement the statewide fire plan at the local level. The overall goal of this plan is to *reduce total wildfire costs and losses* from wildland fire by protecting assets at risk through focused vegetation management projects and aggressive “Fire Safe Defense Awareness” Programs throughout the San Mateo & Santa Cruz Unit.

The major components of the plan include:

- Creation of local forums to determine what the fire problem is through input from citizens, community groups, local agencies and other stakeholders.
- Identification of assets at risk, enabling the stakeholder forums and the Unit to set priorities for vegetation management project work. These assets include citizen and firefighter safety, structures, watersheds, wildlife and habitat, timber or unique areas of cultural or historic significance, and air quality.
- Development of wildfire protection zones through vegetation management projects that reduce the risks of large damaging wildland fires.
- Development and implementation of vegetation management projects cooperatively with stakeholder forums. Projects may include a combination of mechanical clearing or prescribed fire.

This document is a dynamic working plan that will be reviewed and updated periodically, yet is flexible enough to meet the needs of the Unit. The intent is to keep it simple, easy to understand and, above all, a “guide”.

SAN MATEO & SANTA CRUZ UNIT PROFILE

The San Mateo & Santa Cruz Unit covers an area of 1000 square miles and protects 426,230 acres of State Responsibility Area (SRA). The Unit’s western boundary is the Pacific Ocean, to the north San Francisco, to the east the San Francisco Bay area, Santa Clara County and to the south the Pajaro River.

San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties lie completely within the Santa Cruz Mountains. The main axis runs in a general northwest – southeast direction. From just south of San Bruno Mountain in San Mateo County to Mt. Madonna in Santa Cruz County, the ridgeline runs about 65 miles and contains the highest point of the range at Loma Prieta (3806 feet). Among the higher peaks are: Mount Umunhum (3442 feet); Castle Rock (3214 feet); Ben Lomond