

***Unit Strategic Fire Plan
Ventura County Fire Protection
District***



Table of Contents

SIGNATURE PAGE.....	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
SECTION I: UNIT OVERVIEW	4
UNIT DESCRIPTION	4
UNIT PREPAREDNESS AND FIREFIGHTING CAPABILITIES	13
SECTION II: COLLABORATION.....	21
COMMUNITY / AGENCIES / FIRE SAFE COUNCILS	21
SECTION III: VALUES.....	24
VALUES	24
COMMUNITIES	26
SECTION IV: PRE-FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES	28
FIRE PREVENTION	28
ENGINEERING AND STRUCTURE IGNITABILITY	30
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION	33
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT	37
SECTION V: PRE- FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS	44
DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS.....	44
APPENDIX A: PRE- FIRE PROJECTS.....	46
APPENDIX B: UNIT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	54
APPENDICES C-E	55
EXHIBITS: MAPS	67
SUPPLEMENT: 2013	69

SIGNATURE PAGE

Unit Strategic Fire Plan developed for Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFPD) [Return to Table of Contents](#)

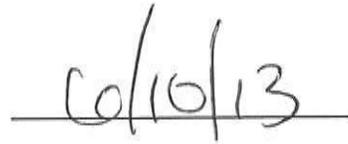
This Plan:

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties, Federal, State, City, and County agencies within the Unit have been consulted and are listed in the plan.
- Identifies and prioritizes pre fire and post fire management strategies and tactics meant to reduce the loss of values at risk within the Unit.
- Is intended for use as a planning and assessment tool only. It is the responsibility of those implementing the projects to ensure that all environmental compliance and permitting processes are met as necessary.

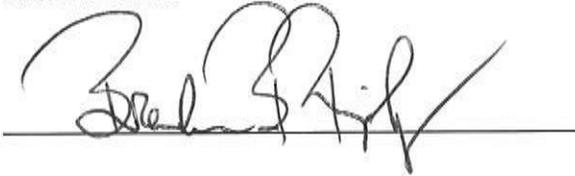


Unit Chief

Mark Lorenzen

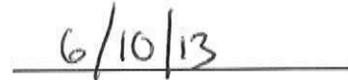


Date



Pre-Fire Engineer

Brendan Ripley



Date

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ventura County Fire Protection District (Ventura County Unit) is one of the contract counties that maintains a contractual relationship with CAL FIRE. A Unit Plan that is part of the California Strategic Fire Plan is used within Ventura County.

The State of California's Strategic Fire Plan creates a statewide framework for reducing losses resulting from wildfires. With an emphasis on prevention and pre-fire planning, the intent of the Strategic Fire Plan is to reduce both firefighting costs and property loss.

The Ventura County Unit seeks to achieve these same goals locally with a Unit Plan that works with stakeholders and cooperators to create programs, policies and procedures that will make the residents of Ventura County safer.

The Healthy Forest Restoration Act (HFRA) enacted by the U.S. Congress on January 7, 2003, established a protocol for the creation of a document that articulates a wildfire safety plan for communities at risk from wildland fires – a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).



This Unit Fire Plan serves as the CWPP for all of Ventura County and replaces the current CWPP prepared by the Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council dated March 9, 2010. As specified by the HFRA, this Unit Fire Plan/CWPP was developed in collaboration with local, County, State and federal agencies as well as various community organizations within Ventura County.

This Unit Fire Plan/CWPP is designed to be a “living” document in order to adapt to changes in the environment and the needs of the various stakeholders that it affects. This version of the Unit Fire Plan/CWPP was created using the approved CWPP for the Ventura County Fire Protection District and the Unit Fire Plan template provided by

CALFIRE. The information provided in this Unit Fire Plan has been updated to reflect administrative changes along with project plans and implementations.

With a commitment to fire prevention, hazard reduction and fuel management, the Ventura County Unit is working to create communities that are less at risk from a wildfire. By carefully managing native vegetation, creating defensible space, hardening homes and raising wildfire awareness, the Unit believes it is helping to prevent fires from occurring, keeping the ones that do occur smaller and reducing their severity. These efforts have the net result of reducing fire suppression costs and property loss, and keeping both residents and firefighters safer.

To support the Strategic Fire Plan, the Ventura County Unit Plan intends to:

- Analyze fuel beds, topography and fire history to identify both at-risk communities and the projects necessary to help protect them.
- Seek sources of funding to implement new and support ongoing vegetation management and fire prevention projects.
- Utilize CAL FIRE personnel and resources, in conjunction with other efforts, to assist with projects.
- Continue to educate the public on wildfire preparedness, defensible space, fire hazard reduction, fire-resistant construction and landscaping, and situational awareness.

With skilled firefighters, fuel modifications and Firewise communities, the Ventura County Unit is well-positioned to protect the residents of Ventura County and their environment against catastrophic fire conditions.

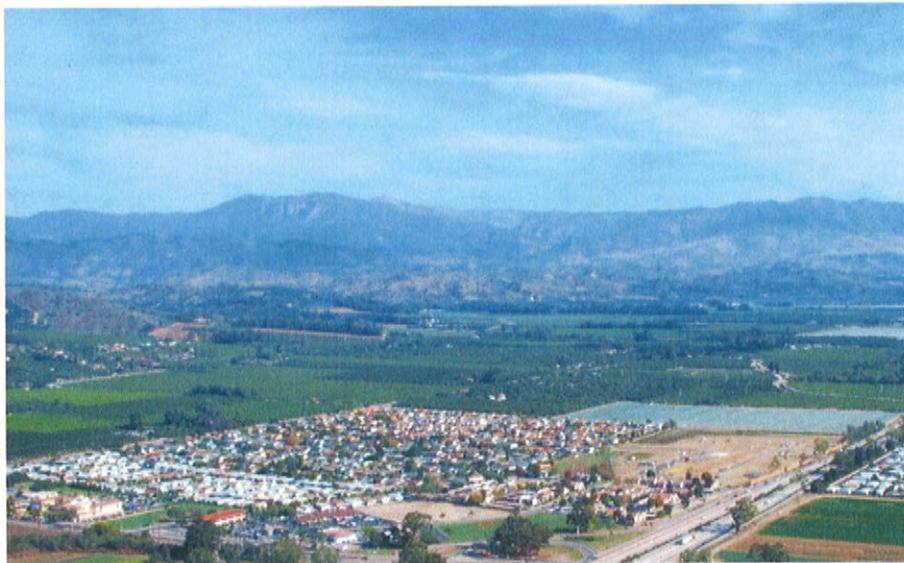
SECTION I: UNIT OVERVIEW

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The Ventura County Unit is located with its southern border along the Southern California coast between the counties of Los Angeles to the east, Santa Barbara to the west and Kern on the north. Ventura County has 42 miles of coastline and its elevation ranges from sea level to 8,831 feet at Mount Pinos in the Los Padres National Forest.

Ventura County was formed from a piece of Santa Barbara County on January 1, 1873, following state legislation that approved the split on March 22, 1872. The county seat is the city of Ventura and the county has a population of over 800,000. The Ventura County Unit provides fire services to the unincorporated areas of the county and six of its 10 incorporated cities.

Ventura County encompasses 1,198,720 acres (1,873 square miles) of which 353,161 acres (552 square miles) are State Responsibility Area (SRA).



The Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, parts of the Los Padres National Forest and the Channel Islands National Park are all located in Ventura County. The county is also home to Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu and Port Hueneme, and the deepwater Port of Hueneme.

The climate in Ventura County is Mediterranean. Average temperatures (highs) are 65 to 75 year-round, with freezing temperatures possible during the winter and highs of over 100 during the summer and early fall. Strong east winds (Santa Anas) are most prevalent during the late summer and early fall, but can occur at any time during the year, raising fire danger. The relatively short rainy season is mainly between December and April.

Major industries within the county include oil exploration and production, agriculture (greenhouse, row crop, citrus and avocado, and ranching), tourism, television and film production, and technology.

Traditional fire season in the Ventura County Unit starts in May or June. Coastal areas are frequently cooler during these months due to a marine influence and coastal fog, but temperatures inland can be much warmer. As the summer progresses into early fall, the fuel beds have typically reached critical moisture levels and the advent of east winds can produce catastrophic fire weather and seasonal drought.

Major wildfires have been documented as far back as 1898. Some of these fires remain among the largest to ever occur in the state of California. The Matilija Fire in 1932 burned more than 220,000 acres. The Wheeler Fire in 1985 consumed over 118,000 acres and the Day Fire in 2006 destroyed almost 163,000 acres.

VENTURA COUNTY FUEL BEDS

There are 10 identified fuel beds in Ventura County. Each is analyzed based on its topography, vegetation types, fire history and Assets at Risk.

CASITAS FUEL BED

The Casitas Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by the Pacific Ocean, on the north by Camino Cielo, on the east by Highway 33 and on the west by the Ventura/Santa Barbara county line. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass.

Assets at Risk include structures, oil fields, 911 emergency communication infrastructure, agricultural orchards and rangeland. Homes, ranches, and orchards along Highway 150 pose the most significant risk in the fuel bed and are also the most difficult to protect through fuel modification because of their sporadic placement. The Lake Casitas watershed is a low risk, high value community resource that needs consideration in the planning process. Oil production facilities dominate the interior canyons of the fuel bed south of Lake Casitas, east of Highway 33 and north of Highway 101.

This fuel bed has sustained six fires of over 300 acres. There are 20.53 miles of fire roads and 1.73 miles of utility roads maintained in this fuel bed.

MALIBU FUEL BED

Potrero Road borders the Malibu Fuel Bed on the north. It is bordered on the south by the Pacific Coast Highway, on the east by the Ventura/Los Angeles county line and on the west by Lewis Road. The Santa Monica Mountain Range is a feature of this fuel bed. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland in the drainages and on the north slopes. Chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass are dominant throughout the fuel bed.

Assets at Risk include structures located in narrow canyons with limited access. The fact that the majority of the structures at risk are scattered throughout the fuel bed makes large-scale vegetation management projects difficult. The 100-foot defensible space requirement ordered by the department's Fire Hazard Reduction Program is a key component of structure protection.

This fuel bed has sustained 14 fires of over 300 acres. Most recently, this fuel bed was affected by the 2013 Springs Fire. The fire started in the adjacent fuel bed (Thousand Oaks) and burned over 24,000 acres. There are 8.43 miles of ranch roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Carlisle Canyon Pre-Fire Plan, Yerba Buena Pre-Fire Plan.

OJAI FUEL BED

The Ojai Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by Santa Paula/Ojai Road (Highway 150), on the north by the Los Padres National Forest boundary, on the east by Santa Paula Creek and on the west by Highway 33. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland, light to medium brush, coastal sage scrub and grass.

Assets at Risk include structures, oil fields, agricultural orchards and rangeland. Many of the at-risk structures are located along the front country and others are in narrow canyons with limited access. The 100-foot defensible space requirement ordered by the department's Fire Hazard Reduction Program is a key component to structure protection in these areas. Orchards are mixed in with this development creating additional assets that are threatened in a wildfire.

This fuel bed has sustained seven fires of over 300 acres. There are 7.07 miles of fire roads and 4.22 miles of utility roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Upper Ojai Pre-Fire Plan, Ojai Front Pre-Fire Plan, Matilija Canyon Pre-Fire Plan, Wheeler Pre-Fire Plan.

SIMI FUEL BED

The Simi Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by Highway 101, on the north by Simi Valley, on the east by the San Fernando Valley (Los Angeles County) and on the west by Highway 23 and Olsen Road. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass. Recent fire activity has reduced the fuel load considerably in the Big Mountain Range north of the city of Simi Valley.

Assets at Risk are primarily structures. Single- and multi-family dwellings in the North Ranch and Oak Park areas are a specific concern due to their alignment with a Santa Ana (east) wind and heavy fuels. The majority of the land management/ownership for the open space belongs to the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA), Rancho Simi Park and Recreation, and Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA).

This fuel bed has sustained 20 fires of over 300 acres. There are 68 miles of fire roads and 30 miles of fuel breaks maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Box Canyon/Lilac Lane Pre-Fire Plan, Kevington Pre-Fire Plan, Bell Canyon Pre-Fire Plan.

THOUSAND OAKS FUEL BED

The Thousand Oaks Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by Potrero Road, on the north by Highway 118, on the east by the Highway 23 and on the west by the Oxnard Plains. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass.

Assets at Risk are primarily structures. Thousand Oaks is an urban area that has interface issues along its perimeter. Thousand Oaks has a great deal of open space which separates developed areas with hazardous fuels and, in some cases, steep terrain. This, coupled with diurnal west winds and seasonal Santa Ana (east) winds, make the area very vulnerable to the effects of wildland fire. The majority of the land management/ownership responsibility for the open spaces belongs to the Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency (COSCA) and the Mountains Recreation Conservation Authority (MRCA).

This fuel bed has sustained 11 fires of over 300 acres. Most recently, this fuel bed was affected by the 2013 Springs Fire. The fire started in the Thousand Oaks Fuel Bed and spread into the adjacent fuel bed (Malibu) and burned over 24,000 acres. There are 3.09 miles of fire roads, 8.95 miles of utility roads and one mile of ranch roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Wildwood Pre-Fire Plan, Ventu Park Pre-Fire Plan

FILLMORE FUEL BED

The Fillmore Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by Highway 126, on the north by the Los Padres National Forest, on the east by Hopper Canyon and on the west by Santa Paula Canyon. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of grass intermixed with chaparral and coastal sage scrub. Oak woodland can be found in the drainage bottoms and on the north-facing slopes. In addition, small stands of timber may be found at the upper elevations of the fuel bed in select drainages.

Assets at Risk include structures, rangeland, agriculture and oil production facilities. In addition, the Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge is located in the northeast portion of the fuel bed. Condor nesting sites dot the landscape throughout the area each year. Close collaboration with the biologists there and training help to promote safe operations on the refuge. The city of Fillmore borders the interface to the south and is vulnerable to both northwest and northeast winds.

This fuel bed has sustained 14 fires of over 300 acres. There are 10.96 miles of ranch roads and 2.8 miles of utility roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: North Pre-Fire Plan

OAK RIDGE FUEL BED

The Oak Ridge Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by the Simi Fuel Bed, on the north by the Santa Clara River, on the east by the Ventura/Los Angeles county line and on the west by Highway 23. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of sparse oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass.

Assets at Risk are primarily structures along the southern border, agricultural along the north and western borders, and rangeland within the interior of the fuel bed. Urban development over the past five years in the Simi Valley and Moorpark areas has increased the WUI threat within the fuel bed. The area is very vulnerable to wildland fire, especially during Santa Ana (east) wind conditions.

This fuel bed has sustained 23 fires of over 300 acres. There are 69.06 miles of fire roads, 20.76 miles of utility roads and four miles of ranch roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Townsite Pre-Fire Plan

PIRU FUEL BED

The Piru Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by the Santa Clara River, on the north by Agua Blanca Creek, on the east by Del Valle and on the west by Hopper Canyon. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of grass intermixed with chaparral and coastal sage scrub. Oak woodland can be found in select drainage bottoms and on the north-facing slopes.

Assets at Risk include structures, rangeland, agriculture and oil production facilities. In addition, the Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge is located in the northwest portion of the fuel bed. Condor nesting sites dot the landscape throughout the area each year. Close collaboration with the biologists there and training help to promote safe operations on the refuge.

This fuel bed has sustained 16 fires of over 300 acres. There are 32 miles of fire roads and 9 miles of ranch roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Piru Pre-Fire Plan

SOUTH MOUNTAIN FUEL BED

The South Mountain Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by Highway 188, on the north by Highway 126, on the east by Highway 23 and on the west by Highway 118. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of grass and coastal sage scrub.

Assets at Risk include structures, rangeland, communication facilities, agriculture, and oil production facilities. Oil production facilities are located in the area of South Mountain and have been a source of many of the larger fires analyzed in the historical data. The arrangement of the facilities and the brush clearance around them normally reduces the risk posed in a wildfire.

This fuel bed has sustained 14 fires of over 300 acres. There are 8.43 miles of ranch roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: South Pre-Fire Plan

VENTURA FUEL BED

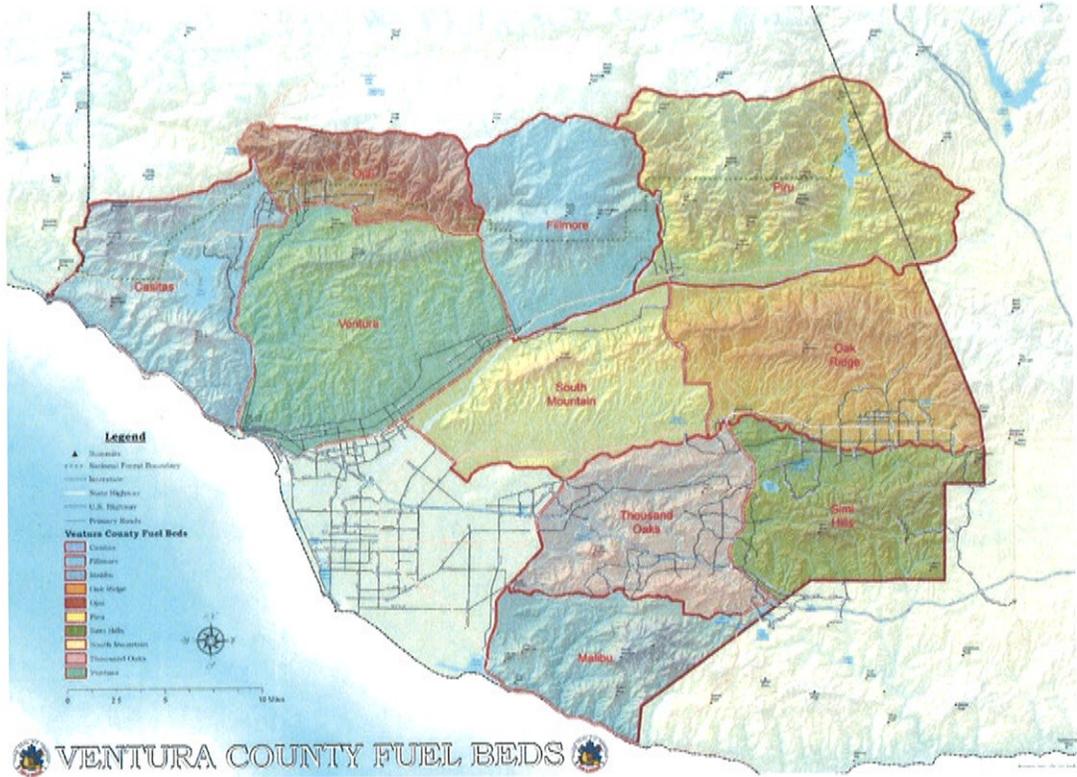
The Ventura Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by the City of Ventura, on the north by the Ojai Valley, on the east by Highway 150 and on the west by Highway 33. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass.

The greatest area of risk in the Ventura Fuel Bed is in the interface area that separates the City of Ventura from the Ventura County jurisdictional areas. Development in the areas between Harmon, Sexton and Barlow canyons would be challenging to protect in a wildfire driven by winds from the northeast. Additional at-risk areas include East Sulphur Mountain Road, Creek Road, and the east side of Highway 33. Agricultural assets and oil production are very prominent throughout this fuel bed.

This fuel bed has sustained 15 fires of over 300 acres. There are 29 miles of fire roads, 12 miles of utility roads and 21 miles of ranch roads maintained in this fuel bed.

Wildland Pre-Fire Plans: Heights Pre-Fire Plan

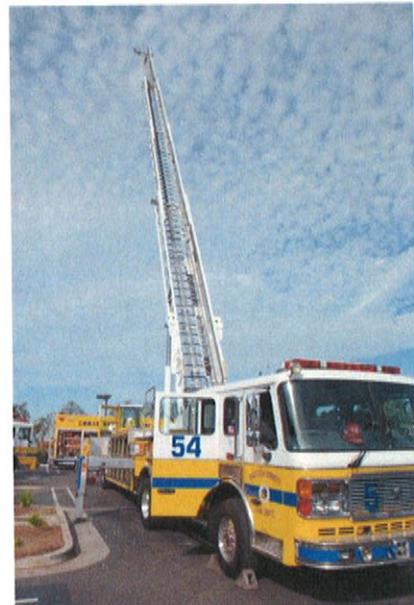
VENTURA COUNTY FUEL BEDS (MAP)



UNIT PREPAREDNESS AND FIREFIGHTING CAPABILITIES

The Ventura County Unit is made up of the Ventura County Fire Protection District (District), an all-risk, full-service department, composed of 574 men and women. We proudly provide fire protection, medical aid, rescue, hazardous material response, and a variety of other services to the public. The District's services are built around our mission of responding to the dynamic public safety needs of our diverse community.

The District has 32 stations serving a population of more than 480,000 in six cities -- Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, Port Hueneme and Ojai -- and the unincorporated areas of the County. The District operates four Administration and Support facilities, 31 first-run fire engines, one first-run Quint, 17 reserve fire engines, 11 wildland fire engines, four ladder trucks (including one reserve), five water rescue and fire boat craft, two paramedic squads, 14 command vehicles, nine pieces of heavy equipment (bulldozers, etc.) and 38 other emergency response vehicles. The District responds to an average of about 95 calls for service every day.



The District is divided into five battalions and several specialized units.

Battalion 1 – Stations 50, 52, 54, 55 and 57, primarily within the city of Camarillo and the surrounding area. Battalion 1 is home to the special operations units for Hazardous Materials, Crash/Rescue, Water Rescue and Urban Search and Rescue.

Battalion 2 – Stations 20, 21, 22, 23, 25 and 26, covering the city of Ojai, unincorporated areas in the northern part of the county and District areas near the cities of Santa Paula and Ventura.

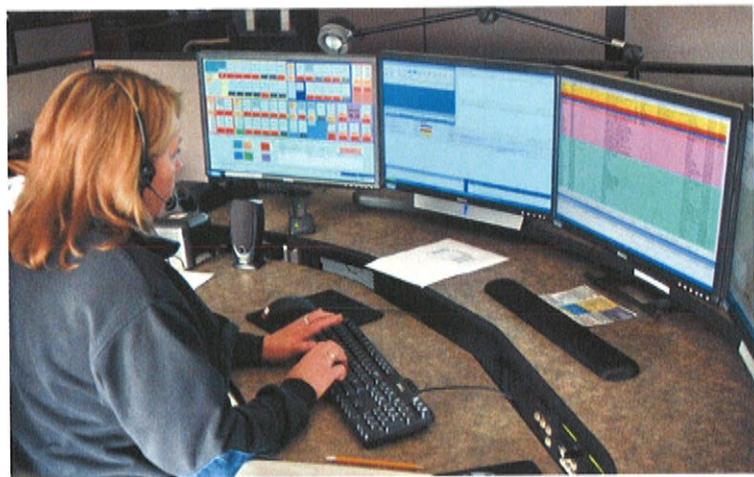
Battalion 3 – Stations 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35 and 36, covering the city of Thousand Oaks and the greater Conejo Valley.

Battalion 4 – Stations 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, and 47, primarily within the cities of Moorpark and Simi Valley.

Battalion 5 – Station 27, 28, 51, 53 and 56, covering the city of Port Hueneme and District areas along the Santa Clara River valley and the Malibu coastline.

In addition to these on-duty stations, the Unit has emergency response agreements with other fire agencies within Ventura County and immediately adjacent to it. This includes Los Angeles County Fire, Santa Barbara County Fire, Kern County Fire, Cal Fire, the U.S. Forest Service, Federal Fire, and the cities of Los Angeles, Oxnard, Ventura, Santa Paula and Fillmore.

The Unit also provides dispatch services for all fire and ambulance agencies within Ventura County except for the city of Oxnard. The Regional Training Center serves the training needs of not only the Ventura County Fire Department, but for much of



Southern and Central California as well, offering numerous ICS courses, live fire training and other specialized instruction.

We partner with our community to identify risks and empower people with the tools to prepare and protect themselves. As part of that responsibility, we enforce codes and regulations, review more than 2,800 plans a year, inspect more than 5,000 homes and businesses a year, and issue roughly 250 fire code permits and 445 film permits a year. We also work with more than 14,000 residents each year to create defensible space through our Fire Hazard Reduction Program and conduct hundreds of public education, fire prevention and safety programs for children, adults and seniors. In addition to the activities by the Fire Prevention Bureau, fire station personnel conduct over 1,100 fire safety inspections a year.

Specialized Units

Also available for response are specialized units with unique capabilities for incidents involving special hazards or needs. These units are not normally staffed. Personnel with the specialized training and qualifications will move from their regularly assigned units at the fire station and respond with these specialized units as needed.

Often, these specialized units will respond and operate in conjunction similar units from other fire departments to form a regional response to incidents that present unique challenges. The District's specialized units are Crash/Rescue, Hazardous Materials, Urban Search and Rescue, and Water Rescue.

Crash/Rescue - Crash 50 is based at the Camarillo Airport (Battalion 1) and responds to incidents involving flammable liquids (primarily aircraft crashes), oil field facility fires, flammable liquid storage and transportation emergencies. Crash 50 has the capability of extinguishing flammable liquid fires and securing spills.



Hazardous Materials (Haz Mat)

The Haz Mat unit is also based at the Camarillo Airport and responds to incidents involving chemical, biological, radiological, etiological hazards or any other unknown substances. The team is state-certified as a Type 1 Hazmat Team qualified for regional responses. The Haz Mat team will isolate a hazardous area, make entry, and identify and mitigate the hazard.



They also perform decontamination of victims and emergency personnel. The District's HazMat team is certified at a regional level and a state-of-the-art response vehicle was placed into service in 2012.

Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) - The USAR unit is based out of Stations 54 (Battalion 1) and 40 (Battalion 4) and responds to technical rescue incidents. This team is also a State asset that responds as Regional Task Force 7. USAR incidents involve victims who are trapped due to earthquakes, building collapse, cave-in, trench collapse, major transportation crash or other incidents where the entrapment exceeds the capabilities of the regular crews. The USAR team will stabilize the scene and make access to and extricate the victim. The District recently received a grant for equipment that allows the USAR team to conduct rescues in so-called super-confined spaces such as tunnels and storm drains that require long-duration breathing apparatus.

Water Rescue - The water rescue unit responds to water rescue incidents that exceed the capabilities of land-based units. It operates as a State asset under the designation of OES Team 10. The team is capable of in-water rescue and/or watercraft rescue. The team is trained in swiftwater, ocean and lake rescues.

Wildland/Aviation - The Wildland unit provides handcrew and bulldozer resources in the construction of fire control lines on wildland fires. When not involved with fire activity, the unit constructs and maintains fire breaks and fire roads, conducts fuel management projects,



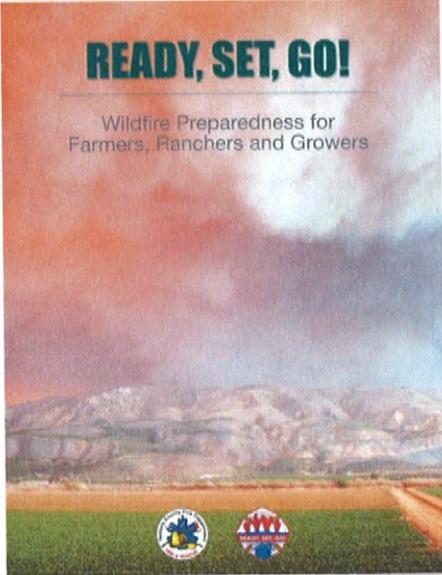
performs other mitigation and prevention tasks. The unit also operates with the Sheriff's Aviation unit to provide helicopter response to fire and rescue incidents, including paramedic crew members and assistance with marijuana eradication.

Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP) - The District takes a dynamic and strenuous approach to the prevention of wildland fires. A key component to the prevention strategy is the Fire Hazard Reduction Program. This program calls for a 100-foot mandatory brush clearance zone from homes located in the



wildland urban interface. The mandate is rigorously enforced, although the District typically receives better than 95 percent voluntary compliance.

In conjunction with the Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP), the District employs a comprehensive wildland fire prevention program to educate Ventura County residents on how to prepare their homes against a wildland fire, how to assemble everything they need for an orderly and early evacuation and, finally, how to safely evacuate in advance of the fire. This program is called "Ready, Set, Go!" and consists of a multi-faceted educational approach that includes brochures, videos, community meetings and other methods of communication.



The "Ready, Set, Go!" curriculum has been expanded recently to include property owners near the WUI but at risk from windborne embers, hikers, mountain-bikers and equestrians, and farmers, ranchers and growers whose property frequently abuts natural vegetation. In 2013, the program is being expanded again to prepare oil field workers against a wildfire. There is also a Spanish language version.

In each case, the program stresses preparedness – both personally and for property, situational awareness and early evacuation.

The "Ready, Set, Go!" and FHRP initiatives, along with effective code enforcement efforts, work together to create defensible space, promote fire-safe construction and fire-resistant landscaping, emergency preparedness and ember awareness.

These elements all combine to create tactical advantages for firefighters when the inevitable wildland fires occur. They help to provide homes hardened against wildland fires, with reliable water supplies and access and safety zones.

Defensible space, hardened homes and a population educated on the dangers of wildland fires allow firefighters to protect more property using fewer resources, while reducing the risk of injury to firefighters and civilians and helping to limit property losses.



The sum effect of the “Ready Set Go!” Program is a force multiplier for active firefighting resources. A single firefighting resource may protect many more structures when preventative measures have been properly employed. In some cases, firefighting resources may not be necessary at all, thus freeing them for other uses.

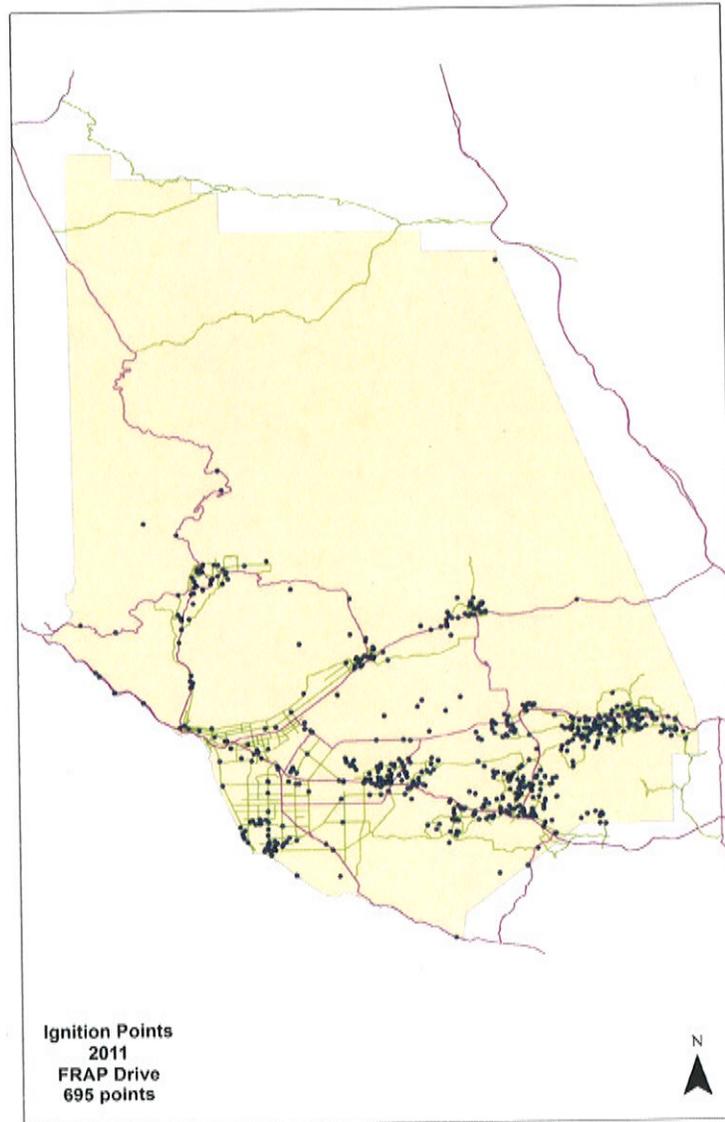
Fire Suppression

The most effective time to control a wildfire is in the incipient stages when intensities are lower and the perimeter is short. The combined resource attack is a coordinated suppression effort including ground assets (engines, crews and dozers), aviation assets (fixed and rotary wing), passive fire protection measures, and command elements. Using in-place passive fire protection systems, incident commanders weave the various active fire suppression assets into an aggressive and coordinated firefighting effort.

Aggressive prevention and suppression policies can artificially age fuel beds to a point of uncontrollable volatility. Fuel beds are managed, where allowed, to reduce the age and expanses of volatile fuel and provide barriers between values at risk and large areas of hazardous fuel. Particular attention is given to those areas in fuel beds that are adjacent to the interface.

Assets susceptible to fire damage are identified in the Fire Plan as air quality, rangeland, agricultural land, recreational land, structures, water and watersheds, wildlife and habitat, and other resources (cultural, historic, and scenic). For the purposes of this plan, greater weight was given to the protection of structures and agricultural

resources. One of the methods used in determining pre-fire projects is fire ignition data. Ignitions are plotted onto a map and the map is used to identify wildfire starts and potential areas of concern.



SECTION II: COLLABORATION

COMMUNITY / AGENCIES / FIRE SAFE COUNCILS

Representatives involved in the development of the Unit Strategic Fire Plan are included in the following table. Their organization and title are indicated below:

Plan Development Team:

Organization	Title
Cal Fire PFE	Region Chief
Cal Fire, SLO	Unit Chief
California Department of Fish and Game	Ed Pert, Regional Manager
California Highway Patrol	J.A Farrow
Southern California Edison	
Fillmore Fire Department	Rigo Landeros
Local Arborist	
Local Businesses	
City Manager Camarillo	Bruce Feng
City Manager Fillmore	Rigo Landeros
City Manager Moorpark	Steven Kueny
City Manager Ojai	Robert Clark
City Manager Oxnard	Karen Burnham
City Manager Port Hueneme	John Velhoen
City Manager Santa Paula	Jaime Fontes
City Manager Simi Valley	Eric Levitt
City Manager Thousand Oaks	Scott Mitnick
City Manager Ventura	Mark Watkins

Organization	Title
Local Land Owners	
Local Ranchers	Bud Sloan
Local Resource Conservation District	Marty Melvin, Executive Officer
National Park Service Santa Monica Mts.	Woody Smeck, Director
Natural Resources Advisor, University of CA	
Natural Resources Conservation Services	Glenn Bailey
Public Information Officer, Thousand Oaks	Andrew Powers
Santa Monica Mt. National Recreation Area	Kathryn Kirkpatrick, Fire Management
Santa Paula Fire Department	Richard Araiza
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, Hopper Mt.	Dan Tappe
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, Southern California Fire Management Zone	Lee Richard, F.M.O
USDA Forest Service, Ojai Ranger District	Div Chief Mike Strauwn
Ventura City Fire Department	Fire Chief Don McPherson,
Ventura City Fire Department	Fire Marshall, Brian Clark
Ventura County Agricultural Commissioner	Henry Gonzales
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	District 1 Supervisor, Steve Bennett
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	District 2 Supervisor, Linda Parks

Organization	Title
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	District 3 Supervisor, Kathy Long
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	District 4 Supervisor, Peter Foy
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	District 5 Supervisor, John Zaragoza
Ventura County Farm Bureau	John Krist
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Brendan Ripley, Captain, Pre-Fire Planner
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Mark Lorenzen, Fire Chief
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Fire Marshall, Massoud Araghi
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Public Information Officer, Mike Lindbery
Ventura County Sheriff	Geoff Dean
Ventura County Watershed Protection District	Dennis Kanthack
Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council	Richard Atmore, President
Mt. Pinos Communities Fire Safe Council	Janie Tominaga, President
Ojai Fire Safe Council	Will Castagna, Secretary
Ventura-Malibu Fire Safe Council	Thomas White, Chair
Ventu Park Fire Safe Council	Bill Pratt, President

SECTION III: VALUES

VALUES

The California Strategic Fire Plan defines valued assets susceptible to fire damage as air quality, rangelands, recreation, agriculture, structures, timber, water and watersheds, wildlife and habitat, and other resources (cultural, historic and scenic). All of these are concerns in Ventura County. As a result, the Unit has prioritized valued assets to maximize mitigation and prevention efforts.

Within the Ventura County Unit, there are approximately 802,983 people, 274,062 housing units and 13,700 businesses at risk. Many of the housing units and businesses are on the Wildland Urban Interface, but almost all of them are within what is called the Ember Zone in the Ventura County Unit. The Ember Zone is any area within one mile of natural vegetation. These structures are a priority value.

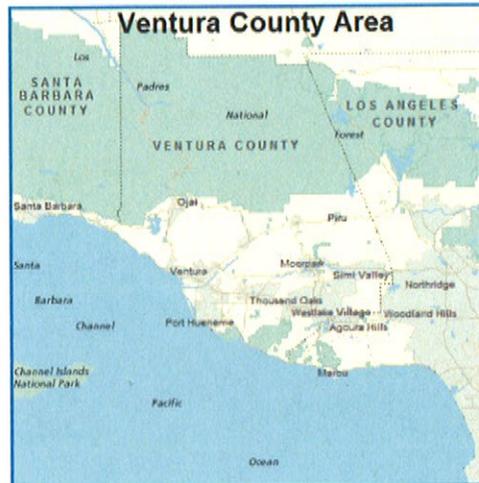
Also given priority are the county's agricultural resources. There are many acres of rangeland and the crops and livestock grown by the county's farmers, ranchers and growers that have an annual value of almost

\$2 billion. The farms and ranches employ thousands of people and the industries that support them – packing houses, trucking companies and others – employ thousands more. Protecting the county's agricultural

assets is a key goal of the Ventura County Fire Protection District. Additionally, the District provides protection to the economically important oil and gas production industry, and there are historic and cultural resources to protect, including the Sespe Condor Sanctuary.



Ventura County is divided by four major valleys – the Ojai Valley, the Santa Clara River Valley, the Conejo Valley and the Simi Valley. Each represents a critical watershed and the valley areas receive priority value and are prime candidates for vegetation management and fuel break projects



COMMUNITIES

Ventura County is a coastal county in Southern California covering 1,873 square miles. The northern half of the county lies within the Los Padres National Forest, concentrating the population mostly in the southern part of the county. The Los Padres National Forest accounts for 860 square miles of the northern portion of the county, comprising 46% of the county's land area.

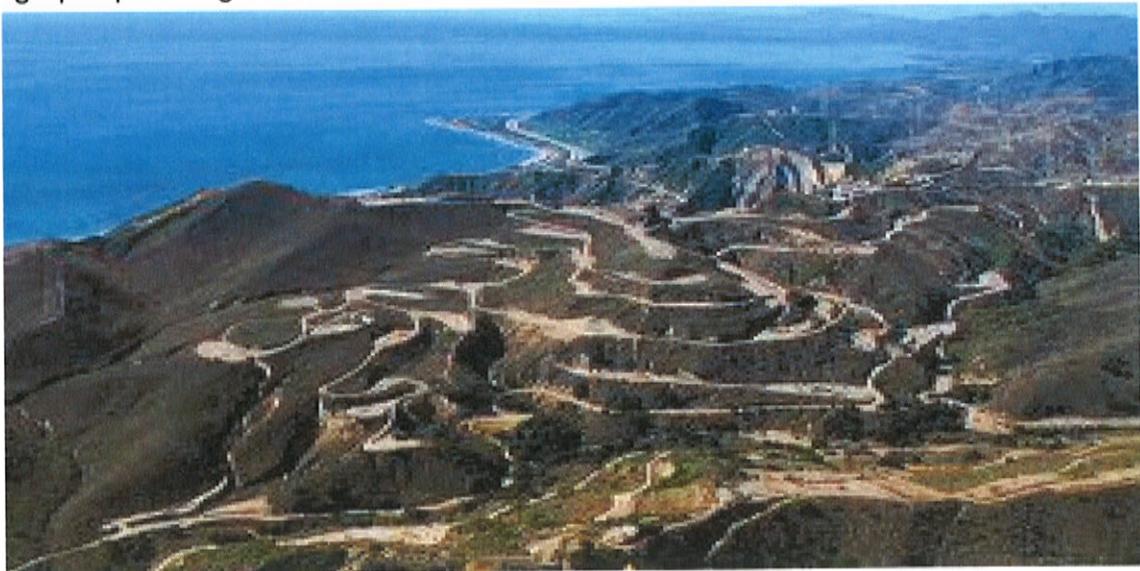
With its southern edge on the Pacific Coast of Southern California, Ventura County is bordered by Los Angeles County to the east, Santa Barbara County to the west, and Kern County to the north. Within Ventura County there are 14 at-risk communities, all clustered in the southern half of the county.

- Camarillo (Battalion 1 – partially in the Thousand Oaks Fuel Bed)
- Casa Conejo (Battalion 3 – Thousand Oaks Fuel Bed)
- Fillmore (Battalion 5 – Fillmore Fuel Bed)
- Meiners Oaks (Battalion 2 – Casitas Fuel Bed)
- Mira Monte (Battalion 2 – Casitas Fuel Bed)
- Moorpark (Battalion 4 – Thousand Oaks Fuel Bed)
- Oak Park (Battalion 3 – Simi Fuel Bed)
- Oak View (Battalion 2 – Casitas Fuel Bed)
- Ojai (Battalion 2 – Ojai Fuel Bed)
- Piru (Battalion 5 – Piru Fuel Bed)
- Santa Paula (Battalion 5 – Ventura Fuel Bed)
- Simi Valley (Battalion 4 – Oak Ridge Fuel Bed)
- Thousand Oaks (Battalion 3 – Thousand Oaks Fuel Bed)
- Ventura (Battalions 2 and 5 – Casitas and Ventura Fuel Beds)

INFRASTRUCTURE AND AGRICULTURE AT RISK



Ventura County offers some unique challenges when dealing with values at risk. The county is home to a booming agricultural industry that includes protecting many different types of orchards. These orchards are intermixed and often pose a challenge when protecting the various trees and nearby agricultural infrastructure. The Ventura County Fire Protection District takes an aggressive stance in protecting these valuable assets through pre-planning and direct involvement with the local ranchers.



Critical infrastructure always poses a challenge to firefighters. Ventura County has numerous distribution systems that range from natural gas pipelines to major electrical transmission lines. Another challenge is the number of oil and natural gas production distribution systems within the county. These installations have a significant exposure to wildfire.

SECTION IV: PRE-FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

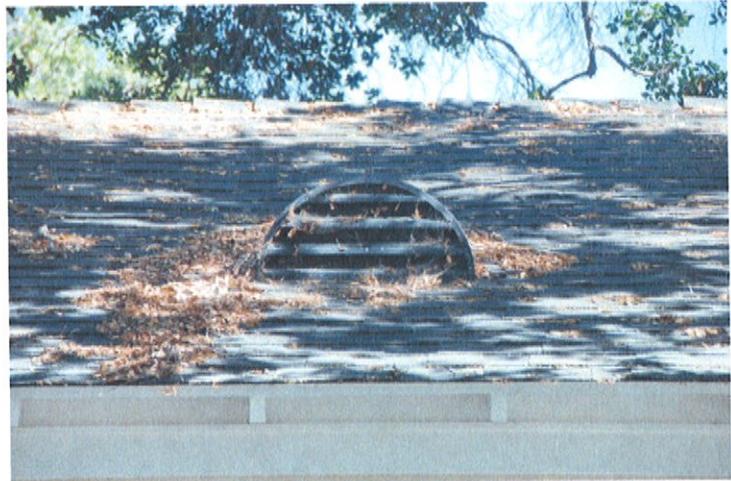
FIRE PREVENTION

Wildfire plays an important role in the natural ecosystem within Ventura County. The goal of the Ventura County Unit Strategic Fire Plan is to prevent human-caused wildfires and to minimize the risk to lives, property and infrastructure during the wildfire events that inevitably do occur.

The Ventura County Unit focuses on its fire prevention objective by employing tools such as fire-resistant landscaping and construction, mechanical fuels treatment, building construction standards and local fire codes, and pre-fire safety and escape plans.

Risk factors include:

- Areas with limited or inadequate infrastructure to accommodate access for fire protection equipment or safe evacuation of residents during a wildfire event.
- Residential landscapes with dry and/or highly flammable vegetation located close to structures, and inadequate or non-existent defensible space.
- Many older homes constructed with flammable building materials (particularly roofs) and inadequate vent coverings that will allow penetration of embers and flame.
- Population with limited education and knowledge regarding fire-safe behaviors and practices.
- Communities at risk that have expanded (homes, infrastructure and assets) to the edges of large areas of old-growth chaparral.



This plan recommends the following strategies to mitigate these risks:

- Continue existing vegetation management efforts and the initiation of new projects as appropriate to reduce risks in WUI and ember-landing areas within and around the communities at risk.
- Develop and implement focused community meetings, programs and wildfire safety education efforts directed at structure and property owners in the WUI areas, including topics such as:
 - Prevention of accidental starts
 - Creation and maintenance of defensible space
 - Fire-safe landscaping and construction (home hardening)
 - Reduction of structural ignitability
 - Strategies for safety in a wildfire incident, including emergency evacuation in areas with limited infrastructure

ENGINEERING AND STRUCTURE IGNITABILITY

Causes of Structural Ignition

Structures in or near a wildfire event can ignite for a number of reasons, including direct exposure to flame, radiant heat, and impact from falling trees that are burning.

However, the most significant cause of structural ignition, by both direct and indirect effect, is burning embers. In the high winds that frequently accompany wildfires in Ventura County, embers can be

carried for up to two miles in advance of the flame front. These embers can ignite grass, brush, landscaping and firewood piles, and can accumulate on wooden decks or under eaves.

Without proper screening, they can also penetrate into the attic and ignite homes long after the firefight seems to be over. The Unit makes a significant

public information effort specifically targeting the dangers of ember intrusion.



Creating Ignition-Resistant Structures

A multi-faceted approach is recommended to effectively protect structures from ignition during a wildfire event. A combination of defensible space, fire-resistant materials, and fire-resistant structural design can greatly increase the odds of survival in a wildfire event.

Recommendations to improve structure survivability in a wildfire are:

- Roofing materials

The roofing materials must be resistant to the heat from burning embers – a Class A rated roof, self-extinguishing if possible (this means that a burning ember will not burn through the roofing material and ignite the wooden roof deck below it). This is a key

element of structural defense, without which the structure's risk increases dramatically.

- Structural extensions and openings

Awnings, decks and deck covers, patio covers, porches, eaves and open exterior stairways can provide a place where embers accumulate and ignite the extended structure, which can then ignite the main structure. Also, improperly screened attic or crawlspace vents or soffits can allow embers to enter and ignite the structure. Chimneys, open windows or single-pane windows that break easily when stressed by the heat of a wildfire can also allow embers to enter.



- Defensible space around the structure

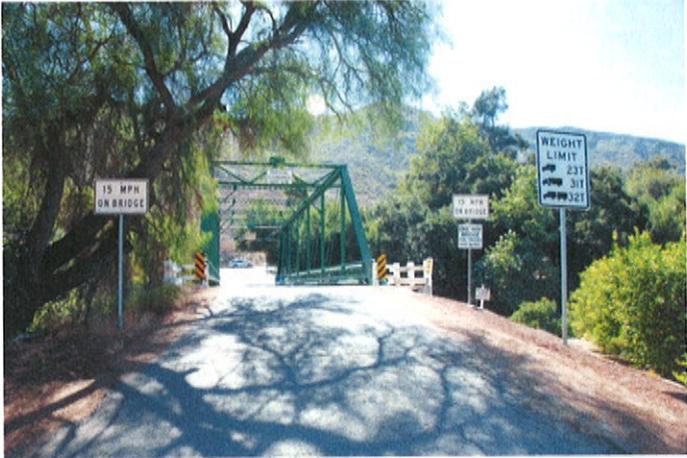
Defensible space, when properly done, eliminates many of the causes of structural ignition. Essentially, it is the trimming and/or removal of potential sources of fuel for fire near the structure, including flammable landscaping, firewood, propane tanks, trees or overhanging limbs, wooden fences, trellises or other easily ignitable wood structures or objects. It should be understood,



that “bare ground” landscaping is not the objective here -- rather, the landscape is carefully addressed to trim or remove “ladder fuels” that can carry fire from one shrub or tree to the next, and trees or shrubs that present direct risks due to their proximity to structures are trimmed or removed (with appropriate permits, if required).

- Firefighting equipment access to the structure

Roads, bridges and driveways leading to a structure must be adequate in width, overhead clearance and structural strength to accommodate firefighting equipment. Education is an important aspect of creating ignition-resistant homes and



structures within the communities at risk. An outreach program to homeowners is recommended, as well as educational and reference materials for contractors, builders and architects.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Wildfires are now a year-round reality in Ventura County. This means that both firefighters and residents have to be prepared against the threat from brush fires at all times. Firefighters train hard and make countless preparations to be ready for a wildfire. Residents need to do the same. Successfully preparing for a wildfire requires homeowners to take personal responsibility for protecting themselves, their families and their property.

The Ventura County Fire Department takes every precaution to help protect homeowners and their property from a wildfire. But the reality is, during a major wildfire, there will simply not be enough fire engines or firefighters to defend every home, especially during the first hours of a major wildfire, so home and property owners must become part of the solution.



If a home borders a natural area, what firefighters call the Wildland Urban Interface, it is directly at risk from a wildfire. And, if the home is within one mile of a natural area, it is in the Ember Zone. Homes in the Ember Zone are at risk from wind-driven embers from a wildfire. Recent fires have resulted in entire neighborhoods being destroyed by fires started by embers, not the wildfire itself.

Through the Ventura County Unit's **“Ready, Set, Go!”** program, homeowners and other property owners learn about the Ember Zone and how to retrofit their homes or agricultural property with features that protect it from embers. The program demonstrates the importance of having defensible space around a home and the preparations homeowners need to make so they can leave early, evacuating before the fire arrives.

Since agriculture is a key component in the economy of Ventura County. The Unit has also designed a “Ready Set Go!” program for the agricultural community. The crops and livestock grown by the county’s farmers, ranchers and growers have an annual value of almost \$2 billion. The farms and ranches employ



thousands of people and the industries that support them – packing houses, trucking companies and others – employ thousands more. Protecting the county’s agricultural assets is a key goal of the Ventura County Fire Department. Wildfire is a major threat to agriculture in Ventura County. Most of our agricultural properties are located either immediately adjacent to natural vegetation or within a mile of it, an area we refer to as the Ember Zone. These properties are all at risk from the flaming front of an advancing wildfire or the embers it produces.

Fire is, and always has been, a natural part of the Ventura County ecosystem. Wildfires, fueled by a build-up of dry vegetation and driven by hot, dry winds, are extremely dangerous and almost impossible to control. Many residents have built their homes and landscaped without fully understanding the impact a fire could have on them. The “Ready, Set, Go!” program helps them prepare their homes so they can leave early, confident that they’ve done everything reasonably possible to protect their homes.

In Ventura County, it’s not a question of if, but when, the next wildfire will occur. That’s why the most important person protecting Ventura County life and property is not a firefighter, but a homeowner. With advance planning and preparation, a homeowner can dramatically increase their safety and the survivability of their property.

Defensible space is the required space between a structure and the wildland area that, under normal conditions, creates a sufficient buffer to slow or halt the spread of wildfire

to a structure. It provides space for firefighters to work between a home and an advancing fire, and it protects the home from igniting due to direct flame or radiant heat. Defensible space is essential for structure survivability during wildfire conditions.

Defensible space can be broken down into 2 zones:

Zone One extends 30 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

- Remove all dead or dying vegetation.
- Trim tree canopies regularly to keep their branches a minimum of 10 feet from structures and other trees.
- Remove leaf litter (dry leaves/pine needles) from yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Relocate woodpiles or other combustible materials into Zone Two.
- Remove combustible material and vegetation from around and under decks.
- Remove or prune vegetation near windows.
- Remove “ladder fuels”. This is done by reducing the height of low-level vegetation that allows the fire to spread from the ground to shrubs and, from there, into the tree canopy. It creates a separation between low-level vegetation and low tree branches.



Zone Two extends 30 to 100 feet out from buildings, structures and decks.

The chance of fire jumping from plant to plant can be minimized by removing dead material and removing and/or thinning vegetation. The minimum spacing between vegetation is three times the dimension of the plant.

- Remove “ladder fuels.”
- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of four inches.
- Trim tree canopies regularly to keep their branches a minimum of 10 feet away from other trees.

Informational Websites and Documents

“Ready Set Go!”

<http://fire.countyofventura.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=F16UdBq8SxM%3d&tabid=231>

“Wildfire Preparedness for Farmers, Ranchers and Growers

<http://fire.countyofventura.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=xDCkAK3DngE%3d&tabid=231> -

“Ready, Set, Go for Trail Users -

<http://fire.countyofventura.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=C0KWSbJiDLM%3d&tabid=231>

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

The Ventura County Unit believes in a vegetation management process that starts at the house and works its way out.

It starts with the Fire hazard Reduction Program, clearing weeds and brush 100 feet away from the structure, and then moves to the natural vegetation beyond that point. When necessary, the modification and/or removal of vegetation that, if ignited, would present risks to homes, infrastructure and assets within the communities at risk can be accomplished in several ways. Techniques include the use of hand crews, mechanized equipment, grazing, herbicides and prescribed burns. Vegetation management projects are often accomplished using a combination of these techniques.



Regardless of the techniques used, the nature of the vegetation in Ventura County assures that, unlike the forests in northern areas, the chaparral prevalent here will quickly grow back. As a result, in addition to the treatments themselves, successful vegetation management projects include planning, oversight and ongoing maintenance.

Proper planning of vegetation management projects includes careful consideration of all environmental, cultural, habitat and historical preservation aspects. Each of these areas needs to be addressed, and proper permits, approvals and permissions acquired before any work is done on the ground. This process is engaged on a project by project basis, taking into consideration the project's activities, geographic location and seasonal timeline.

Wildfire Safety Project Priorities

While any wildfire protection project is important, the realities of funding constraints require priorities to be established among types of projects. Given the information within this document that is specific to Ventura County, the types of projects that are determined to be of highest priority, in priority order, are:

- 1. Vegetation management projects where the potential for a wildfire threatens life, property, agricultural assets, critical infrastructure and/or emergency ingress/egress in and around the communities at risk and unincorporated areas of the county.
- 2. Vegetation management projects where the potential for a wildfire threatens watersheds, riparian areas or other sensitive ecosystems; or high-traffic recreation areas.
- 3. Wildfire Safety Education Programs that provide homeowners, farmers, ranchers and other community members with information on defensible space, fire-resistant landscaping, emergency procedures, home defense and related topics; and Planning or Preparedness Projects that improve citizen and/or firefighter safety in the event of a wildfire.



Fire Hazard Reduction (Brush Clearance Guide)

The Fire Hazard Reduction Program is the single most important fire defense program offered by the Ventura County Fire Protection District. The program provides an opportunity to establish defensive barriers in the urban/wildland interface in preparation for the annual onslaught of wildfires in the county.

The response area for the District includes six incorporated cities, many rural communities and vast areas of open agricultural or undeveloped land. Over time, as the population of Ventura County has grown and development expanded to accommodate that growth, the risk from wildfire has increased.

The effectiveness of the program should not be judged on the number of parcels the fire department has to abate, but rather on the number of homes and structures protected each year from wildfires by the preventative efforts of the Fire Hazard Reduction Program. By that measure, the program is an unqualified success.

The Fire Hazard Reduction Program began in 1965 when the Ventura County Fire Protection District adopted the Uniform Fire Code for the first time. The code was compiled and produced by the California Fire Chiefs Association.

Prior to 1965, the District's fire code was only about 15 pages long, and the only code enforcement was a citation from the courts. Under the old fire code, 1,431 clean-up notices were issued in 1958. If needed, a second notice was issued called a "Fire Code Violation." After that, the district seldom took any further action. All notices were done by hand. Owners were located by asking neighbors if they knew who owned the land parcel in question. Parcel maps were not available at the fire station.

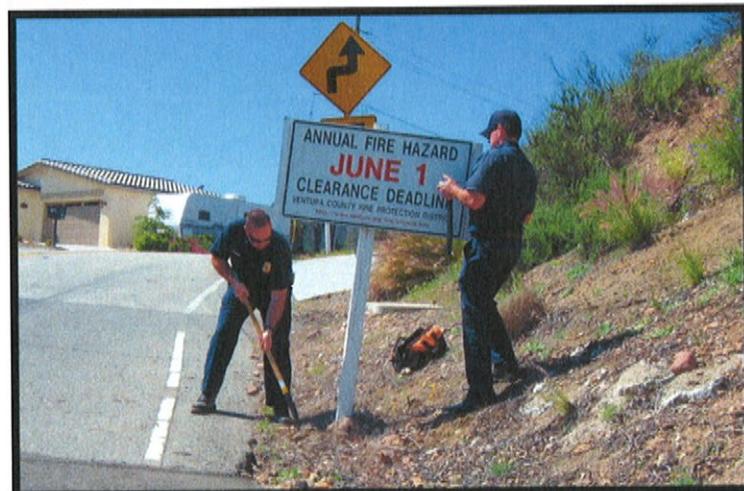
But with the adoption of the fire code in 1965, and the use of Electronic Data Processing as a means of notifying property owners of fire hazards existing on their property, the program began to be much more effective. This system provided the fire stations with the names and addresses of property owners and parcel maps were also available.

Under the provisions of the fire code, failure to comply with an abatement notice resulted in the Fire District removing the hazard with the cost of the removal, plus an administrative charge, being assessed against the property.

Records show in 1965, 5,000 notices were sent out and the program had a \$10.00 administrative charge for each parcel cleaned by the department.

By about 1970, a tremendous amount of development in the Simi and Conejo Valleys resulted in the department sending out over 11,000 notices and hiring contractors to clean more than 2,000 parcels each year, all with the additional administrative charge of \$10.00

In 1971, the brush clearance phase of the weed abatement program was expanded, with a particular focus on improved properties in high hazard areas, to emphasize a 100-foot area of defensible space. This was done in response to the significant losses that occurred in 1970 as a result of devastating brush fires in Ventura County.



By 1983, the administrative charge had been increased to \$41.00 per parcel. Fourteen thousand notices were sent out and 1,340 parcels had to be cleaned by the department.

The program changed its name in about 1990, from weed abatement to the Fire Hazard Reduction Program and the urban/wildland interface conflagrations were termed “the fires of the future.”

During the 1990s, the administrative fee charged by the District began to rise steadily. In 1991 it was increased to \$221, and by 1996, it had risen to \$690. In 2008, the District raised the charge to \$1,050 per parcel.

Over the years, the number of parcels the District has had to abate has been greatly reduced by a concentrated effort from the fire inspectors assigned to the program and the increases to the administrative charge. In 2007, the Fire District abated only 18 parcels, down from a high of 2,000 in 1971.

The statistics over the past 25 years show two unmistakable trends; first, voluntary compliance by the property owners is extremely good thanks to the efforts of the fire inspectors and, secondly, the compliance continues to improve even with many more notices being sent on a yearly basis. In 1971, the District abated about 18 percent of the noticed properties, compared with less than one percent in 2007, despite an increase of more than 75 percent in the number of notices sent over the same period.

The Fire Hazard Reduction Program is operated out of the Fire Prevention Bureau. It is led by a Fire Prevention Officer and staffed by a full-time Fire Inspector. Starting in April and extending until about August, a Fire Captain and about six seasonal workers assist in inspections and compliance.

Landscape (Ornamental)

- Remove all flammable vegetation and other combustible growth within 100 feet of any structure. Single trees, ornamental shrubbery or cultivated ground covers may be permitted provided they are maintained in a manner that they do not readily transmit fire from native vegetation to the structure.



- Special attention should be given to the use and maintenance of ornamental plants known or thought to be high hazard combustible plants when used in close proximity to structures. Some of these known plants are, but not limited to, acacia, cedar, cypress, eucalyptus, juniper, pine, and pampas grass. Planting of ornamentals should

be properly maintained and should not be planted in mass plantings and groups. They should not be planted in such a manner that they could transmit fire from the native brush to the structure.

- The Ventura County Fire Department is strongly recommending an increase in brush clearance from 100' to 200' if any of the following apply to property at risk from a wildfire:

House located on/or at the top of a slope

Old brush not recently burned

East or south facing aspect

Wood shake roof

Limited access for the Fire Department

Ornamental shrubbery next to house

Older construction

Historical fire pattern in the area

Heavy chaparral fuels

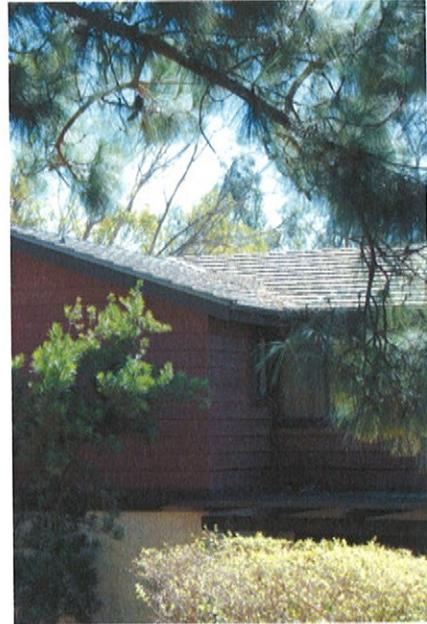
Limited or private water supply

More than five miles from a Fire Station

Space tree canopies and shrubs a minimum of 15' from other shrubs or trees. All trees and shrubs need to be trimmed up off the ground two feet or 1/3 the height of the tree, whichever is less. Maintain all plants by regularly removing all dead fall and litter.

Yard Maintenance

- Stack wood at least 30 feet from structures; remove flammable vegetation within 10 feet of woodpile.
- Remove all stacks of construction materials, pine needles, leaves and debris.
- Locate fixed butane/propane tanks at least 10 feet from any structure and give them 10 feet of brush clearance.



Roof Maintenance

- Remove branches overhanging the roof.
- Clean all dead leaves from roof, roof valleys and rain gutters.
- Cover chimney outlets with a spark arrestor consisting of a metal or non- flammable screen of ½ inch or smaller.

SECTION V: PRE- FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AND FIRE BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION

The Ventura County Fire Department's Vegetation Management Program focuses on natural vegetation that is beyond the scope of the Fire Hazard Reduction Program.

Fire behavior modification zones are useful assets in and around the Wildland Urban Interface. These zones utilize the science of behavior modeling to predict the anticipated fire behavior in a given area. Adding historical fire and weather data, the department evaluates the areas to lessen the effects of fire to the assets at risk. Fire behavior modification zones provide areas with reduced fuel loading, altered fuel continuity and modified fuel configuration that are intended to alter fire behavior.

Positive changes to fire behavior increases firefighter safety during wildland operations by reducing the energy released in the treated fuel bed. Similar projects can be used to construct designated safety zones or temporary refuge areas.

The District works cooperatively and collaboratively with environmental and land management organizations to restore ecosystems and effectively manage the open-space areas within the county while providing fire protection to our communities at risk.

Fast moving, high intensity wildfires contribute to the destruction of habitat and prolong the restoration period associated with wildfires. Vegetation management reduces the secondary fire effects by limiting fire intensity. In addition, the department works with State and Federal resources agencies, and the Ventura County Watershed District, to maintain and preserves valuable resources in the watershed areas.

DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS

The Five-Year Vegetation Management Plan of the Ventura County Fire Department (commonly referred to as the Five-Year Burn Plan) was developed as a planning tool to assist in the overall strategic objective of modifying hazardous fuels within the county. Because vegetation management planning is dynamic by nature, this plan is intended to

be a living document subject to changes caused by many variables. These variables include, but are not limited to, a change in fuels due to natural fires, residential and commercial development into the interface areas, special governmental funding programs for hazardous fuels reduction, and continued participation by public and private landowners.

Six prescribed fire benefits, as defined by Cal Fire's Vegetation Management Program, were evaluated to prioritize specific projects. These benefits are fire hazard reduction, water yield, wildlife habitat improvement, fisheries habitat improvement, air quality improvement, and range forage improvement.

Based on analysis of fire benefits, projects in each identified area are prioritized as high, medium or low. Projects having benefits other than fire hazard reduction are rated as either a medium or low priority based on the value of the other derived benefits. All of our projects have a maintenance component to keep the threat reduced.

Casitas, Ojai, Ventura, Fillmore, South Mountain, Thousand Oaks, Malibu, Oak Ridge, Simi, and Piru are the ten fuel beds that are identified and serve as the geographical basis from which the plan was developed. These areas are found in four of the Unit's five battalions and represent the majority of the Unit's at-risk areas. Fire history from the past 100 years, assets at risk, fuel types and weather patterns were all considered in the development of this plan.

APPENDIX A: PRE- FIRE PROJECTS

Wildfire Safety Projects within Ventura County

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Annual Fire Mitigation for Large Properties	Fire mitigation for Thatcher School, Clark Ranch and Canada Larga Ranch	Underway	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	C.R.E.W., Wally McCall, (805) 649-8847, wmmccall@sbcglobal.net
Asset Protection Plans	Asset protection plans for orchards, pastureland, adjacent structures, and sensitive wildlife habitats	Funded, Implementation	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Casitas Open Space Project	Remove non-native plants including almond orchards and eucalyptus in Santa Ana Road area of Ojai Valley	Funded, under-way	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	C.R.E.W., Wally McCall, (805) 649-8847, wmmccall@sbcglobal.net
CCARP invasive plant species removal	Arundo and tamarisk removal programs along the Calleguas Creek watershed	In development	Camarillo	Ventura County Resource Conservation District, Sonya Webb, District Engineer, PO Box 147, Somis, CA 93066, (805) 240-6318 or (805) 764-5134.
Central Ventura County "Ready, Set, Go!" Program	Assisting the Ventura County Fire Protection District in implementing its "Ready, Set, Go!" program, a personal wildfire action plan for saving lives and property through advance planning.	Funding Received, Implementation in progress	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Chipper Days	Implement local "chipper days" to encourage brush clearance on individual properties by providing chipping, hauling, and disposal at no cost to residents.	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
City of Ojai Last Defense Fuel Break Extension	Maintenance of the City of Ojai Last Defense Fuel Break that was completed in Nov 2008 – 4.5 miles of Strategic Fuel Break in Ojai, protecting from wildfire approaching from the north and east	Maintenance	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Common Address Protocol and Signage	A common address protocol and signage for rural areas	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Community-at-Risk Detailed Plan	Fire Safe Council assistance in hazard assessment, mitigation planning, and continuing improvement of community preparedness.	Planning	Thousand Oaks	Bill Pratt, President, Ventu Park Fire Safe Council, 141 Hope Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 384-2748 x203, wpratt2057@aol.com

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Community Fire Fighting Enhancements	Fire Safe Council and property owner assistance for developing water cistern systems. Fire Safe Council assistance for purchasing portable fire fighting and foam application equipment.	Planning	Thousand Oaks	Bill Pratt, President, Ventu Park Fire Safe Council, 141 Hope Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 384-2748 x203, wpratt2057@aol.com
Condominium Landscaping Education	Design and implement a fire safe landscaping education outreach tailored to local condominium complexes and the landscape companies who serve them	Idea Stage	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
COSCA Project	The Ventura County Fire Dept. and COSCA will work together in developing a vegetation management plan that will enhance our efforts to further mitigate our threat; community partnerships that focus public education in creating defensible space will yield the most tangible results in combating the wildfire hazard. The vegetation management plan will consider the effects upon the environment, wildlife, soil, and plant life.	Pending Environmental	Thousand Oaks, Casa Conejo	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
Curriculum Development and Certification for Landscape Professional Education	Develop an effective curriculum and associated certification program for landscape professionals who design and work in areas of high fire danger	Idea Stage	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Evacuation Plans	Area evacuation plans for people and livestock	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Evacuation and Response Ingress and Egress Enhancements	Fire Safe Council and property owner assistance for emergency route vegetation management, right-of-way improvements, and red-flag day parking control. Further assistance for promotion of community evacuation procedure. Further assistance for mitigation of emergency route traffic "pinch points".	Planning	Thousand Oaks	Bill Pratt, President, Ventu Park Fire Safe Council, 141 Hope Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 384-2748 x203, wpratt2057@aol.com

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Fillmore Front Project	This federally funded grant project is located in the Piru and Fillmore fuel beds. The project consists of the following components: 1) vegetation management to protect agricultural assets, 2) increase defensible space surrounding the Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge, 3) wildfire preparation and training for the Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge, city of Fillmore, and town of Piru, 4) fire road and fuel break maintenance. A CEQA negative declaration was prepared for this project along with NEPA documentation for the Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge.	Completed, Maintenance	Piru, Fillmore	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
Fire Safe Vegetation Research and Display	Provide education and examples of fire safe vegetation to be used in populated communities and Agricultural operations. For this project, agricultural institutions would be used to consult and provide the area needed for community display.	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Fire Safe Education Outreach	Creation and distribution of newspaper inserts that describe fire safety programs and available methods for protecting homes and structures.	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Fire Safe Landscaping Contest	A local contest sponsored by the Fire Safe Council to encourage action by citizens and landscapers by raising awareness of the importance of fire safe landscaping	Idea Stage	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Gutter Brigades	Development of gutter brigades of local volunteers and community groups to clear leaf accumulation in gutters before the start of fire season.	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Haley/Taylor Ranch Range Improvement	The vegetation management area will be located north of the oil facilities in Padre Juan Canyon, south of HWY 150, east of Los Sauces Creek and west of Lake Casitas. This area will serve to protect the Lake Casitas watershed and support range improvement.	Approved, VMP Vegetation Management Plan	Ventura	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
Hazardous Tree Removal for Homeowners	Improve safety of Ojai Valley residents and infrastructure by assisting property owners with removal of dead and diseased trees that pose a hazard in the event of wildfire	Idea Stage	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
HOA Education Program	Develop and implement a wildfire safety education and action program designed to be disseminated through and facilitated by homeowner associations	Idea Stage	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Home Hardening and Residential Hazard Reduction – “Cash for Kindling” Program	Property owner assistance for structural modifications to reduce ember penetration and reduce exterior flammable surfacing materials, and for landscaping modifications for species replacement, tree maintenance and ladder fuels reduction. Fire Safe Council assistance for sponsorship and promotion of neighborhood “dumpster days” for do-it-yourself debris removal.	Planning	Thousand Oaks	Bill Pratt, President, Ventu Park Fire Safe Council, 141 Hope Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 384-2748 x203, wpratt2057@aol.com
Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge	The US Fish and Wildlife contracts with the Ventura County Fire Department to provide defensible space around the Hopper Ranch Center and the bird pens.	Maintenance	Fillmore	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
KFA Project	Oak Woodland Restoration	Maintenance	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
Local Information Maps for Firefighters	Ranch plans containing information for fire personnel including maps depicting water sources, safety zones, and evacuation routes for ranch personnel and domestic animals	Funding received, Implementation	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Matilija Canyon Defensible Space Improvements for Homeowners	Matilija Canyon Defensible Space Improvements for Homeowners	Matilija Canyon Defensible Space Improvements for Homeowners	Matilija Canyon Defensible Space Improvements for Homeowners	Matilija Canyon Defensible Space Improvements for Homeowners
Matilija Canyon Evacuation Route Cleanup	Improve safety of citizens and firefighters during a wildfire event by conducting much-needed vegetation management along the only roadway in and out of the canyon	Idea Stage	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Neighborhood Vegetation Management	Vegetation management and neighborhood fuel reduction programs	Idea Stage	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Neighborhood Wildfire Emergency Response Program	Fire Safe Council assistance for communications equipment & training. Property owner assistance for purchasing foam systems. Fire Safe Council assistance for promotion of community alert program and senior and disabled persons evacuation coordination. Further assistance for website development.	Planning	Thousand Oaks	Bill Pratt, President, Ventu Park Fire Safe Council, 141 Hope Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 384-2748 x203, wpratt2057@aol.com
Ojai Honor Farm Fire Mitigation	Vegetation management on the 164 acre Honor Farm property leased from Ventura County (Help of Ojai project, subcontracted to C.R.E.W.).	Underway	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	C.R.E.W., Wally McCall, (805) 649-8847, wmmccall@sbcglobal.net
Ojai Senior Citizen Fire Mitigation Project	Residential Fire Mitigation for estimated 600 senior and disabled citizen households.	Funded, Cultural and Environmental Compliance completed	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	C.R.E.W., Wally McCall, (805) 649-8847, wmmccall@sbcglobal.net
Ojai Valley "Ready, Set, Go!" Program	Community outreach/ education to support the implementation of the "Ready, Set, Go!" program, a personal wildfire action plan for saving lives and property through advance planning.	Planning	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Perimeter Vegetation Management Program	Fire Safe Council and property owner assistance for fuel mass reduction, species replacement, runoff mitigation, habitat enhancements, and wildlife escape corridors.	Planning	Thousand Oaks	Bill Pratt, President, Ventu Park Fire Safe Council, 141 Hope Road, Newbury Park, CA 91320, (805) 384-2748 x203, wpratt2057@aol.com

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Phone Book Insert Project	Update and reinsert the already-developed Wildfire Safety Tab into the local telephone directory	Planned, Requires Funding	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Reagan Library	Maintain the existing fuel break that surrounds the library, through the use of hand cutting, broadcast chipping and brush mowing	Maintenance	Simi Valley	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
San Buena-ventura Project	This vegetation management project is located northeast of the City of Ventura. It consists of the following canyons: Sexton, Harmon, Sloan, Aliso, Barlow, Canada Larga, School, Hall, Lake, Wheeler, O'Hare, and Manual. This project is 43,362 acres and has been selected due to its ability to protect its interface area from Ventura to Santa Paula.	VMP Development	Ventura	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
Santa Paula Range Fire Protection and Fuel Management Project	Enhance support and expand the wildfire notification, fire protection systems and Ranch information mapping used by Rancho Simpatica and neighbors. Provide vegetation management and fire protection through prescribed fire, grazing and fire fuel breaks. Develop an informational booklet for preparation and safety procedures for imminent fire encroachment. Enhance ranch and oil access roads with addition clearance for emergency equipment access and safety zones. This project can be defined into two areas; one from Highway 150 (Santa Paula) east to Timber Canyon. The second area defined as Timber Canyon to Sespe Creek (Fillmore).	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
SCARP invasive plant species removal	Arundo and tamarisk removal programs along the Santa Clara River watershed	Completed	Santa Paula	Ventura County Resource Conservation District (VCRCD) Christina Sulzman Wildlife Biologist Wildscape Restoration 2977 Sexton Canyon Road Ventura, CA 93003 Phone – (805)644-6852

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Sisar Road Project	The vegetation management area will be located north of Ojai Santa Paula Road, south of Nordhoff Ridge Road, east of Horn Canyon and west of Bear Canyon. This area provides protection to the at-risk assets in east and northeast wind-driven fires. This project was completed in 2007 and is being maintained as needed to reduce structure threat.	Maintenance	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ventura County Fire Protection District 2471 Latigo Avenue Oxnard, CA 93030 (from VCFPD Prefire Management Plan VI)
South Mountain Area Fire Protection and Fuel Management Project	Provide vegetation management and fire protection through prescribed fire, grazing and fire and fuel breaks. Create and manage buffer zones around agricultural, residential and Oil assets at risk. Enhance ranch and oil access roads with addition clearance for emergency equipment access and safety zones. Look at fire protection actions and resources that can be used during a fire event to prepare and safe guard assets at risk. This includes neighbor notification system, Ranch informational packet for emergency personnel, and pre-fire foaming of critical buildings and facilities.	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Taylor Ranch and Area Fuel Management Project	The Taylor Ranch area is located west of the Ventura River and covers an area roughly from the Ventura River to Padre Juan Canyon and from Highway 101 to Red Mountain; supporting agricultural lands, oil and communication facilities. The scope of the Taylor Ranch project includes enhancing fire clearance in and around Agricultural lands and oil and communication facilities. Conducting where possible prescribe fire burning for fuel reduction and vegetation management.	Planning	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851

Project	Description	Status	Community at Risk	Agency/Contact
Update VC AG Employee ID Cards	The purpose of the Ventura County Agricultural Employee ID Card (Ag Pass) is to identify farm and ranch employees to firefighting personnel, California Highway Patrol officers, sheriff's deputies and other emergency workers assigned to restrict public access to areas threatened by fires and other disasters. Phase out current blue card & replace over 24 months with new laminated card which includes the employee's photo. It is available free of charge to farmers, ranchers, nursery owners and their employees.	Funding received, Implementation phase 2013-2014	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851
Vegetation management on Ojai Valley Land Conservancy 1,537 acre preserve	Ventura River Rio Vista Preserve, Ojai Meadows Preserve, Ventura River El Nido Preserve, and San Antonio Creek – The C.R.E.W. is already working on a proposal to CFSC in collaboration with the Ojai Valley Land Conservancy.	Proposal not yet submitted	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	C.R.E.W., Wally McCall, (805) 649-8847, wmmccall@sbcglobal.net
Ventura County Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update	Conduct CWPP information gathering exercises in all 14 communities at risk, improving the level of detail for each individual community.	Maintenance (Initial Plan Complete)	Meiners Oaks, Oak View, Ojai, Mira Monte	Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Will Castagna, Grants Manager, will@firesafeojai.org (805) 646-7307
Wildfire Safety Expo	Sponsor annual community fire protection exposition	Funding received for 2013, Expo scheduled for Aug. 3, 2013	Ventura, Santa Paula	Rich Atmore, Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council, Inc., 2977 Sexton Canyon, Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 644-6851

APPENDIX B: UNIT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Ventura County Unit Strategic Fire Plan is to prevent the loss of life from wildfires, reduce the amount of property destroyed by them and reduce total cost of fighting wildfires.

This is accomplished in Ventura County by protecting assets at risk through focused pre-fire management prescriptions and increased initial attack success. With this in mind, the Ventura County Fire Protection District supports the



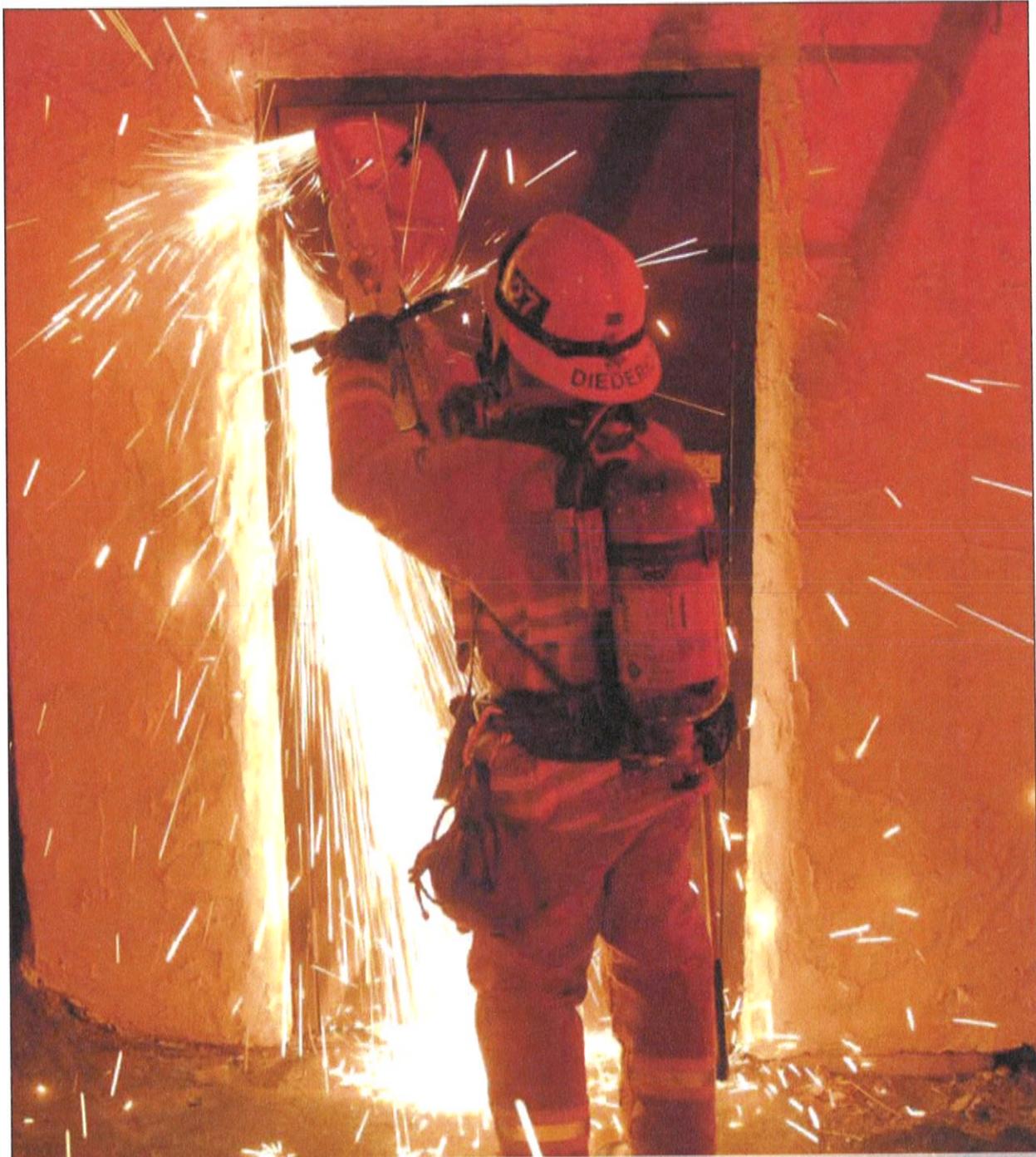
California Strategic Fire Plan and has modeled its Ventura County Unit Strategic Fire Plan as a complement to the State plan.

The Ventura County Unit Strategic Fire Plan has five strategic objectives:

1. To create wildfire protection programs and policies that reduce the risk to communities and create safer conditions for firefighters.
2. To assess all areas of natural vegetation that threaten values at risk, to determine strategies for reducing that risk.
3. To emphasize intensive and effective training for firefighters to improve their skills and increase their safety.
4. To develop and maintain strong programs for vegetation management and fire hazard reduction while protecting the environment and preserving habitats.
5. To develop and maintain comprehensive public education programs to inform, instruct and enlighten residents on the dangers from wildfires and what they can do to prevent and prepare for them.

APPENDICES C-E

APPENDIX C. ANNUAL REPORT



Ventura County Fire Protection District
2012 Annual Report



Message from the Fire Chief

Chief Mark Lorenzen

The year 2012 was a significant one for the Ventura County Fire Protection District. We changed leadership. We've renewed our commitment to the environment, and we're focusing on the future.

In March, Fire Chief Bob Roper retired after serving nearly 15 years as the department's chief and almost 33 years as a member of the department. I was both proud and honored to be selected as his replacement. And now, after almost a year in the position, I can truly see the quality of the organization he built and that I am privileged to lead.

The legendary coach of the Green Bay Packers, Vince Lombardi, said, "The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual." That is clearly the case with the Fire District. I am very fortunate to be surrounded by people who are capable, competent and committed, and their united accomplishments keep our organization strong and focused on the future.

Our people are the key to the future of the Fire District and the caliber of our people is directly tied to our success. I am humbled to lead an organization that is so well-respected within the fire service, the communities we serve, and across the state and nation.

At the Fire District, we have always been concerned with our environment and natural surroundings. When the District was formed in 1928, our first fire chief, Walter Emerick, had already been the County's Fish and Game Warden since 1923. Over the years we have continued to pay special attention to our brush-covered hillsides, seeking to mitigate the wildfire hazard they pose, while preserving habitats, protecting native species and combating invasive species. Now we are taking conservation even further and applying it to our operations.

Our two newest fire stations, 43 and 47 in Simi Valley, were both built to tough environmental standards that reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, conserve energy and water, and are healthier and safer for the firefighters who live there.

And finally, we are continually seeking ways to anticipate and respond to the needs of the diverse and dynamic communities we serve. Some of that is done operationally, through new equipment or training. But much of it is done through new processes and policies that encourage interaction with the public and make doing business with the District easier and less complicated.

As 2013 begins, the Ventura County Fire Protection District is strong – both operationally and fiscally – and we are moving into the future with purpose, pride and professionalism.

Ventura County Fire Protection District

Board of Directors

The Ventura County Fire Protection District (Fire Department) is a dependent special district within the county that was created by a special election. It was formed in 1928 to provide fire protection for most areas of the county. That area now includes the cities of Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, Port Hueneme and Ojai, as well as the unincorporated areas of the county.

The County of Ventura Board of Supervisors acts as the Fire District's Board of Directors. One supervisor is elected from each of the five supervisorial districts within the county. These five supervisors appoint the fire chief to provide fire protection services for the District.

Currently, the Ventura County Fire Protection District Board of Directors is comprised of:



District 1 – Supervisor Steve Bennett

He represents the communities of San Buenaventura, Montalvo, Saticoy, Ojai Valley, City of Ojai, Upper Ojai Valley, Riverpark, Northwest Oxnard, and North Coast.



District 2 – Supervisor Linda Parks

She represents the cities and areas of Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, Westlake Village, Oak Park, Bell Canyon, Hidden Valley, Lake Sherwood, Somis, Las Posas Valley, California State University Channel Islands, Portions of the Oxnard Plain, Santa Rosa Valley, Naval Base Ventura County Point Mugu, California Air National Guard, and South Coast.



District 3 – Supervisor Kathy Long

She represents the communities of Camarillo, Port Hueneme, Southeast Oxnard, East Oxnard Plain, Santa Paula, Fillmore, Piru, East Lockwood Valley, and Eastern Portion of Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme.



District 4 – Supervisor Peter C. Foy

He represents the communities of Simi Valley, Moorpark, Santa Susana Knolls, Box Canyon, Chatsworth Peak, Home Acres, Sinaloa Lake, and Tierra Rejada Valley.



District 5 – Supervisor John Zaragoza

He represents the communities of Oxnard, Oxnard Shores, Mandalay Bay, Silver Strand, Hollywood Beach, Hollywood By-the-Sea, Channel Islands Harbor, El Rio, Nyeland Acres, Del Norte Area, Oxnard College, Oxnard Plain, Strickland and Portion of Naval Base Ventura County Port Hueneme.



Ventura County Fire Department

165 Durley Avenue • Camarillo, CA 93010

805-389-9710 • Fax: 805-388-4364

<http://fire.countyofventura.org> • <http://vcreadysctgo.org>

<http://www.facebook.com/venturacountyfire>

District Promotions

Promoted to County Fire Chief
Mark Lorenzen

Promoted to Deputy Fire Chief
Michael La Plant

Promoted to Assistant Fire Chief
Keith Gurrola

Promoted to Division Chief
Andrew Ortega

Promoted to Battalion Chief
Bill Breuklander Gary Monday
Todd Leake Jerry Vandermeulen

Promoted to Captain
Lance Austin Jeff Pike
Paul Barrera Jeff Studt
Michael Fine Kenneth Van Wig
Jason Hansen Robert Welsbie
Steven Matsuura Danny Whelan

Promoted to Firefighter Trainee
Peter Duran Gregory Peters
Michael Kennedy Jeffrey Whitehouse

Promoted to Senior Fire Control Worker
Ryan Eaton

Promoted to Fire Equipment Mechanic
Ryan Lee

District Retirements

County Fire Chief
Bob Roper

Batallion Chief
Jim Ackerman
Bob Ameche
Ranger Dorn

Captain
Michael Eul
Rick Frebe
Gary Gallion
Jules Griggs
Ron Lauer
Tom Law
Tom Retan
Daniel Rodriguez

Engineer
Mark Carrillo
Jeffrey Norcott

Firefighter
Daniel Salas

Public Safety Dispatcher II
Vicki Crabtree

Office Assistant III
Ann Patton

Department Profile

The Ventura County Fire Protection District response area covers 848 square miles, an area about half the size of the state of Rhode Island. The county has 42 miles of coastline and ranges in elevation from sea level to 8,831 feet at Mount Pinos in the Los Padres National Forest. The District provides fire, emergency medical and rescue services in areas as diverse as urban centers, the coastline, farmlands and wildlands.

In 2012, District firefighters responded to 34,779 calls for service – an average of over 95 every day – under an adopted operating budget of just over \$126 million. Currently, the District serves about 57 percent of the population of Ventura County, more than 480,000 people in six cities and the unincorporated areas of the county.

FIRE DEPARTMENT PROFILE

PERSONNEL

Safety:	395
(firefighters, battalion chiefs, etc.)	
Non-Safety:	158
(fire prevention, fleet maintenance, administration, etc.)	
Total Allocated Positions:	574
Fire Stations:	32
Administration and Support Facilities:	4

APPARATUS

First-Run Fire Engines:	31
First-Run Quint Apparatus:	1
Ladder Trucks (incl. 2 reserve):	5
Paramedic Squad Vehicles:	2
Wildland Fire Engines:	11
Crash Truck:	1
Crew Transports:	3
USAR Vehicles:	2
Reserve Fire Engines:	16
Fire Boat and Water Rescue Craft:	5
Command Vehicles:	14
Heavy Equipment:	9
(bulldozers, loaders, backhoes, etc.)	
Other Emergency Response Vehicles:	34



2012 Highlights

Transition at the Top

The United States has inaugurated three presidents since the last time the Ventura County Fire Protection District named a new leader. That changed in March 2012, when Mark Lorenzen was selected to replace Bob Roper as the Fire Chief.

Roper had served as Fire Chief since May 1997, and retired in March after almost 33 years of service to the citizens of Ventura County. During his tenure, Roper and the District received numerous awards and became a nationally renowned and respected fire department.

"Chief Roper left me a strong and fiscally sound organization," said Lorenzen, "but our greatest asset is the people we have working for us. Our firefighters set the bar for others to follow and our other employees are true professionals. I'm both humbled and proud to be leading them."

Lorenzen, a 21-year veteran of the department rose steadily through the ranks and was named Deputy Chief in May 2010. He is a CPA with more than 20 years of accounting experience and he has earned a bachelor's degree from the University of California at Santa Barbara and a Master of Public Administration from California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Rolling Hazardous Materials Laboratory

In 2012, the District upgraded its ability to respond to hazardous materials incidents with the purchase of a new HazMat trailer. Based out of Station 50 in Camarillo, HazMat 50 replaces the former trailer, a converted horse-hauler, which was placed into service in the late 1980s.

HazMat 50 features a slide-out Command Post that provides additional workspace, multiple computer stations, large-screen monitors, a top-mounted camera with infra-red for night vision, a lab and workspace area and storage for a wide range of testing equipment, boots, gloves, breathing apparatus and other equipment.

A federal grant paid about 75 percent of the trailer's cost. The remainder came from money budgeted over a period of years, making the purchase of HazMat 50 a sound fiscal decision.

CERT Members Refresh Their Skills

In October, the District hosted the fourth annual CERT Refresher exercise at the Regional Training Center in Camarillo. The exercise gives community volunteers who have graduated from the Community Emergency Response Team program the opportunity to polish their skills and use them in a realistic disaster scenario.

More than 70 CERT graduates turned out for the all-day training. The day started with classroom training on search and rescue, fire suppression, first aid, and medical triage. In the afternoon, the CERT members entered a large-scale simulated disaster area where they were tasked with employing their skills to mitigate the incident. The scenario included fires, a vehicle accident and people trapped inside a building.

Firefighters, volunteers and other emergency service workers took part in the exercise including some who wore special make-up to simulate injuries.

Uniforms have a New Look

For the first time since the District was formed in 1928, a departmentwide uniform patch has been approved and is now worn by all firefighters.

Various units within the department, including many of the fire stations, have had patches over the years. But the new shoulder patch is the first to be used by the entire department. The patches are in the shape of the fire service's traditional Maltese cross and the County seal is in the center of the patch. Firefighters wear a dark blue patch while chief officers wear a black one.



2012 Highlights

New Station Opens in Simi Valley

Station 47 on Erringer Road in Simi Valley was officially dedicated in November. Although a number of stations have been remodeled or relocated to new facilities, Station 47 is the first completely new station built by the District in over 10 years.

The station was constructed in response to the amount of development in the Big Sky area of Simi Valley, but the station is a benefit for the entire city as well. Its location north of Highway 118 allows very rapid access to the freeway, providing faster response time to other areas of the city when needed.

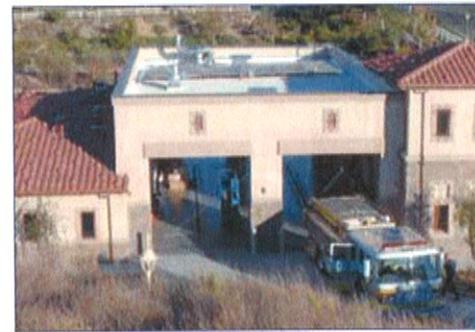
With the addition of Station 47, the Ventura County Fire Protection District now operates 32 stations in six cities and the unincorporated areas of the county. Station 47 is just over 7,000 square feet and features two apparatus bays and six dorms. It had a project budget of \$4.2 million and was built using an architectural design consistent with the community it serves.



The District Goes Green

Concern for the environment has always been a focus of the District. This concern is usually seen in our wildland operations where fuel management to reduce the severity of wildfires is also designed to preserve habitats, protect wildlife and combat invasive species. But the District is taking conservation even further.

Much of our light fleet vehicle inventory now consists of hybrid cars, reducing both fuel costs and emissions. And our two newest fire stations – 43 and 47 in Simi Valley – were designed to internationally recognized green building standards that lower operating costs, reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills, conserve energy and water, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The District is also making more use of solar panels for power (photo) and reducing the impact of exterior lighting on the neighborhoods around the fire stations by using downward-facing lighting.



48th and 49th Fire Academies

In 2012, the District graduated two fire academy classes, the 48th and 49th. A total of 27 new firefighters joined the ranks after completing their 18-week academies.

Each academy is a comprehensive course in firefighting instruction. The trainees learn about every aspect of firefighting and much of the coursework is conducted outside the classroom as they learn fire suppression techniques, search and rescue, ladders, hose evolutions, roof operations and many other skills.

Each academy concludes with a public demonstration of their skills at the Regional Training Center in Camarillo. During the demonstration, the trainees conduct live-fire exercises involving a structure fire and a vehicle fire. They also put on exhibitions involving automobile extrications, rappelling, ladder and roof operations.

At a formal ceremony following the demonstrations, the new firefighters receive their badges in front of family and friends.



2012 Fire Season

Ventura County enjoyed a light fire season in 2012. For the third year in a row, wildfire activity was light despite the occurrence of Santa Ana winds and very dry vegetation.

Firefighters were able to keep the fires that occurred small because they were both well-trained and well-prepared.

In July, a series of live-fire exercises were held near Moorpark to help the District's firefighters train and refresh their wildfire-fighting skills. Firefighters from other nearby agencies were invited to participate as well. The exercises involved progressive hose-lays, pumping, communications and tactics.



Bureaus

The Fire District is divided into six functional bureaus and units. Each performs specific tasks either to directly serve the public, or to support the District's mission of public service.

The Bureau of Emergency Services fulfills the core function of the Fire District. The bureau is responsible for all fire suppression and rescue activities, the delivery of emergency medical care, regional dispatching, and specialized responses such as hazardous materials incidents (HazMat), urban search and rescue (US&R) and water rescues.

The Fire District maintains 32 stations across the county, staffed 24-hours a day, for responding to emergencies. The fire apparatus at these stations are equipped to handle fires, provide emergency medical care and perform rescue operations. As a regional dispatch center, Public Safety Dispatchers at the Fire Communications Center direct responses from the Ventura County Fire Department and most of the other fire agencies and all of the ambulance services in the county.

In 2012, District firefighters responded to almost 35,000 calls for service.

The Bureau of Support Services consists of the Fleet Maintenance unit, the Wildland/Aviation unit and the Supply unit.

Fleet Maintenance is responsible for keeping the District's fleet of vehicles in service and available for response. This past year, the Shop achieved 100 percent completion of the Preventative Maintenance Program by coordinating and tracking the schedules for the District's various types of Fleet vehicles. This improved process resulted in cost savings and reduced the down-time of apparatus and vehicles. The Shop also took delivery of, and placed into service, eight new vehicles and ordered a new D6 dozer.

The Wildland Fire and Aviation unit responds to wildfires with hand crews and dozers to create firebreaks, conduct backfiring operations and assist in firefighting operations. It also coordinates the use of the Ventura County Sheriff's Department fleet of helicopters for Fire District missions.

The department was awarded the 2012 Western States Fire Managers Wildland Urban Interface Grant from the USDA Forest Service for the Buena Ventura Prescription Burn Project that will be implemented by the Wildland crew during 2013.

The Wildland unit has been selected by NASA and Chapman University to work in partnership on a satellite-based program to track fuel and soil moisture. This recognition is a result of Ventura County being one of the very few agencies that tracks its own fuel data.

The Supply unit receives and distributes all goods and materials for the Fire District. Most recently, staff ordered and issued the PPE and other equipment for members of the two fire academies held during 2012.

The Bureau of Fire Prevention is responsible for three functions that are both interrelated and mutually supportive. They are: Planning and New Construction; Code Enforcement and Licensed Care; and Engineering and Fire Protection Systems. Fire Hazard Reduction (weed abatement), Community Education and Filming, and Public Information are also units within the bureau.

In 2012, the Fire Prevention Bureau went online with a new land management software system called Accela. The Accela system improves data transparency for the District and the public, inter-agency collaboration on joint projects, project tracking, statistical/metric reporting and, most importantly, customer service.

The Community Education unit taught more than 300 classes, educating almost 14,000 people on such important topics as fire extinguisher use, emergency preparations and fire safety in the home.

The Bureau of Planning and Technology consists of the Training, Public Records, Computer-Aided Dispatch, Geographic Information and Mapping, Emergency Medical Services, Information Technology, Pre-Emergency Planning and Investigations, and Telecommunication units.

The EMS unit reported 31 CPR saves for 2012. These were all people who were found in full cardiac arrest, had a pulse re-established in the field and were later discharged from the hospital to resume a normal life. This is the highest number of CPR saves in a single year ever recorded by the District.

The Regional Training Center is responsible for fire, rescue and emergency medical training for the District's members. In 2012, department-wide training focused on live structure fire simulations to train firefighters to recognize rapid heat build-up and the proper use of nozzle applications in interior structure fire operations. The RTC also held promotional workshops for both captains and engineers and conducted behind-the-wheel driver's training for all firefighters.

The Pre-Emergency Planning and Arson/Fire Investigation unit aids the District by preparing plans for District actions in the event of a major emergency or disaster, and investigating the causes of fires. In 2012, the Custodian of Records processed 2,329 requests for Public Records or subpoenas, and there were 165 fire cause investigations. The bureau is also responsible for training Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members and more than 400 people completed the training in 2012.

The Human Resources Bureau handles the recruitment, hiring and administration of the District's employees. It staffs the fire stations, coordinates insurance and other benefits, conducts testing for promotional opportunities and performs risk assessment for the department. Industrial accidents and injuries are also under the supervision of Human Resources.

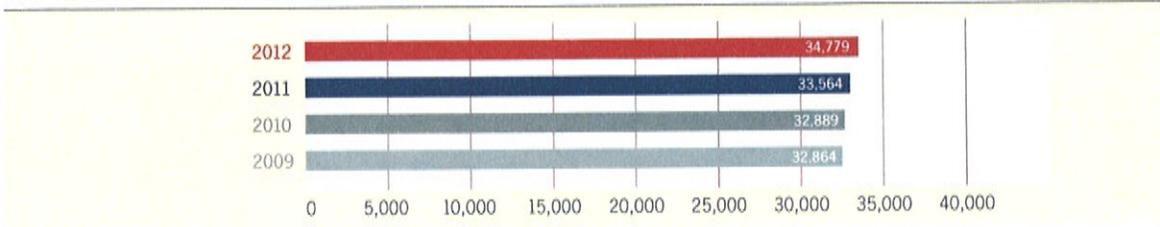
In 2012, the Human Resources Bureau conducted a number of internal and external recruitments. Administered various promotional processes and facilitated department retirements.

The Bureau of Administrative and Fiscal Services is responsible for the financial management of the Fire District. Its functions include payroll, accounts payable, purchasing, budgets, financial analysis and facilities management.

In the fiscal area, staff continued to refine procedures in payroll and purchasing to make functions more efficient. In addition, actions continued in implementing the department's cost recovery program which resulted in continued successes.

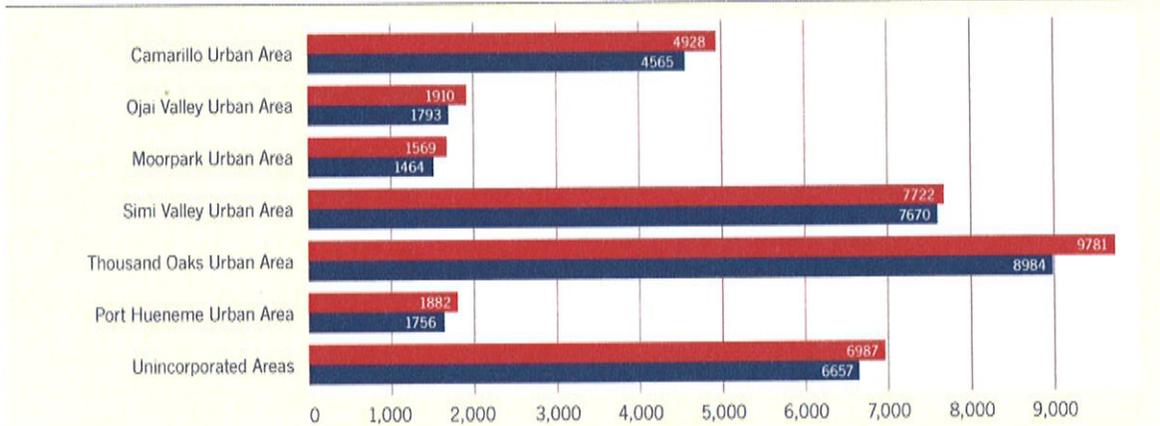
2012
2011

Annual Calls for Service



Calls for Service by Community

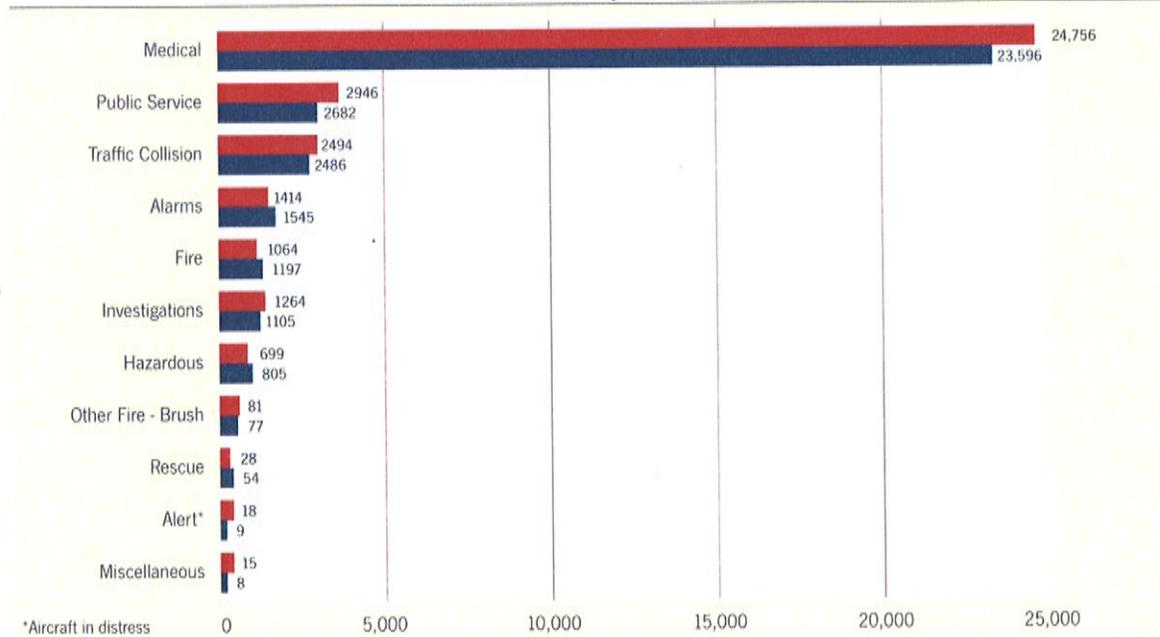
2012: 34,779 2011: 33,564



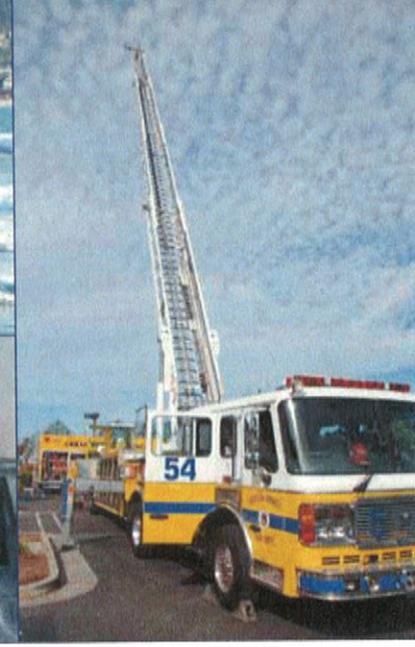
The statistics shown in this graph are generated from the District's Computer-Aided Dispatch system. The CAD system dispatches the closest resource to a call without regard to city boundaries. As a result, the statistics are shown by area, not city. Some results for 2010 have been restated in this publication due to changes in reporting methods. The Ojai Urban Area includes Oak View. The unincorporated areas include brush areas, the Camarillo and Oxnard Plains, portions of Malibu, and the communities of Oak Park, Casitas Springs, El Rio and Piru.

Calls for Service by Incident Type

2012: 34,779 2011: 33,564



*Aircraft in distress



APPENDIX D. ADDITIONAL UNIT SPECIFIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

SUMMARY

As the Ventura County Unit for the California Strategic Fire Plan, the Ventura County Fire Protection District is responsible for wildland fire protection within Ventura County under policies set forth by its Board of Directors and its contractual obligations to the State.

The Ventura County Unit fulfills this mission by using innovative strategies to create an atmosphere where careful planning, comprehensive education and highly trained firefighters result in well-protected communities. For the Ventura County Unit, the elements of effective protection are:

- Comprehensive Planning
- Ongoing Community Education
- Vigorous Prevention Efforts
- Aggressive Fire Suppression

With the proper mix of these elements, values at risk within Ventura County can be effectively and economically protected from the risks of wildfire.

Comprehensive Planning includes such pre-fire actions as the construction of fire breaks, hazardous fuel reduction, the construction of refuge areas and the creation of defensible space. These actions not only reduce the risk to valued assets, they also enhance firefighter safety.



Community Education is a key component to creating safe and Firewise communities. There is no doubt that, even during a major wildfire, there are not enough fire engines to have one in every driveway. As a result, the Ventura County Unit believes it must establish a partnership with residents to educate them on how they can harden their homes, provide defensible space and safely evacuate. This is accomplished primarily through the use of the “Ready, Set, Go!” wildfire preparedness program, but it is delivered in a number of ways. All Ventura County fire stations have printed materials available and all of the firefighters are trained in the key message points.

The Unit’s Community Education and Public Information units make regular presentations to service clubs, school groups, homeowners associations, civic organizations and, twice a month, at the County



Courts jury assembly room. Working with Fire Safe Councils and other interested collaborators, the Ventura County Unit reaches a wide range of affected property owners.

The Unit also employs websites (<http://fire.countyofventura.org> and <http://vcreadyssetgo.org>), social media (Facebook and Twitter), mobile apps and other available technology to help educate and inform the public.

Many of the Ventura County Unit’s fire prevention efforts have become models for other fire departments. In particular, the Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP), with a 48-year record of success, has been widely adopted in other jurisdictions. Under this program, abatement notices are sent to more than 14,000 property owners in the Wildland Urban Interface. The code requires these property owners to clear weeds and brush 100 feet from any structure. This removes dangerous fuels in proximity to

structures and it provides defensible space for firefighters to use. The Unit performs the work on parcels that do not complete the abatement by the deadline and the property owner is assessed the cost. But, due to the historical success of the program, there is about a 99 percent voluntary compliance rate.

Despite concerted education and prevention efforts, the Ventura County Unit understands that wildfires will occur. It has a stated goal of keeping 95 percent of these fires at less than 10 acres. Its commitment to training and equipment has resulted in achieving this goal on a regular basis. The Ventura County Fire Protection District firefighters are some of the best-trained firefighters in the world, and their expertise shows not only in the results in Ventura County, but through their contributions in other jurisdictions as well.

Because of all of this, the Ventura County Unit and its Strategic Fire Plan are a strong component of the California Strategic Fire Plan and the State's overall firefighting effort.

APPENDIX E. 2013

Fire Safe Councils / Contacts

Fire Safe Councils utilize the combined expertise, resources and distribution channels of its members, the Fire Safe Councils fulfills its mission to preserve Ventura County's natural and manmade resources by mobilizing all residences to make their homes, neighborhoods and community's fire safe.

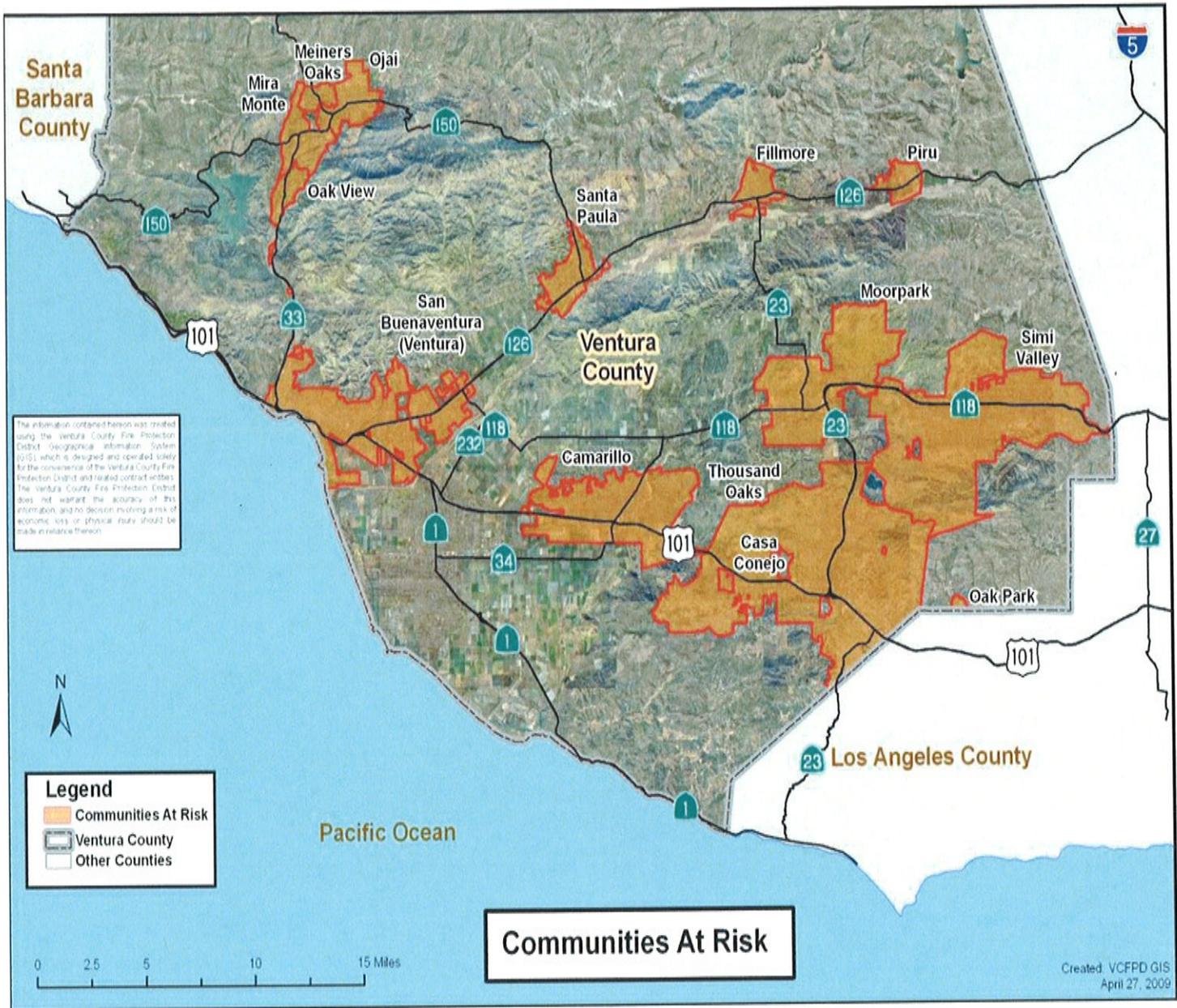
Ojai Fire Safe Council
Will Castagna, Secretary
1330 Foothill Rd. Ojai, CA 93023
Office: (805) 646-7307
wdc@mac.com

Ventura-Malibu Fire Safe Council
Thomas White, chair
(805) 457-6407

Mt. Pinos Communities Fires Safe Council
Janine Tominaga, President,
mtpinosfsc@frazmtn.com

Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council
Richard Atmore, President
(805) 644-6851
<http://cvcfiresafe.org/aboutus.html>

Ventu Park Fire Safe Council
Bill Pratt, President
141 Hope Road
Newbury Park, CA 91320
(805) 236-7519 cell
(805) 384-2748 x203 work
wpratt2057@aol.com



SUPPLEMENT: 2013

Annual Report of Unit Accomplishments

During the past year, the Ventura County Unit has:

- Conducted 20 neighborhood meetings in conjunction with the Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council to teach residents about wildfire preparedness using the “Ready, Set, Go!” program. These meetings were held in the neighborhoods at risk with the homeowners who lived there.



The small-group setting allowed people to ask questions specific to their area and concerns.

- Worked with the Central Ventura Fire Safe Council on a program to develop ranch maps for firefighters to use during wildfires. Data from Geographical Information Systems is used to produce a map that firefighters can use to navigate the property during a wildfire.
- Developed special curriculum for the “Ready, Set, Go!” program specifically focused on the agricultural community. Working in collaboration with the Ventura County Farm Bureau, the Ventura County Cattlemen’s Association and area growers, the District was able to produce a wildfire preparedness tool that was accepted and adopted by a wide range of agricultural operations.
- Worked with the Ventura County Farm Bureau and the Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council to develop and enhance the AG Pass program. This program provides identification cards that will allow essential personnel to pass law enforcement barricades to return to agricultural properties during times of voluntary evacuations

due to wildfires. The Ventura County Agricultural Employee ID Card (Ag Pass) identifies farm and ranch employees to firefighting personnel, California Highway Patrol officers, sheriff's deputies and other emergency workers assigned to restrict public access to areas threatened by fires and other disasters. As each fire season approaches, the Ventura County Fire Department works with these agencies to make sure incident commanders and other personnel understand that possession of these cards means workers are authorized to pass road closure points for the purposes of tending to crops, protecting outbuildings and conducting other necessary agricultural activities.

- Worked with Cal Fire and the Central Ventura Fire Safe Council to conduct a two-day certification class for contract dozer and transport operators.
- Staffed a booth at the annual Ventura County Fair promoting wildfire and home safety. More than 300,000 people attended last year's fair. The Unit will participate again this year in conjunction with the county's various Fire Safe Councils.
- Worked with residents in Matilija Canyon to create a Temporary Refuge Area and create defensible space. Matilija Canyon is an isolated community with only one road. Evacuation from the area might not be possible, so the District worked with the residents to harden their homes, create additional defensible space around them, and create a Temporary Refuge Area that can be used by either residents or firefighters.



- Conducted 26 “Ready, Set, Go!” presentations at the Ventura County Courts jury assembly room, speaking to jurors waiting for assignment. Prospective jurors are drawn from throughout the county, making this venue very effective for reaching people from many different areas and circumstances.



- At the Unit’s Regional Training Center, offered many ICS courses to departments from neighboring jurisdictions, making the training both accessible and affordable. In addition, the District provides significant IMT support by encouraging many of its safety and civilian personnel to participate on state and federal teams. District personnel fill positions in suppression, administration and support areas.
- Provided live-fire training and support for the Oxnard Fire Department, Oxnard College and Rio Hondo College and wildland fire safety training for the biologists at the Hopper Canyon Condor Refuge.
- Completed a radio system upgrade, installing a simulcast system that improves radio communication, particularly in canyons and other remote areas. The system is particularly useful in allowing responding units to monitor radio transmissions while in route. This helps increase situational awareness and allows the District to distribute resources quickly.

- Used goat herds as environmentally friendly methods for brush clearance. This was particularly effective at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library where the effort received significant media attention.



- Conducted Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for more than 400 students and held a countywide CERT “refresher” large-scale disaster drill for CERT graduates to practice their skills.
- Confirmed 31 CPR “saves,” the highest number the District has ever recorded. A save is defined as a patient who was found in full arrest, and was later able to leave the hospital and resume a normal life.

- Successfully planned fire mitigation near a naturally occurring underground oil fire near the city of Fillmore. By installing and maintaining dozer lines around the fire’s above-ground outlet, a major wildfire was averted when the fire, as it periodically does, reached the surface last July.



- In 2012, District firefighters responded to almost 35,000 calls for service, an average of 95 a day.
- Conducts regular checks of live fuel moisture levels at various points around the county to monitor fire hazard severity and works closely with the National Weather Service (NOAA) to support their efforts for public notice of increased fire danger, most notably Red Flag Warnings.
- The District reinforced its commitment to environmental awareness through the construction of two new fire stations that were built to internationally-recognized “green” building standards, preserving habitats and protecting wildlife during its fuel management projects, increasing the use of solar panels at its facilities and increasing the use of hybrid vehicles in its non-emergency fleet.

- The Community Education unit taught more than 300 classes and participated at dozens of events, educating more than 14,000 people on such important topics as fire extinguisher use, emergency preparations and fire exit drills in the home.



- Aggressively worked to maintain fire roads, fuel breaks and helispots to provide better firefighter access to remote locations and to provide firefighter safety and operational advantages.

- The District's child safety seat program installed 564 car seats and offered instruction to more than 1,000 parents and grandparents on car seat safety. The car seat installations are performed by appointment only to allow time for proper construction and are conducted in three locations around the county every week.



- Conducted a fire season opening press conference in conjunction with the National Park Service and other fire agencies operating in Ventura County. The press conference received coverage throughout Southern California and reinforced the Unit's messages on weed abatement and preparedness.

