

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

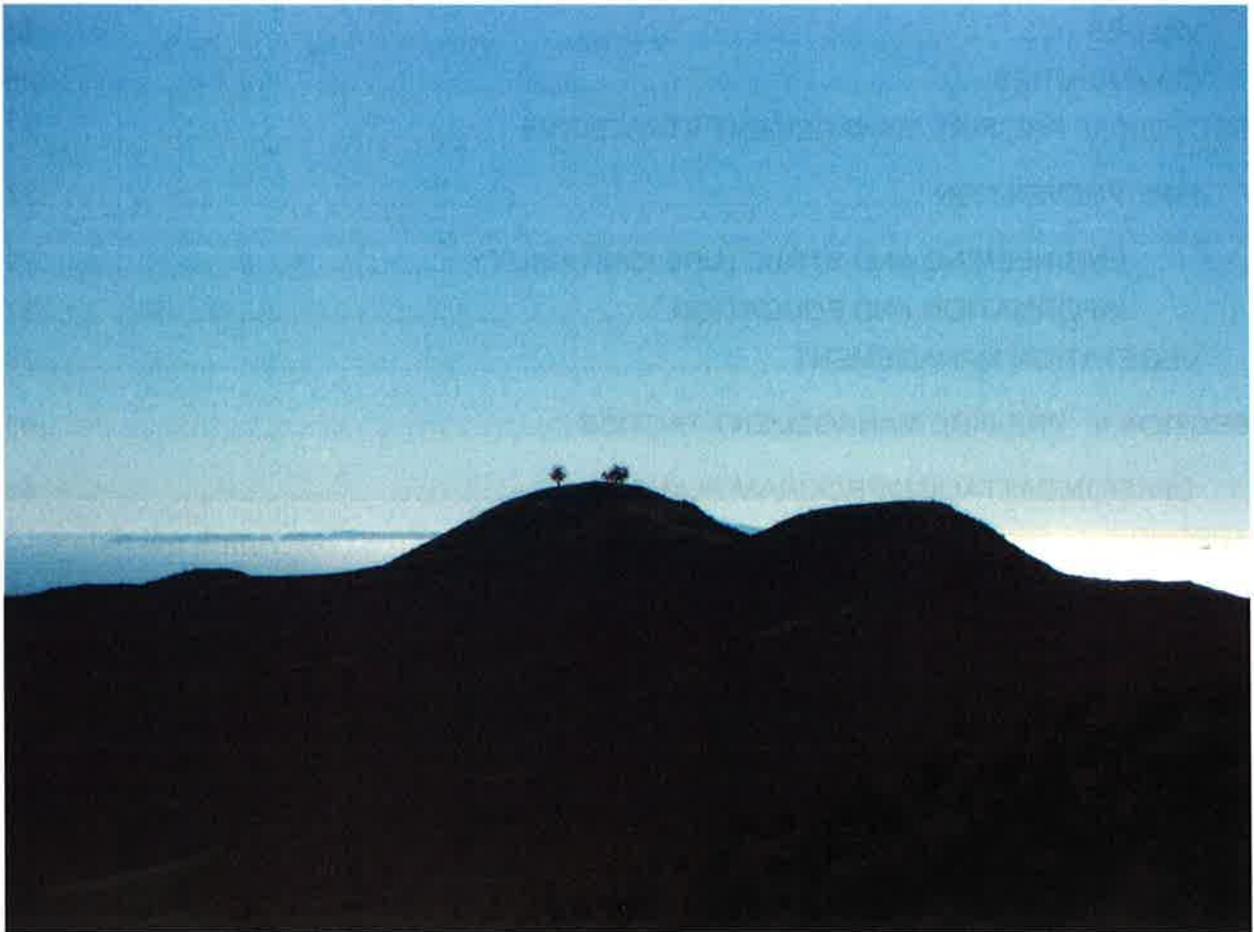


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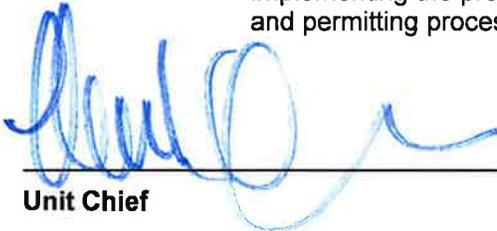
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SIGNATURE PAGE

Unit Strategic Fire Plan developed for Ventura County Fire Protection District (VCFPD)

This Plan:

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties as well as 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 designed 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 requirements are met and permitting processes are followed.

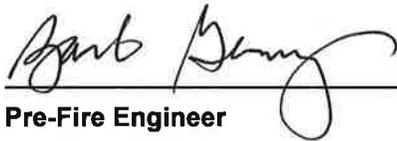


Unit Chief

Mark Lorenzen

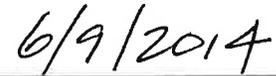


Date



Pre-Fire Engineer

Barb Geringer



Date

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ventura County is one of six counties that maintain a contractual relationship with CAL FIRE. A Unit Plan that is part of the California Strategic Fire Plan is used within the Ventura County unit.

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 while protecting the environment and preserving habitats.

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. Another significant element of this plan is to minimize the negative effects of wildland fire on the natural and man-made environments.

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 also serves as the CWPP for all of Ventura County. 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 whom it affects. This version of the Unit Fire Plan/CWPP was created by integrating the approved CWPP for Ventura County and the Unit Fire Plan template provided by CAL FIRE. The information provided in this Unit Fire Plan has been updated to reflect project plans, implementations, and accomplishments.

With a commitment to fire prevention through hazard reduction, public education and vegetation management programs, the Ventura County Unit is working to create communities

that are at reduced risk from wildfire. By carefully managing native vegetation, creating defensible space, hardening homes and raising wildfire awareness, the Unit believes it is preventing fires from occurring and mitigating the ones that do occur. These efforts result in reduced fire suppression costs and property loss, and keep both citizens and firefighters safer.

To support the Strategic Fire Plan, the Ventura County Unit Plan will continue in their efforts 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 support ongoing vegetation management and fire prevention projects as well as to implement new ones.
- Utilize CAL FIRE personnel and resources, in conjunction with other efforts, to assist with projects.
- Educate the public on wildfire preparedness, defensible space, fire hazard reduction, fire-resistant construction and landscaping, and situational awareness.

With skilled firefighters, fuel modification projects and engaged 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 on California's Pacific coast and is bordered by Los Angeles County to the east, Santa Barbara County to the west and Kern County to 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 (San Buenaventura) and the county has a population of over 830,000. The Ventura County Unit is an all-risk department providing emergency 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 located in Ventura County. The county is also home to Naval Base Ventura County at Point Mugu and Port Hueneme as well as the deepwater Port of Hueneme.

Ventura County has a Mediterranean climate. Average high temperatures are 65-75 degrees Fahrenheit year-round; average low temperatures are 45-60. Freezing temperatures are possible during the winter and highs of over 100 may occur 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 thereby elevating fire danger. The relatively short rainy season is typically between December and April.

Major industries within the county include oil exploration and production, manufacturing, health care, agriculture (greenhouse and row crops, citrus and avocado groves) ranching, tourism, television/ 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 Ventura County 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.

On May 2, 2013, the Springs Fire started along southbound Highway 101. With sustained Santa Ana winds of 40 mph and gusts up to 60 mph that combined with record heat, the fire grew quickly to 24,000 acres over 2 days. Although conditions proved to be challenging to the containment efforts, skillful firefighting and effective pre-fire accomplishments in hazard reduction mitigated the potentially disastrous effects of the fire.

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 fuel bed is dominated by sparse oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass.

Assets at risk are primarily structures along the southern border, agriculture along the north and western borders, and rangeland within the fuel bed interior. Recent urban development 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 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

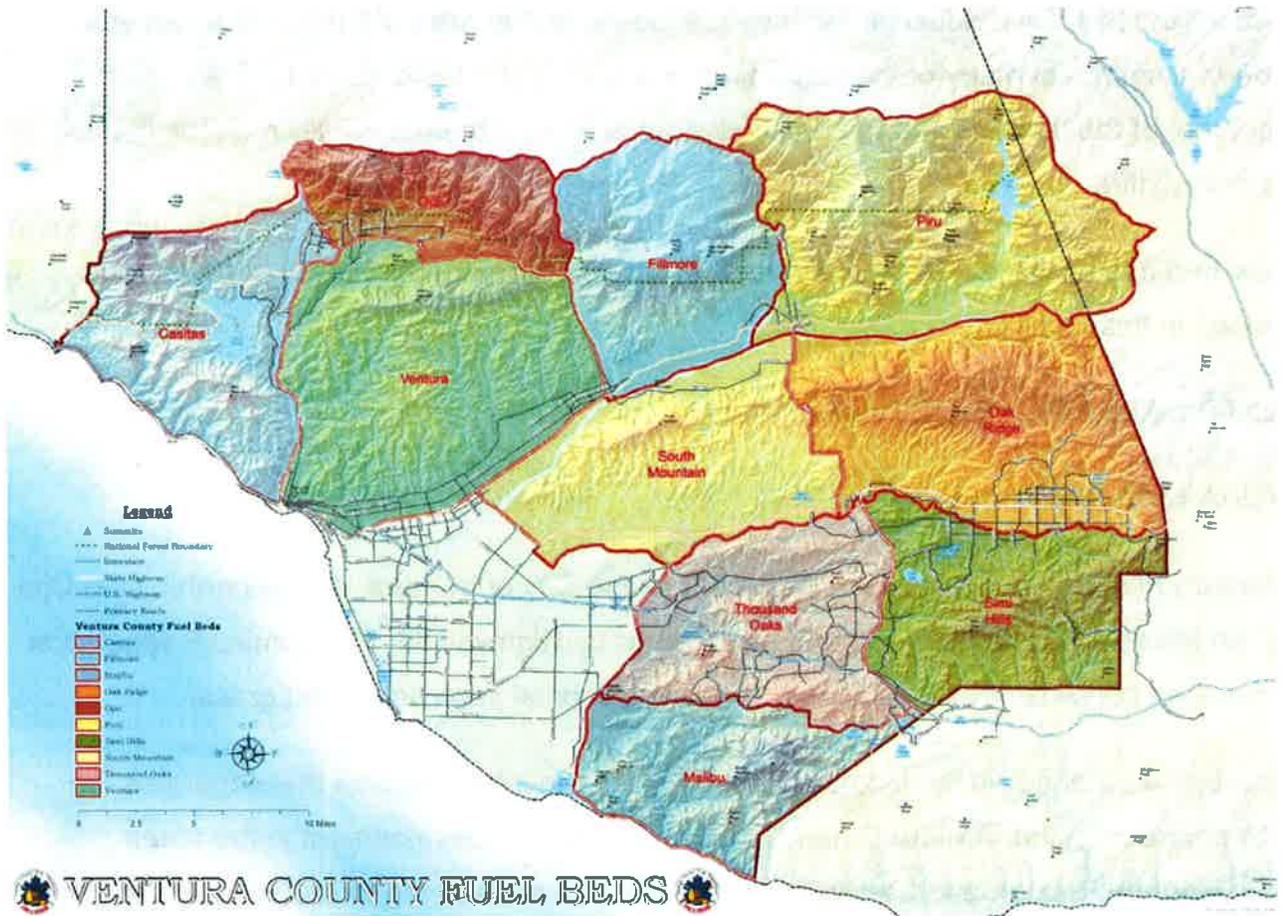
The Ventura Fuel Bed is bordered on the south by the City of Ventura, on the north by the Ojai Valley, on the east by Highway 150 and on the west by Highway 33. The dominant vegetation in the fuel bed consists of oak woodland, chaparral, coastal sage scrub and grass.

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) which is an all-risk, full-service department, composed of 583 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, 16 reserve fire engines, 11 wildland fire engines, five ladder trucks (including two reserve), five water rescue and fire boat craft, four paramedic squads, 15 command vehicles, 12 pieces of heavy equipment (bulldozers, etc.) and 33 other emergency response vehicles. The District responds to an average of 97 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, 36, and 37 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 2,100 plans a year, inspect more than 2,500 homes and businesses a year, and issue roughly 350 fire code permits and 500 film permits a year. We also work with more than 15,000 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 hand crew and bulldozer resources in the construction of fire control lines during wildfire suppression activities. When not engaged with fighting fire, the unit constructs and maintains fire breaks and fire roads, performs fuel management projects, and carries out 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. Ventura County's Aviation Unit has 4 copters available for fire department missions. Copters 6, 7, and 8 have water tank capabilities and 6, 8, and 9 are hoist-capable.



Fire Suppression

The most effective time to control a wildfire is in the incipient stages when intensities are lower and the perimeter is small. 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). 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.

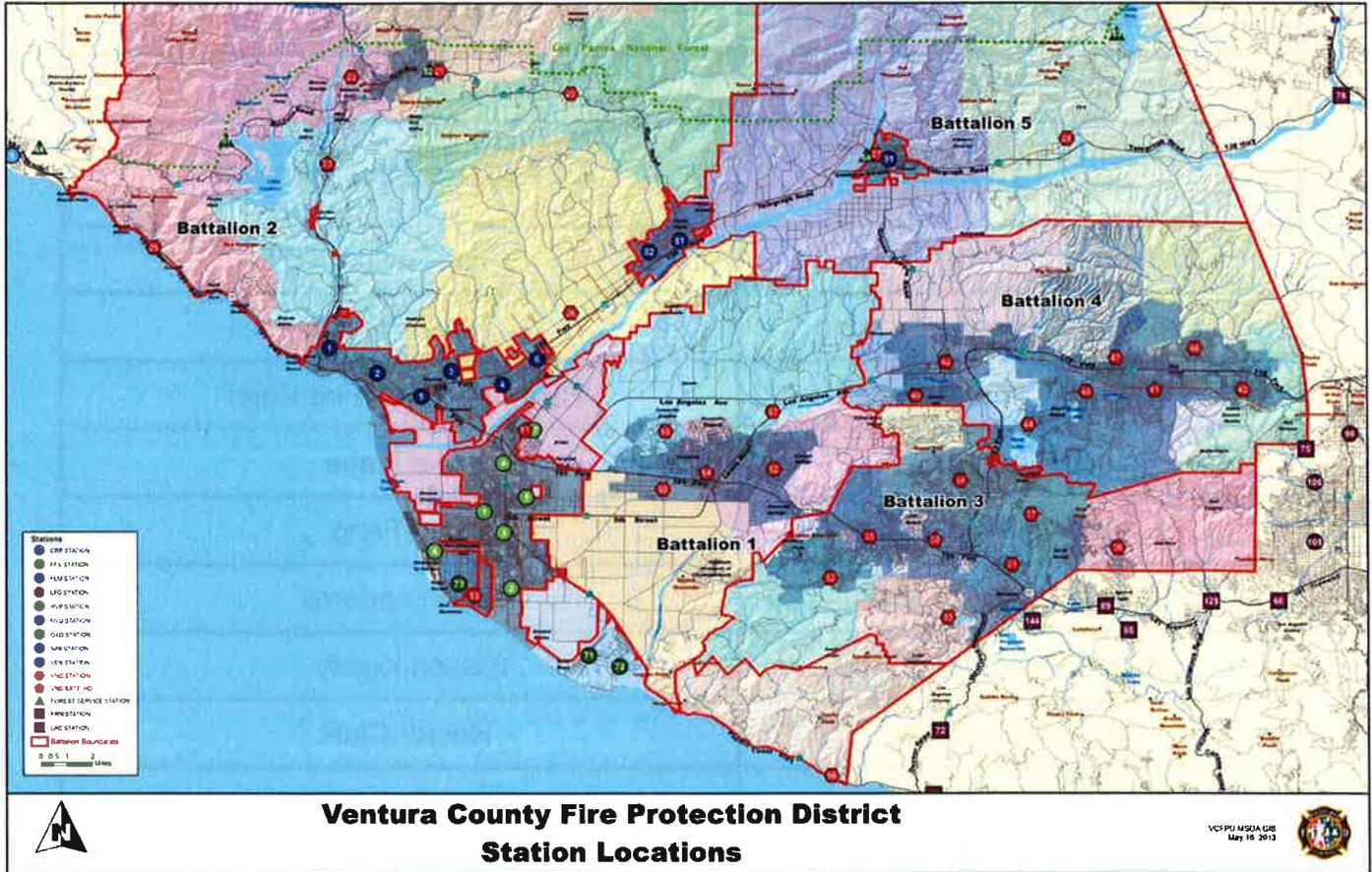
VENTURA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT - STATION DIRECTORY

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Communications	160 Durley Ave, Camarillo 93010	388-4279
Community Education	102 Durley Ave, Camarillo 93010	389-9748
Headquarters	165 Durley Ave, Camarillo 93010	389-9710
Supply	2431 Latigo Ave, Oxnard 93030	388-4536
Training	104 Durley Ave, Camarillo 93010	389-9727
Vehicle Maintenance	2451 Latigo Ave, Oxnard 93030	388-4500
Wildland Fire	2471 Latigo Ave, Oxnard 93030	388-4584
20 Summit	12727 Santa Paula-Ojai Rd, Santa Paula 93060	
21 Ojai	1201 E Ojai Ave, Ojai 93023	
22 Meiners Oaks	466 S La Luna Ave, Ojai 93023	
23 Oak View	15 Kunkle St, Oak View 93022	
25 Rincon	5674 Pacific Coast Highway, Ventura 93001	
26 Saticoy	12391 W Telegraph Rd, Santa Paula 93060	
27 Fillmore	613 Old Telegraph Rd, Fillmore 93015	
28 Piru	513 N Church St, PO Box 317, Piru 93040	
30 Civic Center	325 W Hillcrest Dr, Thousand Oaks 91360	
31 Westlake	151 Duesenberg Dr, Westlake Village 91362	
32 Potrero	830 S Reino Rd, Newbury Park 91320	
33 Lake Sherwood	33 Lake Sherwood Dr, Lake Sherwood 91361	
34 Arboles	555 E Avenida de los Arboles, Thousand Oaks 91360	
35 Newbury Park	2500 W Hillcrest Dr, Newbury Park 91320	
36 Oak Park	855 Deerhill Rd, Oak Park 91377	
37 North Ranch	2010 Upper Ranch Rd, Westlake Village 91362	
40 Mountain Meadows	4185 Cedar Springs St, Moorpark 93021	
41 Church Street	1910 Church St, Simi Valley 93065	
42 Moorpark	295 E High St, Moorpark 93021	
43 Yosemite	5874 E Los Angeles Ave, Simi Valley 93063	
44 Wood Ranch	1050 Country Club Dr, Simi Valley 93065	
45 Pacific Street	790 Pacific Ave, Simi Valley 93065	
46 Tapo Street	3265 Tapo St, Simi Valley 93063	
47 Big Sky	2901 Erringer Rd, Simi Valley 93065	
50 Camarillo Airport	189 S Las Posas Rd, Camarillo 93010	
51 El Rio	3302 Turnout Park Cir, Oxnard 93036	
52 Mission Oaks	5353 Santa Rosa Rd, Camarillo 93012	
53 Port Hueneme	304 N 2nd St, Port Hueneme 93041	
54 Camarillo	2160 Pickwick Dr, Camarillo 93010	
55 Las Posas	403 Valley Vista Dr, Camarillo 93010	
56 Malibu	11855 Pacific Coast Hwy, Malibu 90265	
57 Somis	3356 Somis Rd, PO Box 347, Somis 93066	

Battalion 1
 Battalion 2
 Battalion 3
 Battalion 4
 Battalion 5

2160 Pickwick Dr, Camarillo 93010
 15 Kunkle St, Oak View 93022
 325 W Hillcrest Dr, Thousand Oaks 91360
 1910 Church St, Simi Valley 93065
 3302 Turnout Park Cir, Oxnard 93036

383-6412
 649-6013
 371-0469
 578-2053
 278-2731



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, Southern Region	Region Chief
Cal Fire, SLO	Unit Chief
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	Ed Pert, Regional Manager
California Highway Patrol	J.A Farrow
Southern California Edison	Troy Whitman
Fillmore Fire Department	Rigo Landeros, Fire Chief
Local Arborist	Mike Inaba
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	Cynthia Haas
City Manager Santa Paula	Jaime Fontes
City Manager Simi Valley	Eric Levitt
City Manager Thousand Oaks	Scott Mitnick
City Manager Ventura	Mark Watkins
Local Ranchers	Bud Sloan

Organization	Title
Local Resource Conservation District	Marty Melvin, Executive Officer
National Park Service Santa Monica Mountains NRA	David Szymanski, Superintendent
Natural Resources Advisor, University of CA	Christopher M. Smith, Ventura County Director
Natural Resources Conservation Services	Dawn Afman
Public Information Officer, Thousand Oaks	Andrew Powers
Santa Monica Mountains NRA	Derrick Hartman, FMO
Santa Paula Fire Department	Richard Araiza, Fire Chief
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, Hopper Mt.	Dan Tappe
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services, Southern California Fire Management Zone	Lee Rickard, Zone FMO
USDA Forest Service, Ojai Ranger District	Kevin Grant, Division Chief
Ventura City Fire Department	David Endaya, Fire Chief
Ventura City Fire Department	Brian Clark, Fire Marshall
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
Ventura County Board of Supervisors	District 3 Supervisor, Kathy Long

Organization	Title
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, Vegetation Management Planner
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Mark Lorenzen, Fire Chief
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Massoud Araghi, Fire Marshall
Ventura County Fire Protection District	Mike Lindbery, Public Information Officer
Ventura County Sheriff	Geoff Dean
Ventura County Watershed Protection District	Tully Clifford, Director
Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council	Richard Atmore, President
Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council	Will Castagna, Secretary

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 within the Wildland Urban Interface, but almost all lie inside the Ember Zone. The Ember Zone is any area within one mile of natural vegetation. These structures are priority assets.

Also given priority are the county's agricultural resources. There are approximately 125,000 thousand acres of farmland and nearly 200,000 acres of grazing land. 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 their supporting industries – 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 into six separate watersheds – Ventura River, Santa Clara River, Calleguas Creek, Malibu Creek, Cuyama River, and Coastal Creeks. These critical watersheds and their surrounding valley areas are prime candidates and receive priority consideration for vegetation management and fuel break projects. These projects benefit the watersheds by reducing fire hazards, removing invasive species, improving water yield and enhancing wildlife

and fisheries habitats. In addition, rapid post-fire assessment with project implementation as necessary is conducted in order to restore and protect areas of recovery, minimize flooding, protect water quality, and maintain native species seed banks.

COMMUNITIES

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. Clustered within the southern portion of the county are 14 Communities at Risk.

- 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 including many different types of orchards which require protection. These orchards are intermixed and often pose a challenge when protecting the various trees and nearby agricultural infrastructure. 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. These installations have a significant exposure to wildfire.

SECTION IV: PRE-FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

FIRE PREVENTION

Fire 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 goal by addressing the risk factors which 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 the WUI and ember-landing areas within and around the communities at risk.
- Promote fire-resistant landscaping and construction.
- Conduct mechanical fuels treatments.



- Develop and enforce building construction standards and local fire codes.
- Compose pre-fire safety and escape plans.
- Develop and implement focused community meetings, programs and wildfire safety education efforts directed at structure and property owners in the WUI areas.

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 for the threat of 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 grown and livestock raised by the county’s farmers and ranchers 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 very challenging to control. Many residents have built their homes and landscaped their properties without fully understanding the impact a fire could have on them. “Ready, Set, Go!” helps them prepare their homes so they can leave early, confident that they’ve done everything 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. Over 1000 fire departments across the country have now adopted the “Ready, Set, Go!” program.

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

Fireline – A public resource application to inform citizens of incidents in their area.

<http://firelineweb.ventura.org/>

“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 reduce 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 resource agencies, and the Ventura County Watershed District, to maintain and preserve 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

Project Number	Project Name	Planning Area	Status	Project Type	Activity Acres	Project Acres
3013-1975-PRE-029	FHRP Defensible Space Inspection	SRA, LRA	A	PREV	countywide	
3013-2013-VMP-028	FHRP Road Clearance	SRA, LRA	P	VMP	50	50
3013-2014-PRE-027	Wildland Fire Mitigation & Education Outreach	SRA, LRA	O	PREV	countywide	N/A
3013-2014-VMP-026	Neighborhood Chipper Program	SRA, LRA	A	PREV	countywide	100
3013-2011-FPL-013	Ag ID Cards	SRA, LRA	O	FPL	countywide	N/A
3013-2013-PRE-014	Wildfire Safety Expo	SRA, LRA	O	PREV	countywide	N/A
3013-2013-VMP-000	Helispots	SRA	M	VMP	0.25-1.0	7
3013-2009-VMP-032	Hopper Mountain Condor Refuge	SRA	A	VMP	19	19
3013-2008-VMP-025	Ojai Last Defense	SRA	A	VMP	14	28
	Fillmore Front Project	SRA	O	VMP		24000
3013-2008-VMP-030	KFA Project	SRA	M	VMP		
3013-2011-VMP-001	Reagan Defensible Space		M	VMP	18	18
3013-2008-VMP-003	Upper Ojai Wildfire Protection Zone	SRA	M	VMP	25, 8	33
3013-2013-VMP-031	San Buenaventura Project	SRA	A	VMP	78, 113, 100, 176, 93, 128, 110, 179, 24, 132	2163
3013-2010-VMP-002	Matilija TRA	SRA	M	FPL	7	7
3013-2012-PRE-015	Central Ventura County Ready, Set, Go! Program	SRA, LRA	O	PREV	countywide	N/A
3013-1974-VMP-024	Fire Roads	SRA	O	VMP	countywide	
3013-2014-OTH-018	Asset Protection Plans	SRA, LRA	O	FPL	countywide	N/A
3013-2010-VMP-035	Sespe	SRA	O	VMP	2.7	2.7
3013-2014-VMP-021	Taylor Ranch and Area Fuel Management Project	SRA	P	VMP		

Project Number	Project Name	Planning Area	Status	Project Type	Activity Acres	Project Acres
	CSUCI Grazing	SRA	P	VMP		
	Santa Paula Range Fire Protection and Fuel Management Project	SRA	P	VMP		
	South Mountain Area Fire Protection and Fuel Management Project	SRA	P	VMP		
	Springs Incident Post-Fire Assessment, Repair and Recovery	SRA, LRA	P	OTH		
N/A	Ojai Senior Citizen Residential Fire Mitigation Project	SRA, LRA	O	PREV	.025-1.0	300
N/A	Ojai Honor Farm Fire Mitigation	SRA	O	VMP	164	164
	COSCA Project	SRA, LRA	P	VMP		
	Casitas Open Space Project	SRA	O	VMP		
	Grubb-Taylor Bridge	SRA	A	VMP		

Project Number: Cal MAPPER ID Project Name: Project Name as in Cal MAPPER

Planning Area: SRA or LRA

Status: A = Active, P = Planning, C = Completed, O = Ongoing, M = Maintenance

Project Type: VMP, CFIP, FPL = Fire Plan, PREV = Prevention, and FI = Forest Improvement, Other = identify at the bottom of the table.

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.

APPENDIX C: 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, 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 through the use of the “Ready, Set, Go!” wildfire preparedness program, and the message is delivered by other means. 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 D

Fire Safe Councils / Contacts

In order to fulfill their common mission to preserve Ventura County's manmade and natural resources, Fire Safe Councils utilize the combined expertise, resources and distribution channels of their members.

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

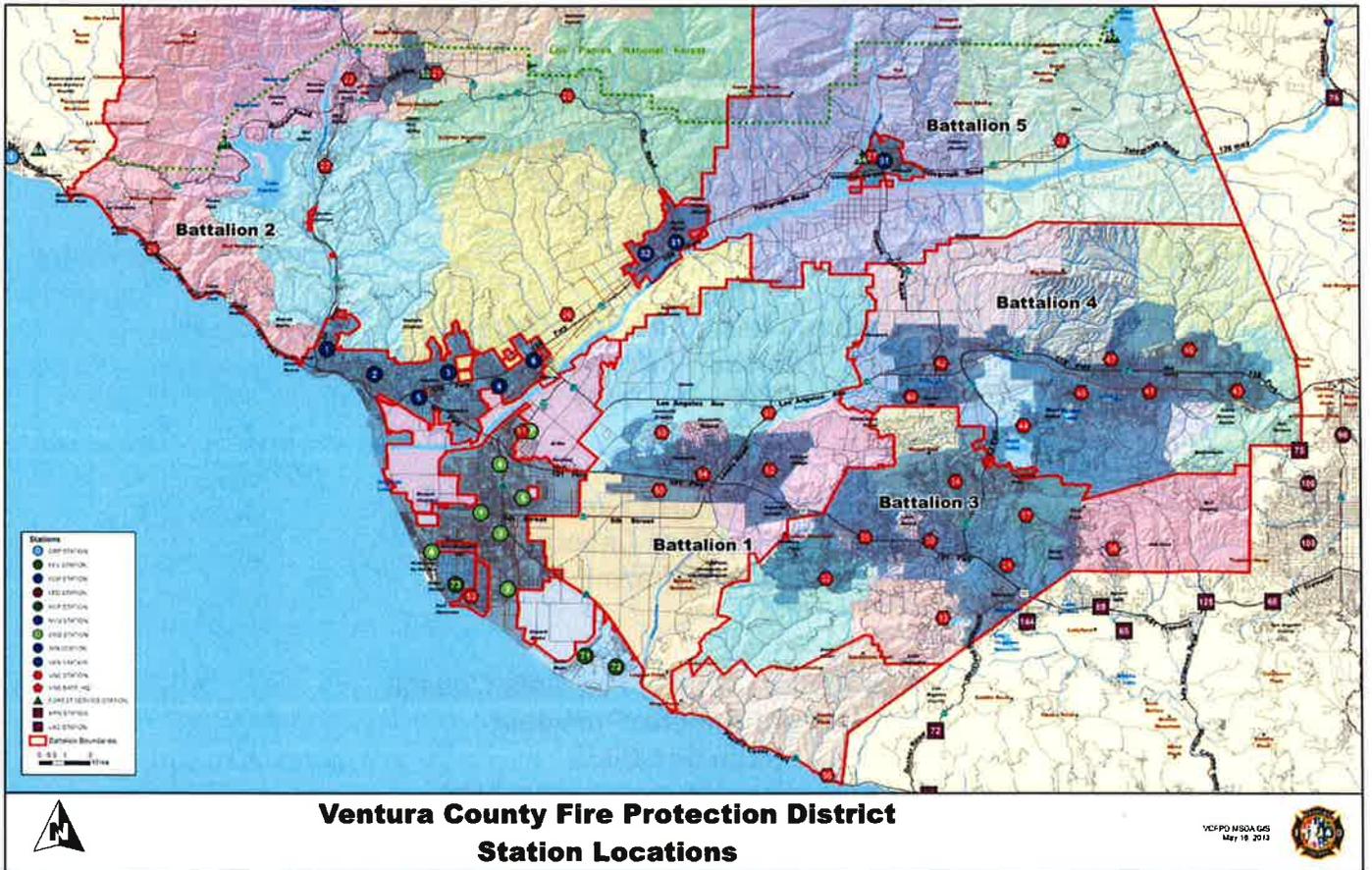
Ventura-Malibu Fire Safe Council
Thomas White, chair
(805) 457-6407

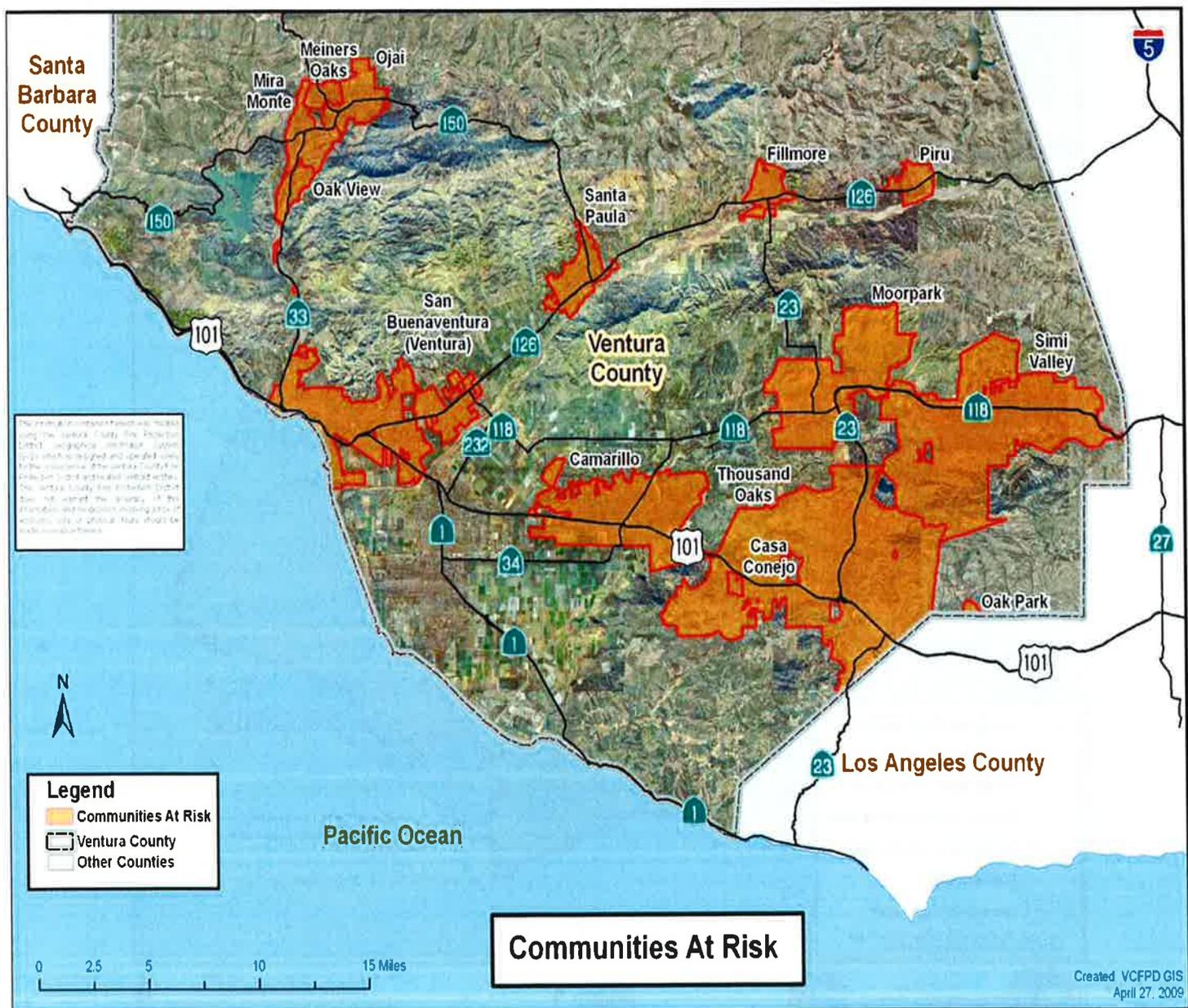
Mt. Pinos Communities Fire Safe Council
JD and Suzi Caboor
mtpinosfsc@frazmtn.com

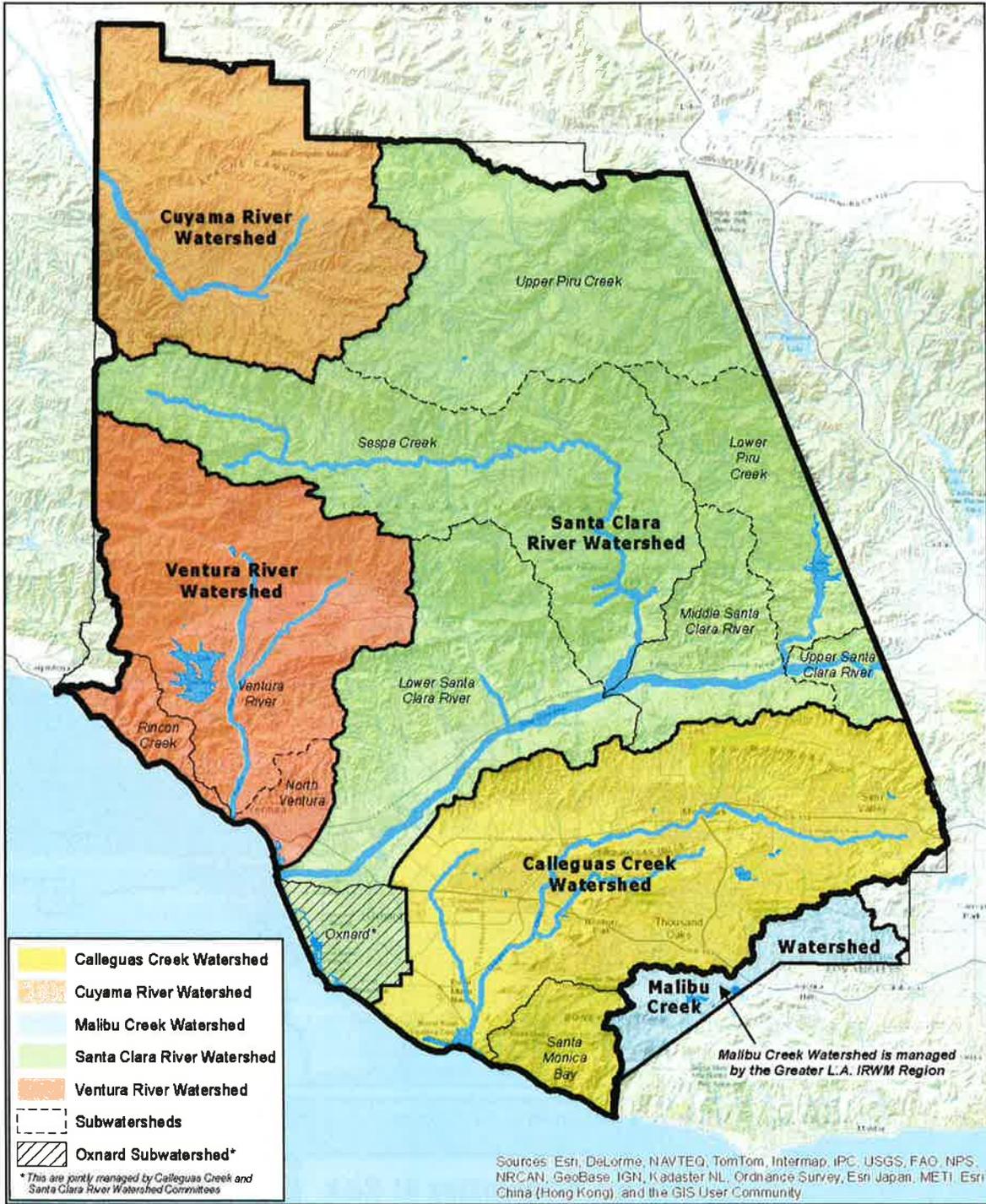
Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council
Richard Atmore, President
(805) 644-6851
<http://cvcfiresafe.org/aboutus.html>

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

EXHIBITS: MAPS





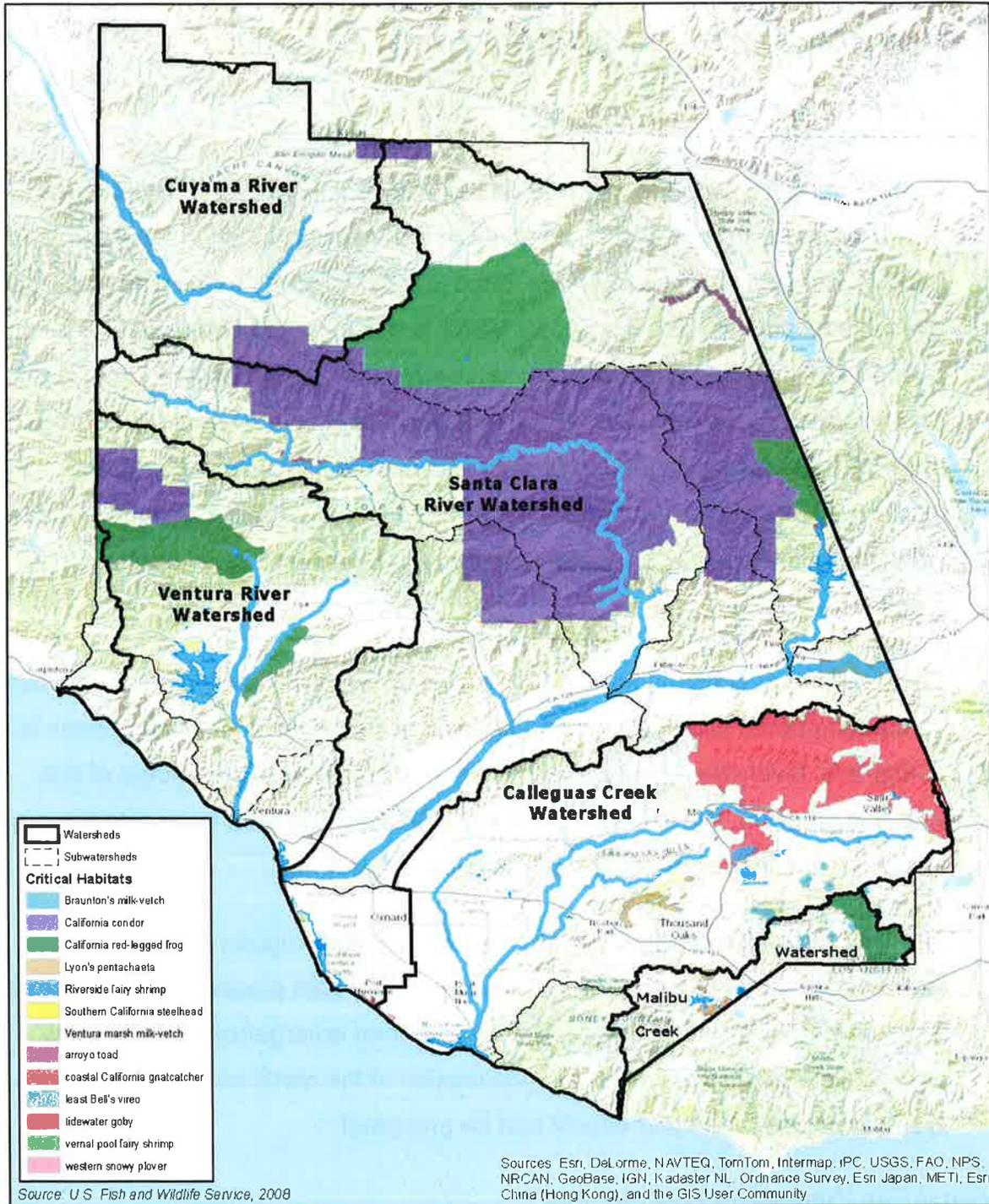


Ventura County
Resource Management Agency
Information Systems Department
Map created on 08/20/2013



Map 1 IRWM Boundaries

0 2 4 8 Miles
Disclaimer: This map was created by the Ventura County Resource Management Agency Mapping Services - GIS, which is designed and operated solely for the convenience of the County and related public agencies. The County does not warrant the accuracy of this map and no decision involving a risk of economic loss or physical injury should be made in reliance thereon.



Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2008



Ventura County
Resource Management Agency
Information Systems Department
Map created on 07/31/2013



Map 9

0 2 4 8 Miles

Disclaimer: this map was created by the Ventura County Resource Management Agency Mapping Services - GIS, which is designed and operated solely for the convenience of the County and related public agencies. The County does not warrant the accuracy of this map and no decision involving a risk of economic loss or physical injury should be made in reliance thereon.



ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING (2013)

Fire Planning:

- Good progress was made this year on our Wildland Pre-Fire Plan situational awareness tool. The project is based upon the Ventura Situation Awareness Tool (VSAT), but also includes revisions to the legacy hardcopy maps which are made available to incoming fire resources. VSAT is a web-based geospatial decision support tool intended to allow users to create and share information across the organization or incident. The "VSAT Wildland Pre-Plan Viewstate" is a version of the VSAT interface designed to browse and update pre-planning data before the incident. As fire stations submit local pre-fire plan data, the information is made available both internally and externally through VSAT and as printable PDF maps.
- The department continued to work with Central Ventura County Fire Safe Council on creating ranch plans which provide quick accurate situational awareness to firefighters. Over two dozen ranch owners have now taken advantage of this valuable program. We intend to work with CVCFSC this year to update the maps in order to insure consistency in the GIS work performed.
- The Unit also worked with CVCFSC on the Ag Pass Program which provides identification cards allowing essential personnel to gain passage through areas of disaster-restricted access. Public safety and other emergency workers allow discretionary access to workers in possession of the cards so that outbuildings, livestock, crops, and other assets can be protected.

Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:

- Fire roads and helispots in the county are maintained annually to ensure adequate access and egress for firefighting resources. By providing improved

access, incident mitigation is accomplished quickly and more safely. Annual maintenance of the two Matilija Canyon Temporary Refuge Areas was also conducted.

- Ventura County's FHRP insures compliance with CA PRC 4291 by conducting annual property inspections. Approximately 8000 structures are included in the program which has become so successful that there were only 30 non-compliant properties in the county which required enforcement mitigation in 2013.

Education and Information:

- The Unit continues to support wildland fire education and succession planning for their employees by offering many ICS/NIMS courses. The Unit supports large incident management by allowing Incident Management Team participation by safety and non-safety personnel.
- The department conducted 20 30-hour CERT classes and certified 430 people.
- Three times per year, Unit crewmembers post 41 signs throughout the county to remind residents of the FHRP deadline, extreme fire danger, and the Ready, Set, Go! Program.
- The Unit staffed a wildfire preparedness booth at the Ventura County Home and Garden Show. The "House-out" approach to preparedness was discussed as well as the ongoing drought situation. Interactive maps were used to demonstrate and educate folks on their potential risks and appropriate mitigations.
- The Ventura County Wildland Division developed social media which highlighted wildland fire-specific activities such as prescribed burns, live fuel moisture charts, red flag warnings, and training.
- The Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council utilized grant award money to provide local phone book inserts which provided wildfire preparedness information. This project reached 20,000 residences and businesses.

Vegetation Management:

- The VMP personnel routinely collected vegetation specimens to determine live fuel moisture percentages. This is one of many helpful tools used to identify the potential for significant fire in Ventura County.
- The Buenaventura I Vegetation Management Program - Prescribed Burn Plan (VMP) has been in the planning phase for almost four years. The first VMP plan was approved by Cal fire in November 2013. The original 51,000 acre project area was re-defined as the planning area and smaller project areas like the Buenaventura I VMP will be developed in the future. On December 6, 2013 the first burn was conducted. Due to long term drought conditions and short term fire weather conditions the prescribed burns were delayed. Additional burns are scheduled for 2014.



- Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council contracted with The C.R.E.W. - an environmentally-oriented nonprofit youth leadership and employment organization – to conduct

defensible space clearances for 50 residences in remote Matilija Canyon. This community is at extreme risk due to the narrow canyon's limited access and egress. Funding for the project was through grant awards.

- Each year the Ventura County Fire Protection District conducts a 20 acre fuel reduction project around the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. This project complements the existing defensible space and provides enhanced protection from Santa Ana wind driven fires. This fuel reduction project is accomplished through grazing by goats. Due to the large number of visitors to the library, this project gets a great deal of exposure and provides a platform to promote defensible space.



- One of the unique challenges the district faces is the Sespe underground fire. Since 2007 a fire has been burning underground in a remote area of the county. The fire is located within the Sespe Condor Refuge and poses a direct threat to the condors as well as the biologists observing in the field. Each year the district

constructs control lines utilizing a dozer and crew to isolate fires that are ignited. The last fire to occur was on August 8th, 2013 and due to the mitigations, the incident was quickly and safely controlled.

- Wildfire training is a foundational component that promotes safety and increases efficiency in the fire service. As an ongoing support to the local colleges and neighboring fire departments we provided wildland fire training for Oxnard City Fire Department, Ventura City Fire Department, Oxnard College and Rio Hondo College.
- Each year the Fire District also conducts training for the biologist assigned to the Sespe Condor Refuge. Almost all of their operations are imbedded in the remote back country of the county. Increasing their situational awareness and providing training on the use of the tools and equipment they have available to them helps increase their knowledge and promote safety.

Volunteerism:

- CVCFSC - in cooperation with Ventura County Fire Protection District – offered the 2nd Annual Hired Equipment Operator Fire Safety Training Workshop. The workshop provided certification for operators of dozers, transports, and other heavy equipment. In the course of 2 days, 76 people became certified.
- CVCFSC staffed a booth at the Ventura County Fair promoting wildfire and home safety. Their council's volunteer time devoted to outreach, education, ranch plans, and Ag Pass program totaled over 750 hours in 2013.
- The Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council held their 2nd annual Wildfire Safety Fair. The Ventura County Wildland Unit as well as the Forest Service, VC Search and Rescue, VC Sheriff's Department and other public safety entities participated in this popular one-day event. Ventura County Fire's Firefighter Robby was also in attendance.

- Members of the Ventura County Unit's Wildland Division attended Matilija Canyon's annual Homeowner's Association General Membership Meeting and discussed the current and long-term fire situation in their canyon. The Unit continues to work with the residents on a regular basis providing advice as well collaborating on their newly-formed volunteer "Fire Cells".

Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:

- Our GIS department updated our Prevention Desk Application with Fire Hazard Reduction Program parcels and new 2013 imagery to assist each fire station in their FHRP efforts. Updated parcel data is also used in composing mailings to affected parcel owners. New maps were created for each station showing FHRP parcels. GIS also assisted Fire Prevention by creating maps for contract cities which reflected FHRP parcels and FHSZs.

