

BATTALION 2 – Battalion Chief Dan Summerville

**And the Forest Ranch Preservation Alliance - Coordinator Mary Ellen Largent
And Cohasset Community Association - Coordinator Bert Coffman**

Purpose Statement

Battalion 2 includes the northeastern area of Butte County and a small portion of southeastern Tehama County. Generally bisected by State Highway 32, Battalion 2 runs northeasterly from the Chico City limits to the crest of the Sierra Nevada; an elevation change of nearly 7000 feet. It encompasses about 175,000 acres of State Responsibility Area (SRA), and about 25,000 acres of Butte County Fire Department, local government jurisdiction. Battalion 2 includes the communities of Butte Creek Canyon, Cohasset, Forest Ranch, and Butte Meadows, and has a permanent population of about 10,000 and another 3-4000 seasonal workers and recreationalists.

The influencing factors involved are the urban interface housing situation, timber values and range, fire history, and fuel hazard ratings. Many of Butte's large damaging fires have originated within this target area. Steep, inaccessible terrain combined with light, flashy fuels at the lower elevations and extremely heavy fuel loading at the higher elevations dominate Battalion 2. Fires that start in this area immediately threaten high value / high-risk exposures and are often complicated by the challenges of urban interface firefighting.

With the exception of variable lightning occurrence, man-caused fire ignitions are very low. In 2003 48 fires were reported, 8 more than 2002. Fires by type for Battalion 2 are as follows: 21 vegetation fires, 7 refuse fires, 10 vehicle fires, 10 structural fires. The top three causes were equipment – 18, arson – 9, and debris – 5. For 2003, Arson fires occurred in various locations throughout the Battalion with no established pattern discernable, while equipment caused fires were all the result of mechanical or electrical failure in highway vehicles, and the debris fires consisted mostly of out-of-hour control burns.

Historically, Battalion 2 has had relatively low fire activity without any single fire cause element that stands out. Fire starts in this area, while relatively few have also generally been the result of various cause factors making focused ignition manage difficult. With this said the emphasis of the Battalions fire prevention efforts will focus on fuel management and code enforcement activities, especially those immediately around structures.

In the community of Forest Ranch, there is an active coalition of public and private members called the Forest Ranch Preservation Alliance. Organized to address preservation of the community and forest health, a Battalion 2 Fire Captain actively participates in all Alliance activities. In the Community of Cohasset several citizens have become active in the Butte County Fire Safe Council providing input and serving as liaisons to the Cohasset Community Association. In the Community of Butte Meadows the active recruitment of Butte County Volunteer Fire Fighters has led to a renewed interest in home fire safety and fuels reduction for the 300 plus residents in the area. Also, active in the Butte County Fire Safe Council are members of the local watershed groups, Butte Creek, Big Chico Creek and Little Chico Creek, who from time to time have become involved with fire wise planning and hazardous fuel reduction planning.

Forest Ranch Preservation Alliance (FRPA)

Coordinator: Mary Ellen Largent
Email: melargent@bigfoot.com

PO Box 696
Forest Ranch, CA 95942

Mission Statement

We are stewards of our lands and the responsibility for management, preservation, and restoration rests with the community working together. It's a big job and it competes with other priorities and demands on time: families, jobs, privacy, health, or financial circumstances. Individually, few of us have the resources to do a thorough job of preserving the natural setting of even our own property. FRPA is a way to create appropriate plans, share the responsibility, and get outside assistance without losing local control. The membership is made of local property owners coming together to preserve the beauty and lifestyle of Forest Ranch. The Forest Ranch Community Association sponsors their effort. See our web site for our accomplishments in pre-fire management.

Cohasset Community Association (CCA)

Contact: Bert and Marilyn Coffman
Email: bertcoff@aol.com

The Cohasset Community Association has applied and received \$12,000 in Federal Assistance under the Economic Recovery Program, Grant No. 01-DG-11051150-020, to complete a Fire Safe Plan for the Cohasset Community. In early 2002 a contract was awarded to Firestorm Inc. to complete the Fire Safe Plan.

The Association applied for a second grant to fund an evacuation plan for the community. This grant opportunity was made available from the Bureau of Land Management by way of the Sacramento Regional Foundation.

Additionally, The Association is in the process of assembling a grant proposal for a shaded fuel break project along Cohasset Road that is projected to extend from the lower Cohasset area up to the existing SPI H Line project. This project will not only benefit the citizens of Cohasset by attempting to make the main community escape route a safer means of egress, but it will provide firefighters an extra margin of safety during firefighting operations along the road.

Both The Forest Ranch Preservation Alliance and Cohasset Community Association have taken on the task of coordinating the community chipper program in the respective communities. Under the program residents complete fuel reduction work, stack the cut material along the roadway, and the material is later chipped using a contractor established under the Butte Fire Safe Council Community Chipper Program.

Prioritized Objectives

- Gain compliance with PRC 4291, defensible space standards through an education, inspection, and enforcement program.

Butte Unit
Fire Management Plan
2005

- ❑ Reduce fuel loading in the communities by working with homeowners and large landowners.
- ❑ Assist large property owners, such as the Brown and Cheal ranches and Big Chico Creek Ecological Reserve, with hazardous fuel reduction.
- ❑ Promote fire wise property and community planning programs.
- ❑ Conduct grammar school fire prevention education programs.
- ❑ Participate in all community activities.
- ❑ Maintain fire occurrence at or below current levels.
- ❑ Solicit stakeholder input regarding the preservation of the community against damaging wildfires.

Prescriptions

- ❑ Each Company Officer will perform 25 or more LE38 inspections in their respective response areas with re-inspections as necessary to gain compliance. Additionally, public complaints will be investigated and appropriate action initiated. Train and motivate VIP's to conduct additional inspections.
- ❑ Support stakeholder participation in fuel management activities. (Forest Ranch Preservation Alliance and Cohasset Community Association)
- ❑ Support SPI shaded fuel break construction and maintenance, coordinate and assist with Cal-Trans and the Lassen National Forest on fuels reduction.
- ❑ At Forest Ranch and Cohasset schools conduct fire prevention and education classes yearly or as requested.
- ❑ Participate in all community functions, includes association meetings, fundraisers, school activities, be an active member of the community.
- ❑ Post and maintain Fire Prevention signs along roadways.
- ❑ Promote the reflective address sign program.
- ❑ Perform quality preliminary fire investigations and follow-up action to determine fire causes.
- ❑ Maintain a positive fire prevention attitude and educate the public at every opportunity.

Ongoing & Proposed Projects

- ❑ **Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) VMP H-Line Shaded Fuel Break** – Continue the vegetation management program of understory burning on SPI lands along the H-Line shaded fuel break.
- ❑ **Doe Mill Community Roadside Fuel Reduction** – This is a planned project using CDF Fire crews to reduce fuels along the public right of ways on Canyon Shadow Rd. and Wilder Dr. to improve ingress for emergency crews and egress to residents in the Doe Mill Ridge Community.
- ❑ **Cohasset Road Shaded Fuel Break** – This project proposes to complete a shaded fuel break along Cohasset Road through the community of Cohasset and tie in with the SPI shaded fuel break along the H-Line northeast of the community. Cohasset Road is the only road serving the community of Cohasset; roadside fuel reduction would improve ingress and egress during emergencies and give firefighters a safer place to defend the community.

Butte Unit
Fire Management Plan
2005

- **USFS Lassen National Forest (Jonesville DFPZ)** – The LNF is proposing to complete a DFPZ shaded fuel break along Humboldt Rd. that extends near the WUI Communities of Butte Meadows and Jonesville.

Butte Unit
 Fire Management Plan
 2005

