

1. Executive Summary

Unit Overview

The Siskiyou Unit (SKU) is comprised of Siskiyou County and encompasses 1.2 million acres of ecologically diverse wildland ranging from high desert in the east, to the magnificent coniferous forests of the Klamath River drainage with lush farmland carpeting the interior valleys, and 14,000' Mt. Shasta as the geographical centerpiece. The County is drained by the Sacramento River in the south, the Klamath River in the north and the Salmon River in the west.

The County's weather patterns are as diverse as its ecology. Summer temperatures may climb into the 100's while winter temperatures may drop to well below freezing with significant snowstorms common throughout the winter months. Fuel types in the Unit include timber, timber with grass under story, grass, brush, oak woodland and desert sage and juniper stands. Like most mountainous areas, Siskiyou County may experience a high occurrence of lightning activity during the summer months. Ranching, recreation and the timber industry fuel Siskiyou County's economy. The summer months see a large influx of tourists who take advantage of the County's wide-open spaces for outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, white-water rafting, mountain climbing and camping.

SKU has primary responsibility for just over 1.2 million acres of CDF Direct Protection Area. The County contains portions of 6 National Forests. The Interagency Command Center staffed by CDF and USFS assumes dispatch responsibility for 28 local fire departments and 7 ambulance companies responding to incidents over a vast geographic area.

The Siskiyou Unit manages 7 fire stations, and 1 conservation camp. During fire season, 13 Schedule "B" engines and 2 dozers are staffed. The county provides funding under the Amador plan for 3 stations to remain open year-round.

Status of the Assessments

The Four assessments addressed in the Fire Plan process are:

1. Level of Service
2. Severe Weather
3. Hazardous Fuels
4. Assets at Risk

The initial validation of raw data related to these assessments has taken several years to complete, and methodologies continue to be refined by the Pre-Fire Engineers and Sacramento support staff. The **level of service assessment** for the Unit is complete. The initial **hazardous fuels assessment** is complete. The **severe weather assessment** methodology is currently being addressed at the Sacramento Fire Plan level to refine the data acquisition process, but the current map used to display severe weather zones in the Unit is acceptable. The **assets at risk ranking** has been completed. This year the Unit has combined the four assessments and established a high-risk/ high-value, countywide ranking. The ranking achieved through the assessments is in agreement with historically targeted areas.

Intent of the Plan

The intent of the Unit Fire Management Plan is to create and maintain a meaningful script for addressing the wildfire problem in Siskiyou County. In line with the stated goals of the California Fire Plan, and the mission of the Department, life and property are the highest priorities. Stakeholder input coupled with sound data and local fire suppression experience, should pave the way for a dynamic and enduring document to guide our community.