# Support Bureaus

## *Fuels Management Programs*

## *Vegetation Management Program*

During the past 10 years, the Unit has treated an average of 1,000 acres annually under the Vegetation Management Program (VMP). Currently the Unit has treated approximately 19,825 acres since 1982, with an estimated 1500 additional treated acres by the end of the year. Many of the projects undertaken in the Unit have been within the wildland-urban interface. Due to the existing land use patterns within the Unit and the increasing population densities in Amador and El Dorado Counties, it is anticipated that the emphasis of the Vegetation Management Program will continue to focus projects within the wildland-urban interface areas. Future projects will concentrate on densely populated areas with high assets at risk.

## *California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP)*

Both federal and state cost share programs exist to assist private timberland owners in the management of their lands; CAL FIRE will pay as much as 90% of the cost of the project. The California Forest Improvement Program (CFIP) has recently been funded to aid non-industrial timberland owners in managing their lands. Many of the cost share practices such as site preparation, timber stand thinning, pruning, and chemical release aid in managing and reducing fuel loading on non-industrial timberlands.

In 1999, CAL FIRE foresaw the need to expand the ability of the program to meet other watershed needs. These measures include thinning, shaded fuel breaks, and other land treatments or forest resource improvement projects consistent with Section 4794.

## *Proposition 40 Fuel Reduction Program*

The goal of the CAL FIRE Prop-40 Fuels Reduction Program is to reduce wildland fuel loadings that pose a threat to watershed resources and water quality. These funds would be for planning, administration, and implementation of forest land and fuels management projects that protect watersheds from catastrophic wildfire, thereby improving water quality, protecting habitat and fisheries, and controlling erosion and sedimentation in the Sierra Nevada region.

CAL FIRE is using the VMP program, Community Assistance Grants (CAG's) and CFIP as tools to accomplish the goal of protection of the targeted watersheds, specifically fuels management projects. In order to protect these stands from fire it may be necessary to accomplish more than the standard

lopping of fuels generated from hand site preparation, Pre-commercial thinning (PCT), pruning and/or release activities. The table below displays the Community Assistance Grant projects implemented under the Proposition 40 Program:

| Project name | Type | County | Treated Acreage | Completion Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Auburn Lake Trails #2 - Perimeter Common Lots | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | Up to 251 | April 15, 2009 |
| Gold Ridge Forest #1 -Priority Common Lots | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | 130 | April 15, 2009 |
| Chrome Ridge #1 | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | 41 | April 15, 2009 |
| City of Placerville #1 - Gold Bug Park | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | 45 | April 15, 2009 |
| SPI #2 - Sly park / Swansburrough | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | 170 | April 15, 2009 |
| Sand Ridge #3 - Wolverine Modified Shaded Fuelbreak | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | 30 | April 15, 2009 |
| Auburn Lake Trails #3 - Perimeter Private Lots | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | Up to 239 | April 15, 2009 |
| Meeks Bay Fire | Chipper | El Dorado | | April 15, 2009 |
| Lake Valley Fire | Chipper | El Dorado | | April 15, 2009 |
| Sandridge #1 Freshwater lane | Roadside fuelbreak | El Dorado | 6.5 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Sandridge #2 Puma Point / Jaguar lane | Roadside fuelbreak | El Dorado | 8.0 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Georgetown #1 Spanish Dry Diggins | Roadside fuelbreak | El Dorado | 20 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Mosquito Priority Evacuation Routes phase 2 | Roadside fuelbreak | El Dorado | 23 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| South Rubicon Bay Fuels Reduction | Fuelbreak | El Dorado | 20 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Fallen Leaf Fire Project 4, Phase 1 Fallen Leaf Road | Fuelbreak And Thinning | El Dorado | 14 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Jackson Extension Fuelbreak (46Ac) | Fuelbreak | El Dorado | 46 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Antelope Fuelbreak (50% of Project= 75Ac.) | Fuelbreak | Amador | 147 | Dec 31, 2007 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marz Fuel Modification | Fuelbreak | Amador | 59 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| *Bear Valley -- total cost $58,280(funded AEU/TCU) | Fuelbreak | Alpine | 30 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| Grizzly Mtn Defense Zone | Fuelbreak | El Dorado | 8 | Dec 31, 2007 |
| City South Lake Tahoe Fuels reduction Project (Springwood) | Fuelbreak | El Dorado | 30 | 2009 |
| El Dorado RCD C.A.G.- Uncle Toms Pre Fire mgmt area I | Modified shaded fuelbreak | El Dorado | 200 | May 31, 2007 |
| Auburn Lake trails C.A.G. | Roadside fuelbreak | El Dorado | 65 | Dec 31, 2006 |
| Mosquito Priority Evacuation Routes | Roadside fuelbreak | El Dorado | 62 | Dec 31, 2006 |
| Amador FSC C.A.G - Shake Rams Fiddletown complex | Fuelbreak | Amador | 143 | 2006 |
| Alpine FSC C.A. G.-Hot Springs Road Right-of-Way Fuels Treatment | Roadside Fuelbreak | Alpine | 30 | 2009 |
| Fallen Leaf Lodge Homeowners | Fuelbreak and Thinning | El Dorado | 25 | 2009 |
| Lake Valley Fire Protection District Chipper Program | Chipper | El Dorado | 245 | Oct. 2005 |
| Christmas Valley 3 Fuelbreak (Combined into Chipper Agreement) | Fuelbreak and Thinning | El Dorado | 25 | Nov. 2006 |
| Meath Road C.A.G | Modified Shaded Fuelbreak | Amador | 112 | April 15, 2010 |
| Grizzly “GF4” PFSB | Perimeter Fuelbreak | El Dorado | 129 | April 15, 2010 |
| Logtown #1 | Fuelbreak & Thinning | El Dorado | 127 | April 15, 2010 |
| Greenstone country #1 | Modified Shaded Fuelbreak | El Dorado | 50 | April 15, 2010 |
| Markleeville/Woodfords Fuel Reduction | Roadside Fuelbreak | Alpine | 100 | April 15, 2010 |

## *California Tahoe Conservancy Fuel Reduction Program*

The California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) conducts fuel reduction projects throughout the Lake Tahoe Basin through their Urban Land Management Program. The California Tahoe Conservancy, through contract, funds CAL FIRE personnel to perform various professional forestry duties, including those duties required to implement fuel breaks. In addition, CAL FIRE provides professional forestry advice and services, including but not limited to, preparation and implementation of THPs, Exemptions and vegetation management projects on California Tahoe Conservancy properties. CAL FIRE also works with the California Tahoe Conservancy Forest Habitat Enhancement Program on fuel reduction, forest health and wildlife habitat enhancement projects located within the urban interface and general forest areas.

In January 2005, CAL FIRE was authorized approximately 40 million dollars of Proposition 40 funds over 5 years by the legislature for fuels reduction projects which would result in improvement and protection of watersheds and their water quality and assets at risk. Approximately $600,000 was allocated to CAL FIRE expressly for authorizing its use to the California Conservation Corp for fuels reduction projects on California Tahoe Conservancy lands.

## *Pre-Fire Engineering*

Prefire engineering is a critical part of the unit fire plan. GIS mapping is used to analyze the fire environment and help unit managers make key decisions for on the ground prefire projects. It is the goal of engineering to provide the most current and accurate data for the fire plan process. This goal is accomplished by field validating the data with unit battalions, collaborators, county officials, and federal agencies.

**Objectives:**

- Update the AAR data
- Update the fuels for the unit
- Maintain current and up to date county parcel data
- Work with Unit personnel and collaborators to enhance the fire plan data
- Asses the weather rankings for accuracy

## *FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU – Battalion Chief Chris Anthony*

### AMADOR/ELDORADO UNIT (AEU)

### 2008 IGNITION MANAGEMENT PLAN

**2007 Fire Season Ignition Statistics**

Wildland fire ignition stats were tracked for the entire year of 2007. The Unit experienced 251 fires within its Direct Protection Area (DPA) for the year. This number represents a 27% decrease from 2006 (301 fires), and less than a 1% decrease over the 10-year average (299 fires).

The five largest fires in the unit were:

1) Montfort Fire at 180 acres, $350,000 dollars of damage, cost to suppress estimated at $32,833, and caused by an illegal burn barrel.

2) Bayne Fire at 126 acres, $3,000 dollars of damage, cost to suppress estimated at $130,000, and the cause arson.

3) Logtown Fire at 104 acres, $6,000 dollars of damage, cost to suppress estimated at $126,000, and the cause was undetermined.

4) Mine Fire at 80 acres, $5,000 dollars of damage, cost to suppress estimated at $121,000, and the cause was arson.

5) Pardee Fire at 36 acres, $75,000 dollars of damage, cost to suppress estimated at $25,000, and caused by a vehicle.

| 2007 Five Largest Fires | Acres | Total Cost | Cause |
|---|---|---|---|
| Montfort Fire | 180 | $387,833 | Burn Barrel |
| Bayne Fire | 126 | $133,000 | Arson |
| Logtown Fire | 104 | $132,000 | Undetermined |
| Mine Fire | 80 | $126,000 | Arson |
| Pardee Fire | 36 | $80,000 | Vehicle |

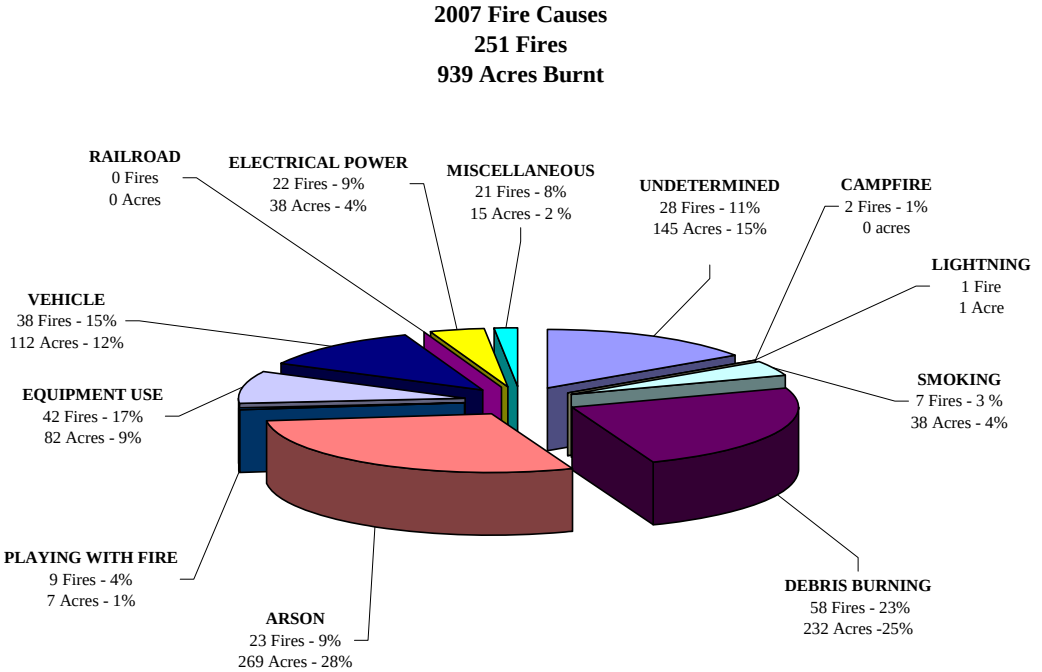
Approximately 941 acres burned in 2007 compared with the 10-year average of 1,890. Damage caused by these fires in 2007 was estimated at approximately $608,900.00.

In reviewing fire causes during the 2007 season, it was found that the five leading causes of vegetation fires in the Unit were:

**1) Debris Burning (58 fires – 23%)**
**2) Equipment (42 fires – 17%)**
**3) Vehicle (38 fires – 15%)**
**4) Undetermined (28 fires – 11%)**
**5) Arson (23 fires – 9%)**

These accounted for 189 fires or 75% of all fires that occurred. These were followed in order by: electrical power (22 fires – 9%), miscellaneous (21 fires – 8%), playing with fire (9 fires – 4%), smoking (7 fires – 3%), campfire (2 fires – 1%), lightning (1 fire) and railroad (0 fires).

Fire occurrences on the increase from the 10-year average were debris burning and electrical power. Increases can be explained because of year long reporting not just during the declared fire season. All other sources were on the decrease even with year long reporting. Ignitions causing the most acreage loss were arson at 269 acres, debris burning at 232 acres, and undetermined at 145 acres. When analyzing data for the whole year debris burning caused the most fires, though these fires were kept relatively small in size, one fire at 180 acres accounted for most of the acres burned for this category.



In order to better address ignition management for the Unit, a more detailed analysis of the fires in each major cause classification was conducted.

**1) Debris Burning** accounted for 58 fires or 23% of the total fires in the Unit. Escaped debris burns resulted in 232 acres being burned or 25% of the Unit's total. This cause saw a 19% increase from the 10-year average of 47. The increase was explained because in previous years, fires were only counted when they occurred during the declared fire season. In 2006, 29 debris fires occurred outside the declared fire season with 39 debris fires occurring during the declared fire season. 69 debris fires were reported during the year. A concerted educational program along with the elimination of debris burning during June through November substantially limited the number and severity of these fires. The Montfort Fire accounted for the greatest amount of damage and suppression costs for this category. Lack of clearance is the #1 cause for the escape burns followed by wind and old control burns re-igniting (coming back to life). Unattended control burns also contributed to the totals. All fire departments in Amador and El Dorado Counties are assisting us in handing out legal notices (LE-38's) on all debris caused fires. These legal notices serve to educate the public and put them on notice that their next escape will result in a citation. This cooperation has proven to continually keep number and acres lost below the 10 year average. Over the last 3 years of LE-38 notices only 2 repeat offenders were identified. There were no repeat violators in 2007.

**2) Equipment** accounted for 42 wildland fires or 17% of the total ignitions. Equipment caused fires resulted in 82 acres being burned or 9% of the Unit's total. This represents a 21% decrease from the 10-year average of 53. Historically, this classification has been one of the top causes of wildfire starts in the Unit. Equipment use and debris burning were again heavily targeted this year. Through continuing displays and education programs, we hope to continue a downward trend. In reviewing the specific causes within this classification, approximately 68% are due to the misuse of mowers and weed-eaters. Welding or grinding without adequate clearance caused 16% and another 16% were caused by the operation of heavy equipment. The majority of the heavy equipment caused fires occurred in the El Dorado Hills Area. These fires were all quickly extinguished. Over 90% of the mower fires were due to the mower blades striking rocks and friction belts igniting collected chaff around them. Ironically, most of the mower caused fires occurred as a result of residents trying to clear property for fire safety, but doing it during the hottest part of the day, usually between the hours of 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM.

**3) Vehicles** accounted for 38 fires or 15% of the total ignitions. Vehicle caused fires resulted in 112 acres being burned or 12% of the Unit's total. This represents a 24% decrease from the 10-year average of 50. This category has

been one of the leading causes of fires in the Unit for the past several years. The majority of these fires occurred along the major traffic corridors of Hwy 16, 49, 50, 88, and 124.

**4) Undetermined** accounted for 28 fires or 9% of the total ignitions. Undetermined caused fires resulted in 145 acres being burned or 15% of the Unit's total. This category saw an increase from the last several years but it was not above the 10 year average of 30. The majority of acres burned by this cause class resulted from the Log Town Fire which burned 108 acres. Hard work and dedication of the Unit's Fire Prevention Staff and the company officers who conduct thorough origin and cause investigations aid in the declining number in this cause class. Thorough origin and cause investigations also assist in determining fire patterns which may be reduced by public education and or enforcement.

**5) Arson** accounted for 23 fires or 9% of the total ignitions. Arson caused fires resulted in 269 acres burned or 29% of the Unit's total. This represents a 33% decrease from the 10-year average of 35. The Fire Prevention Bureau made 2 arrests for PC 451c – Arson to the Wildland. One person was arrested in El Dorado County and one person in Amador County.

**6) Electrical power** accounted for 22 fires or 9% of the total ignitions. Electrically caused fires resulted in 38 acres burned or 4% of the Unit's total. Electrically caused fires increased by one from the 10 year average of 21. This is a decrease from the last 3 years. Most of these fires resulted from trees, branches or birds into the power lines.

**7) Miscellaneous causes** accounted for 21 fires or 8% of the total ignitions. Miscellaneous caused fires resulted in 15 acres burned or 2% of the Unit's total. This cause class saw a 27% decrease from the 10 year average of 29. This classification includes causes such as spontaneous combustion, fireplace ashes deposited in the wildland, interior fires such as wiring, flue fires, barbequing, cooking fires, fireworks, and electrical wiring on the user side of the meter. Ashes deposited in the dry vegetation caused 8 fires, spontaneous combustion caused 6 fires, gopher bombs caused 3 fires, and an electric fence caused 2 fires to name a few.

**8) Playing with Fire** accounted for 9 fires or 4% of the total ignitions. Playing with Fire resulted in 7 acres burned or 1% of the Unit's total. This was a 44% decease from the 10 year average of 16.

**9) Smoking** accounted for 7 fires or 3% of the total ignitions. Smoking caused fires resulted in 38 acres burned or 4% of the Unit's total. This was a decrease by one fire from the 10 year average of 8. The majority of these fires were

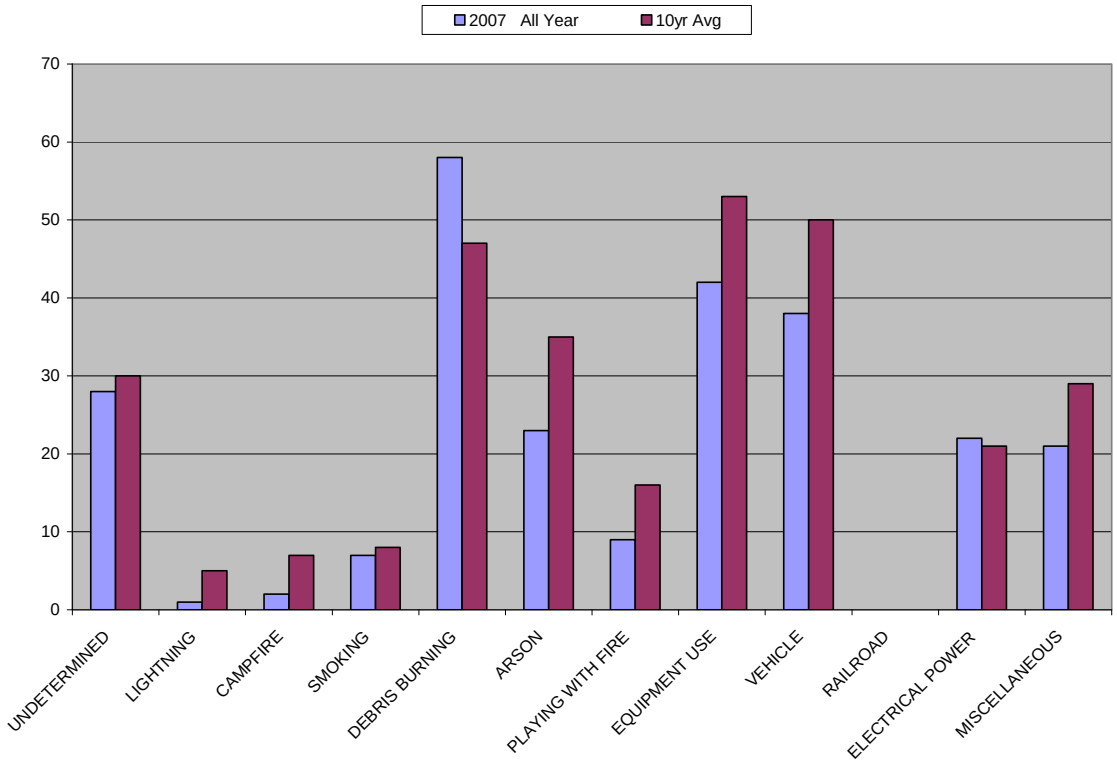
carelessly discarded cigarettes along our roadways. However, several bark and planter box fires were directly attributed to smoking.

**10) Illegal campfires and campfire escapes** caused 2 fires or less than 1% of the total ignitions. No acres burned were recorded as a result of these fires. This was a 80% decrease from the 10 year average of 7.

**11) Lightning** caused 1 fire and burned 1 acre in the Unit in 2007.

**12) Railroad** accounted for zero fires in 2007. No active rail lines are working in either Amador or El Dorado Counties at this time. Sacramento County contains very few working rail spurs in the SRA.

The following chart compares the 2007 primary causes compared to the 10-year average.




### *Education and (Volunteer in Prevention)VIP*

The AEU VIP Program assists the Unit in a variety of Fire Prevention Activities. The VIPs support the Headquarters Office and fire stations, school programs, public education events (fairs, displays, parades, fire patrols) and fire information centers on an immediate need basis. The VIPs are active year round in Amador, El Dorado, Alpine, and Sacramento Counties. Prevention personnel assisted by

engine personnel and VIPs participated in 7 fairs / displays, 12 VIP activities, and 3 school programs.

Juvenile Firesetters

The JFS Program is initiated when a juvenile who have been experimenting with fire. The juvenile and parents /caregivers are assessed utilizing the FEMA JFS assessment program. Following the assessment, the family will view one or two videos specifically designed for JFS. If further assistance is needed, the referrals are processed through the juvenile justice system.
Assessments are done in cooperation with the US Forest Service and local fire districts. Prevention personnel assessed 15 juveniles through the JFS Program. The objectives of the JFS Program are:

- Identify juvenile firesetters
- Assess the juvenile firesetters needs
- Provide life skill training and education
- Provide referrals to family counseling
- Evaluate firesetters and program progress

## *Training Battalion – Battalion Chief Brian Estes*

The AEU Training Bureau exists to provide mandatory and career enhancement training to CAL FIRE employees so that they can carry out the mission of the Department effectively and safely.

The Training Bureau is currently staffed with a Battalion Chief and Fire Captain. The Training Bureau oversees the training for over 160 permanent and seasonal employees. These employees work in Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Command Center, Administration, Resource Management, and our Schedule "A" contracts with both the Cameron Park Fire Department and the Amador Fire Protection District (Amador Plan).

In 2007, the Unit Training Bureau commited employees to over 15,000 staff hours of training. This training included courses on the Incident Command System, Wildland and Structural Firefighting, Emergency Medical System and Hazardous Materials Incidents. This training was facilitated through local, regional and state level courses. 2008 will see an overall increase in training hours and diversity.

**Training and the Fire Plan**

The Training that is provided through the AEU Training Bureau supports the Unit's Fire Plan. A well trained work force will not only perform more safely on a wildland fire, but will also more effectively mitigate and/or prevent major wildland

fires from occurring. Training in the Incident Command System as well as refining basic company officer skills in prevention and suppression will complement the mission of the Fire Plan.

## *Emergency Command Center – Battalion Chief David Samaniego*

The Camino Interagency Emergency Command Center (CICC) provides the Command and Control for SRA, LRA, and FRA, of Amador, Alpine, and El Dorado counties, the Eldorado National Forest (ENF), and Tahoe Management Unit (TMU).

AEU, ENF and TMU are located in CICC's dispatch center at Camino. This co-location allows each agency to assist the other during times of high activity, the opportunity to share personnel and assures coordination of local, state, and federal fire fighting forces during interface wildfires, structure fires, and medical emergencies.

CICC monitors fire weather conditions within the Unit to augment staffing prior to these weather events. CICC maintains 9 Remote Weather Stations (RAWS), and monitors these stations on a daily basis to set the appropriate dispatch level. A Standard Response Plan is pre-determined for each dispatch level for timely activation in the event of a wildfire, or other type fire which is threatening to burn the wildland.

CICC maintains an electronic Emergency Resource Directory, (ERD) which allows personnel to support any given incident within the area. The ERD contains information such as the ICS qualifications for AEU, ENF, and TMU personnel, supplies, vendors, private resources available for hire, call when needed rosters (i.e.; dozers, helicopters, water tenders, etc), and Local Government cooperator information.

CICC also has an expanded operation. The CICC Expanded Dispatch is used for large or complex incidents that outgrow the main floor of the command center. When an Initial Attack incident occurs that has the potential to become an extended attack or major incident, CICC immediately staffs expanded with ECC personnel. Once CICC Expanded is up and running, all ordering for the given incident takes place within this building and staffing levels are adjusted based on the size or complexity of the incident. The incident is assigned a separate Command Frequency, to allow the CICC to return to processing new incidents. As the incident continues to grow, additional resources are assigned from within AEU, ENF, or TMU, or orders are placed to fill from other areas of the state or nation. The properly staffed Expanded Operation allows for timely resource ordering, cancellation, or reassignment of resources, overhead, and equipment while taking the load of supporting the incident off the CICC main floor.

In 2007, the CICC processed 24,021 incidents with the call volume for the CICC increasing by 8.5% from the previous year.

**Mission Statement**

The Camino Interagency Command Center, operated by California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the United States Forest Service, is a cooperative interagency command center. The command center is dedicated to providing professional and efficient dispatch services for the residents and visitors of El Dorado, Amador, Sacramento, and Alpine Counties including the El Dorado National Forest and the Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit. The primary mission is to achieve the most economical and effective cooperative fire, aviation management, emergency medical response, law enforcement, and rescue service through collaboration.

## ***Resource Management -*** **Division Chief Phyllis Banducci**

The State Forest Practice Act and Forest Practice Rules govern the harvest of timber from private lands in California. The Rules require a landowner who harvests timber for commercial purposes (i.e. you sell, barter or trade logs or milled lumber to another party) to submit an exemption notice or timber harvesting plan document with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Some of the notices or plans that are required may require the services of a Registered Professional Forester. Below we have listed the most common documents required by the state and the conditions under which each is appropriate.

1. **Less than 3 acre Conversion Exemption -** For the harvesting of trees which is a single conversion to a non-timber growing use (orchard, house, pasture etc.) on parcels less than 3 acres. The conversion requires that 100% of the slash be removed; these strict slash removal requirements were designed to minimize fuels in and around residences.

2. **Emergency Notice of Operations** - This emergency allows for the harvest of dead and dying trees to capture fire salvage in addition to insect and disease killed trees.

3. **Fuel Hazard Reduction Emergency –** This emergency, adopted in 2004, allows for the immediate harvest of trees where high, very high or extreme fuel hazard conditions, the combination combustible fuel quantity, type, condition, configuration and terrain positioning, pose a significant fire threat on private timberlands. Cutting and removal of hazardous fuels, including trees, shrubs and other woody material, is needed to eliminate

the vertical and horizontal continuity of understory fuels and surface fuels for the purpose of reducing the rate of fire spread, fire duration and intensity, fuel ignitability and to achieve a flame length under average severe fire weather conditions that is less than 4 feet in the treated areas.

4. **10% Dead & Dying Exemption –** This exemption allows for the immediate harvest of dead, dying or diseased trees of any size, fuel wood or split wood products, in amounts less than 10% of the average volume per acre

5. **Fire Safe Exemption -** This exemption allows for the removal of ladder fuels and thinning of trees within 150 feet of a permitted structure. All slash be treated within 45 days. This activity is encouraged to further the intent of Public Resource Code (PRC) 4290.

6. **Modified Timber Harvest Plan** - This plan allows for the harvest of trees on an ownership 100 acres or less.

7. **Timber Harvest Plan (THP)** – A plan addressing the harvest of timber on more than 3 acres that is beyond the scope of a modified THP. An approved THP acts as the functional equivalent of an Environmental Impact Report as required by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

8. **Non-industrial Timber Management Plan (NTMP)** - A long-term timber harvesting plan with no termination date for a timberland owner with less than 2500 acres.

**Timber Harvesting Plans (THP)**

Timber harvest Plans are required to go through a multi-agency environmental review and most require a pre-harvest inspection to determine whether potential environmental impacts are adequately mitigated prior to harvest activities. The potential for creating or reducing fire hazards from timber harvesting is evaluated during the THP review. In Amador-El Dorado Unit, Area Foresters contact the Battalion Chiefs in the area where the harvesting will occur and solicit their input on THPs that pose potential fire hazards. Any concerns the Battalion Chiefs and Area Foresters have with regard to reducing the fire hazard will be incorporated into the THP as additional mitigations. Foresters preparing a THP must show how the proposed harvest will meet maximum sustained production of wood products. Demonstrating maximum sustained production includes addressing the health and productivity of the residual stand. Fuels treatments are considered in this process, fire resilience is a key component of a healthy and productive stand.

Occupied residences and public and private roads are required to comply with the Forest Practice rules that address hazard reduction. Additionally, where logging occurs in and adjacent to subdivisions and residential developments the Area Forester may require that the THP include slash treatments above and beyond the requirements of the Forest Practice Rules.

While logging is active on THP's the Area Forester will make compliance inspections to ensure that the loggers have the required fire fighting tools and equipment on site. Loggers are also required to leave all logging roads passable at the end of each workday.

The Region Office builds and maintains a GIS database of all THP's; this database is provided to the Area Foresters on an annual basis. The THP database is a valuable tool that could be used in identifying recently logged areas that may require different firefighting strategies.

Area Foresters encourage consulting Foresters, to utilize Special Prescriptions to reduce stocking to levels lower than that allowed in the general forest in order to create a more open, fire resistant stand of trees. The use of special prescriptions is the primary means by which fuels are modified to create Community Fuelbreaks. Community Fuelbreaks such as the Omo Ranch shaded fuelbreak in El Dorado County cross over Federal lands, industrial timberlands and non-industrial ownership and fuels treatments are consistent over all ownerships. Landowners are encouraged to create Community Fuelbreaks where:

- Residential developments abut industrial timberlands and /or Federally managed lands,
- On ridges in and adjacent to Communities at Risk,
- On a ridge that will provide for wildlife and watershed protection
- Adjacent to major highways, haul routs and evacuation routes
- Around isolated residence surrounded by timberland
- Where the Area Forester and Battalion Chief agree

**Community Fuelbreak Implementation through the THP Process**

One of these Special Prescriptions is the Fuelbreak/Defensible Space Prescription. The Rules specify it can be applied where; some trees and other vegetation and fuels are removed to create a shaded fuel break or defensible space in an area to reduce the potential for wildfires and the damage they might cause. Additionally the Rules ask the RPF to describe in the plan specific vegetation and fuels treatment, including timing, to reduce fuels to meet the objectives of the Community Fuelbreak area. Area Foresters provide the following guidelines to RPFs to aid them in the application of the Fuelbreak Prescription.

The purpose of a Community Fuelbreak is to create a defensible fuel zone that provides wildfire protection for wildland urban interface communities, watersheds, and firefighters engaged in fire suppression operations. The fuelbreak treatments are intended to protect communities from fires that originate in the wildlands as well as minimizing the spread of fires that originate in urban areas. The fuelbreak is not intended to stop the fire but should be a place where the vegetation has been modified, giving firefighters a safe place to initiate suppression activities. The vegetation will be modified so that the horizontal and vertical continuity of forest fuels are broken up. The extent of vegetation modification will vary depending on topographic features and vegetation condition, slope, aspect, and urban environment. The seven objectives listed below may be implements through the THP process if they are included in the pre-harvest inspection recommendations. Depending on the timing and complexity of the project, the objectives may be implemented through the Units VMP or CFIP Program. .

1. The optimum width for a defensible zone is at a minimum 500' or wider depending on topography and resources at risk. If the defensible zone is along an existing road or ridge it should extend a minimum of 150 feet from the edge of the road or the center of the ridge. Road passage will be a primary goal, where a well developed private or public road lies within the Fuelbreak, for evacuation, tactical, and operational access.

2. Crowns of the overstory trees should be separated, leaving canopy cover ranging between 30% and 50%.

3. A minimum of 80% of the ladder fuels shall be removed if ladder fuels are left (as in the form of regeneration) the lower branches shall be pruned so that they do no provide continuity between the surface fuels and the canopy. Trees over 6 inches DBH will be pruned to 10 feet above the ground.

4. The residual trees shall meet a minimum of the following criteria:
    a. The tree must be alive and healthy
    b. The tree must have at least 1/3 of its length in live crown as a ration of total tree height.
    c. The tree must be a commercial species from a local seed source or a seed source, which the registered Professional Forester determines, will produce commercially trees physically suited for the area involved.
    d. Leave tree specie preference is ponderosa pine, sugar pine, Douglas-fir, incense cedar, black oak, and true fir in that order.

5. Tree removal targets understory trees, with primarily healthy dominant and co-dominant trees retained.

6. Surface and ground fuels shall be treated so that they do not function as ladder fuel to the residual stand. A minimum of 80% of the activity generated non-merchantable material (slash) shall be treated, piled and burned, chipped or removed from the site.

7. Regeneration will be allowed for where it does not act as ladder fuel.

**Service Forestry**

The Area Foresters are also required to provide forestry advice upon request to private landowners. This advice includes, but is not limited to, recommendations for fuels management and fire safe activities that can be applied to residents. Many times service forestry calls are related to bark beetle activity in pine trees. Landowners are encouraged to immediately remove the bark beetle killed trees and treat the slash.