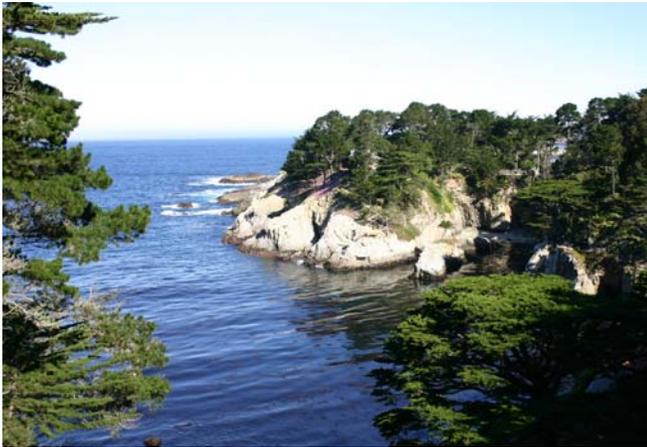


# ***CAL FIRE***

## ***San Benito – Monterey Unit***



## ***2009 Fire Plan***

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**George W. Haines**  
Unit Chief

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## **Introduction:**

The California Fire Plan is the state's road map for reducing the risk of wildfire. By placing the emphasis on what needs to be done long before a fire starts, the Fire Plan seeks to reduce fire fighting costs and property losses, increase firefighter safety, and to contribute to ecosystem health. The San Benito – Monterey Unit, with the cooperation of key stakeholders, has designed a plan with the intention of meeting the goals set by both the stakeholders and the California Fire Plan.

Cal Fire addresses fire prevention through its engineering, education and law enforcement programs. Their shared objective is reduced fire hazard and risk. This is more narrowly addressed in a planning process based on ignition management and loss reduction, including biomass utilization, fire resistant landscaping, mechanical fuels treatment, building construction standards, infrastructure, land use planning and pre-fire, safety zone and escape plans.

Ignitions are managed by preventing fires likely to exceed the capabilities of available suppression forces that could result in large damaging fires. Loss reduction is integral to mitigating large and damaging fires. Significant improvement can be achieved by reducing hazards (fuel buildups around structures and communities) and working with private industry to implement hazard reduction plans around residential developments in the rural-urban intermix areas. Additionally, pre-designated suppression and evacuation plans are effective tools in ensuring civilian and firefighter life safety. Successful programs permit more effective utilization of CDF's initial attack forces and enhance firefighter safety and citizen safety.



## **Executive Summary:**

The San Benito-Monterey Unit is located along the central coast between San Luis Obispo County on the south and Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties on the north. The Pacific Ocean abuts the western side of the Unit, and the Diablo Mountains and the San Joaquin Valley lie to the east.

The Unit encompasses over 3 million acres, in which 2.1 million acres are State Responsibility Area (SRA), representing one of the largest state responsibility jurisdictions in Cal Fire.

The Unit is operationally divided into five divisions and twelve battalions or programs. The Unit has eleven state-funded fire stations, six local government stations, thirteen volunteer companies, one air attack base, one Helitack base, and a Cal Fire /CDC inmate conservation camp. Additionally, the unit has Cooperative Fire Protection Agreements with seven local fire protection agencies.

The weather in the unit is divided into two basic patterns. The northwestern area of the unit experiences a common coastal weather pattern with low clouds and fog which by mid-day give way to temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's. The eastern and southern areas of the unit generally have less fog and temperatures commonly reach the 90 to 100 degree range. Winters are mild with rainfall from 7 to 30+ inches. Wind speed and direction is variable, but is predominantly northwest at 7-10 MPH.

The topography of the unit is steep and rugged with moderate to heavy vegetative cover. Plant species vary by aspect, slope, elevation, soil type, past fire history and distance from the coast. The predominant vegetation types are coastal sage, chaparral, and oak/grass woodland, with the Monterey Peninsula supporting stands of various coastal tree species.

The coastal weather influence, together with periods of extreme fire weather conditions, provide a window for extreme wildland fire behavior in areas of potentially high dollar loss. These conditions combine with the expanding wildland interface and urban population to yield the potential for large, damaging and costly wildfires. These areas at risk are defined further in the "Target Priority Areas" section of the Fire Management Plan. The unit has an overall fire hazard rating of High (56% of Unit) in the State Responsibility Area (SRA), while 30% is rated Very High and 14% is in the Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone.

Primary businesses include farming, industry, and tourism.

The primary goal of the 2009 San Benito - Monterey Unit Fire Plan is to prevent the ignition and spread of unwanted, human-caused fires with an emphasis on reducing losses as a result of large damaging fires. Utilizing fire history, fuels data, weather data, and assets at risk, the unit has identified several target areas as indicated in this document. Proactive pre-fire suppression activities and public information and education programs are key elements of this plan.

George W. Haines  
Unit Chief

# Stakeholders and Assets At Risk (AAR)



## **Stakeholders:**

### **\* Who are they?**

The San Benito- Monterey Unit (BEU) hosts a diverse group of Stakeholders. Local government entities, citizens and businesses have expressed concerns about the potential for large, damaging wildfires and actions that can be taken to prevent or minimize the loss from such fires. With assistance from the Unit, local stakeholders have formed Fire Safe Councils in both Monterey County and San Benito County. As the Monterey County and San Benito County Fire Safe Councils continue to expand, their members, including homeowner groups, local fire agencies, PG&E, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management provide diverse opportunities to address the overall wildland fire problem from a community perspective. A detailed roster of local stakeholders is included in the appendix to this document.

### **\* What are the key issues important to stakeholders?**

Local stakeholders have concerns similar to those expressed historically by most residents of the state. Following the 2003 and 2007 firestorms in Southern California, and locally in 2008, the Basin and Indians fires, local stakeholders are fearful that a similar tragedy could occur in their communities. Recent mitigation efforts have raised the awareness of the impacts of large fires, including the harmful effects of exposure to smoke, loss of tourism, loss of homes and businesses and the potential for serious injury or loss of life. Local stakeholders understand the fiscal constraints of today's economy and are actively seeking avenues to mitigate the threat of large damaging fires through participation on Fire Safe Councils. The Unit and the Fire Safe Councils have taken advantage of and continue to seek out available grants and other funding sources for hazard mitigation projects.

### **\* Assets at Risk**

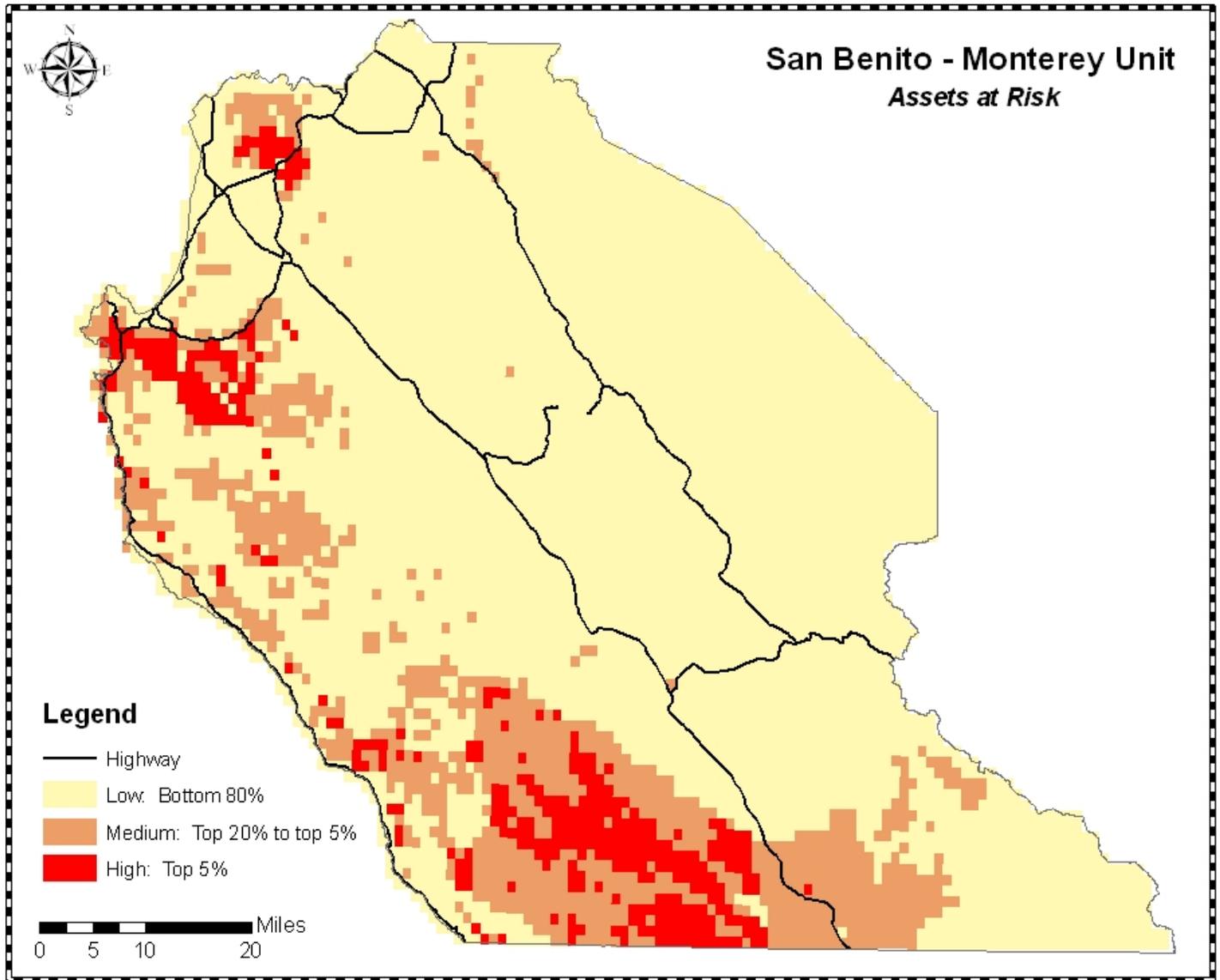
Assets susceptible to fire damage are identified in the Fire Plan as air quality, rangelands, recreation, structures, timber, water and watersheds, wildlife and habitat, and other resources (cultural, historical and scenic). The focus of this plan and relative importance of each Asset has been determined by reviewing input from local stakeholders and Cal Fire Managers. The BEU FIRE PLAN has been engineered with these issues in mind.

## Assets At Risk (AAR) Ranking Methodology

Asset at Risk	Public Issue Category	Location and ranking methodology
Hydroelectric power	Public welfare	1) Watershed area up to 20 miles upstream from run of the river power plants, ranked based on plant capacity; 2) cells adjacent to reservoir based plants (Low rank); and 3) cells containing canals and flumes (High rank) <i>(None in Unit)</i>
<b>Fire-flood watersheds</b>	<b>Public safety Public welfare</b>	<b>Watersheds with a history of problems or proper conditions for future problems (South Coastal Plain, field/stakeholder input), ranked based on affected downstream population</b>
Soil erosion	Environment	Ranking of post-fire erosion potential based on weighted combination of fuel characteristics, soil k-factor, slope and peak rainfall.
<b>Water storage</b>	<b>Public welfare</b>	<b>Watershed area up to 20 miles upstream from water storage facility, ranked based on water value and dead storage capacity of facility</b>
<b>Water supply</b>	<b>Public health</b>	<b>1) Watershed area up to 20 miles upstream from water supply facility (High rank); 2) grid cells containing domestic water diversions, ranked based on number of connections; and 3) cells containing ditches that contribute to the water supply system (High rank)</b>
<b>Scenic</b>	<b>Public welfare</b>	<b>Four mile viewshed around Scenic Highways and 1/4 mile viewshed around Wild and Scenic Rivers, ranked based on potential impacts to vegetation types (tree versus non-tree types)</b>
Timber	Public welfare	Timberlands ranked based on value/susceptibility to damage
Range	Public welfare	Rangelands ranked based on potential replacement feed cost by region/owner/vegetation type
Air quality	Public health Environment Public welfare	Potential damages to health, materials, vegetation, and visibility; ranking based on vegetation type and air basin
Historic buildings	Public welfare	Historic buildings ranked based on fire susceptibility
Recreation	Public welfare	Unique recreation areas or areas with potential damage to facilities, ranked based on fire susceptibility
<b>Structures</b>	<b>Public safety Public welfare</b>	<b>Ranking based on housing density and exposure (potential for structure loss in a large fire event)</b>
Non-game wildlife	Environment Public welfare	Public and Non-Government Owned (NGO) land holdings specifically for protection of non-game wildlife habitat, ranked based on fire susceptibility.
Game wildlife	Public welfare Environment	Omitted due to lack of methodology/available data
<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Public safety Public welfare</b>	<b>Infrastructure for delivery of emergency and other critical services (e.g. repeater sites, transmission lines, transportation corridors)</b>
Ecosystem Health	Environment	Ranking based on condition class, potential for ecological damage from a severe fire event due to deviation from historical fire return interval

**AAR categories highlighted in red represent target areas identified by stakeholders.**

# Assets At Risk:



# Current Fire Situation

- Level Of Service (LOS)
- Fuels
- Severe Fire Weather



## **Current Fire Situation:**

- **Ignition Workload Analysis (Level of Service) Assessment**

The legislature has charged the State Board of Forestry and CDF with delivering a fire protection system that provides an equal level of protection to lands of similar type (PRC 4130). To do this, the department utilizes an analysis process that will define a level of service rating that can be applied to the wildland areas in California to compare the level of fire protection being provided. The rating is expressed as the percentage of fires that are successfully suppressed with initial-attack resources. Success is defined as those fires that are controlled before unacceptable damage and costs are incurred.

Level of service focuses on identifying areas throughout the Unit with the potential for unacceptable loss and high suppression costs. In the assessment, Unit staff has analyzed data by damage, intensity, vegetation type and initial attack success or failure from 1998 through 2008.

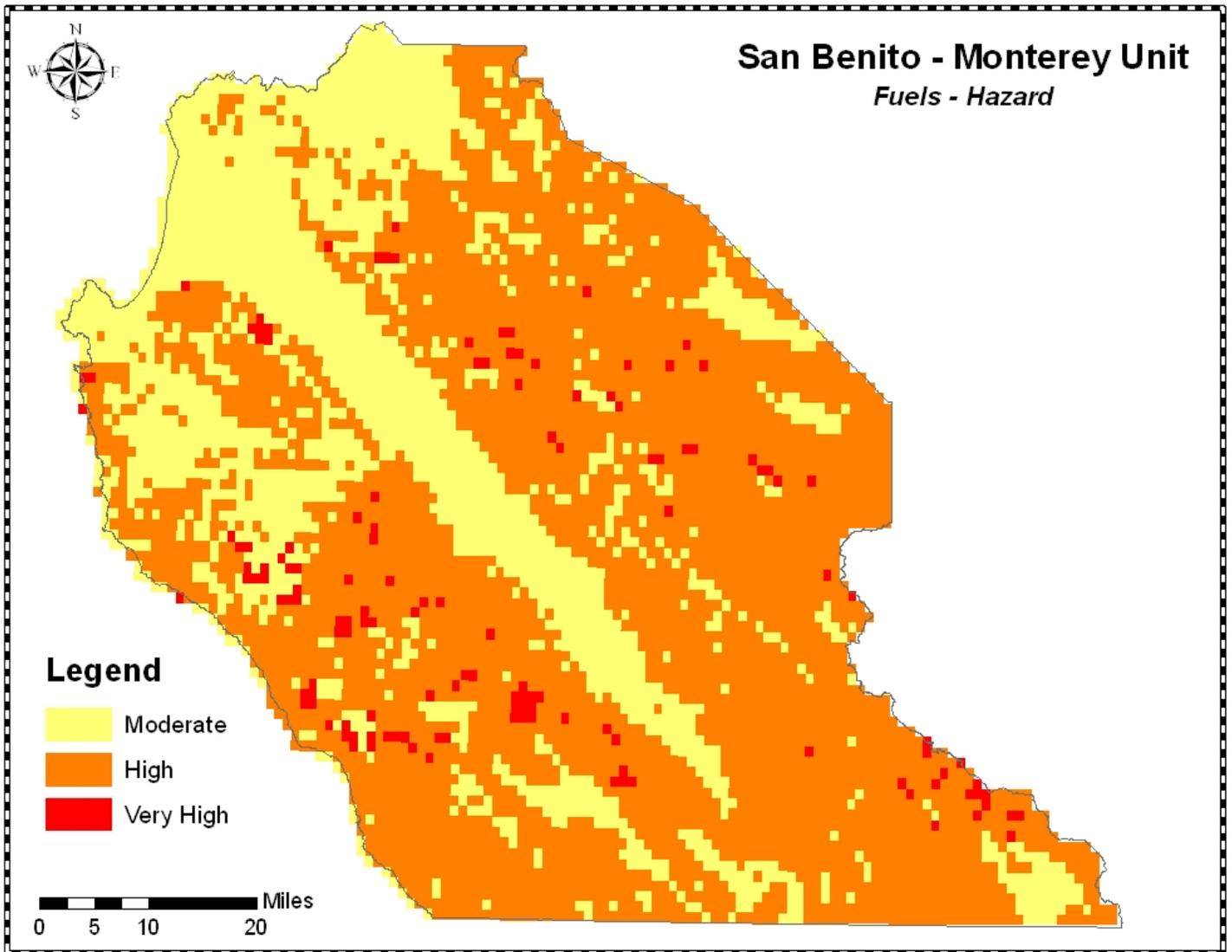
**Total SRA fires (1998 - 2008):**                      **1,281**  
**Successful Initial Attacks:**                      **1,234**

$$\text{Level of Service} = \frac{\text{Total SRA Fires}}{\text{Successful Initial Attacks}} = \boxed{96\%}$$

The Level of Service (LOS) score is intended as a tool to measure the effectiveness of initial attack success vs. failure when compared to other areas of the state. Unfortunately, some local factors are not taken into consideration, such as travel difficulty, resource drawdown and concurrent incidents.

**Fuels:**

Four distinct wildland fuel types dominate the San Benito-Monterey Unit. As the map below depicts, topography and weather patterns seem to dictate the type of fuel in a specific area.



### **Fuel Model 1 (annual grasses)**

Although inter-mixed with fuel model 4 (brush), this fuel model dominates the foothills of the eastern portion of the Unit. Extending from the Santa Clara County line southward along the foothills east of the Salinas valley, this fuel model represents more than fifty percent of the fuel types in the Unit.



### **Fuel Model 2 (oak woodland)**

This fuel model is typically located on the north and east facing slopes of the Unit. It is predominant in the northeast, southeast and southwest areas of both San Benito and Monterey counties and typically aligned with Fuel model 4 (brush), on the opposite facing slopes.



### **Fuel Model 4 (brush)**

While a substantial amount of brush is located in the foothills east of the Salinas Valley, in the area of the Pinnacles National Monument, the majority of this fuel type is found in the mountains west of the Salinas Valley throughout the coastal range. Typically, it is found on south and western facing slopes in areas not used for cattle grazing. Brush can be found measuring over five feet in height, which corresponds to over 30 years of age.



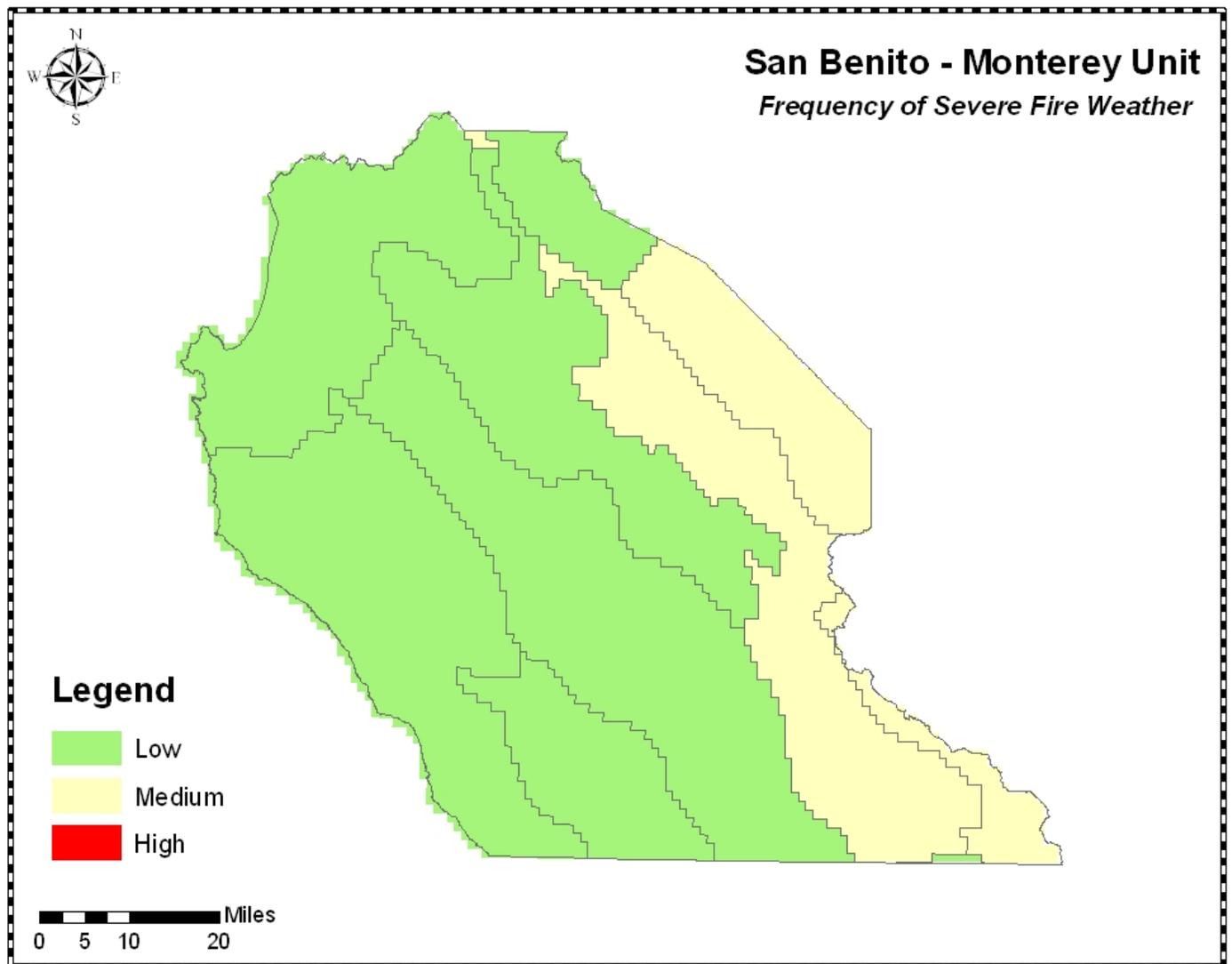
### **Fuel Model 9 (conifers)**

Conifers consisting of several species of pine and redwood are located in two distinct areas within the Unit, specifically, in the Fremont Peak area south of San Juan Bautista, and throughout the coastal mountains south of Monterey. The conifer forests extend into the Big Sur and Ventana Wilderness areas.



## Severe Fire Weather:

The weather in the unit is divided into two basic patterns. The northwestern area of the unit experiences a common coastal weather pattern with low clouds and fog which burn off in mid day to temperatures in the mid 70's to 80's. The eastern and southern area experience mild fog conditions, but clear early in the day and commonly produce temperatures in the 90 to 100 degree range. Winters are mild with rainfall from 7 to 30+ inches. Wind speed and direction is variable, but is predominantly northwest at 7-10 MPH.



# Designated Priority Areas

- Target Areas
- Target Area Goals
- Potential Mitigation Actions



## **Priority Areas:**

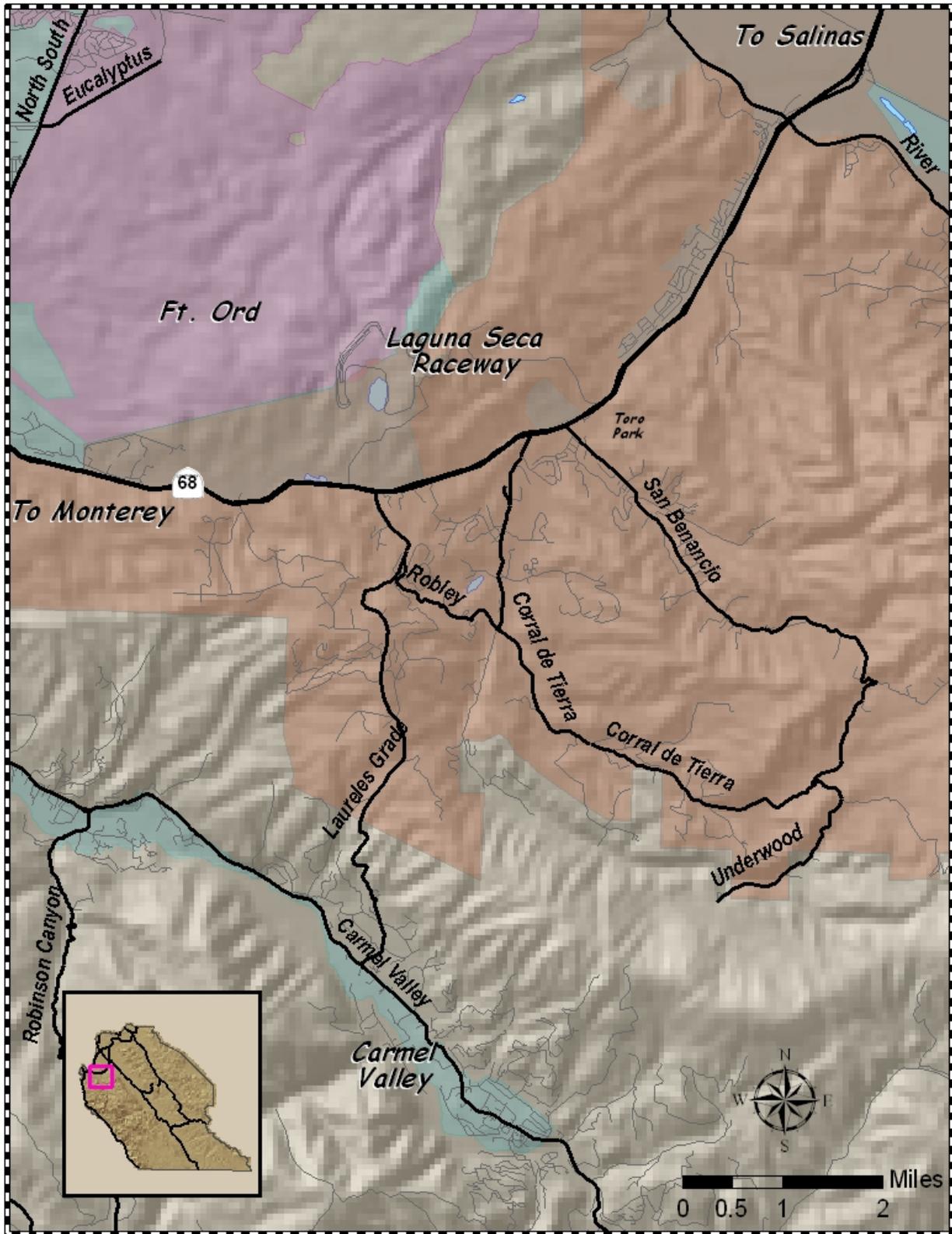
Several areas have been identified as “target areas” by the San Benito – Monterey Unit management team. The identification of these specific areas was based on available data from Pre-Fire Engineering assessments and stakeholder input. Additionally, local employees provided anecdotal and historical information that was considered useful in understanding local conditions. Target areas described in this plan are not listed in order of priority but rather as elements of the overall Unit Plan.

### **Target Areas:**

- **State Highway 68 Corridor between Salinas and Monterey Peninsula / Laureles Grade**
- **Carmel Valley / Carmel Valley Village**
- **Carmel Highlands / Palo Colorado Canyon**
- **San Juan Canyon (San Benito County)**
- **Cachagua (Carmel Valley)**
- **Pine Canyon (King City)**
- **North Monterey County / Aromas**
- **Jack’s Peak / Pebble Beach**

Following the assessment of each Target Area, a series of potential mitigation actions was identified and agreed upon by the Unit Management Team. The following describes each area’s geographic location, Assets At Risk (AAR), and potential mitigation actions:

State Highway 68 Corridor / Laureles Grade:



## **State Highway 68 Corridor / Laureles Grade:**

This area is located in the western portion of the unit, between Salinas and the Monterey peninsula. The area is bounded on the north and west by the former Fort Ord Army Base, on the south by Carmel Valley, and on the west by Jack's Peak.

Assets at Risk (AAR) include a large number of single and multi-family residences. Highway 68 is a major travel route between Salinas and the Monterey Peninsula. Several commercial / industrial parks are located along Highway 68, including the Laguna Seca Recreation Area. Large areas of BLM wildland are located along the northern border. This area contains large plots of vegetation that have not burned in several years, resulting in a build-up of decadent mature fuels.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

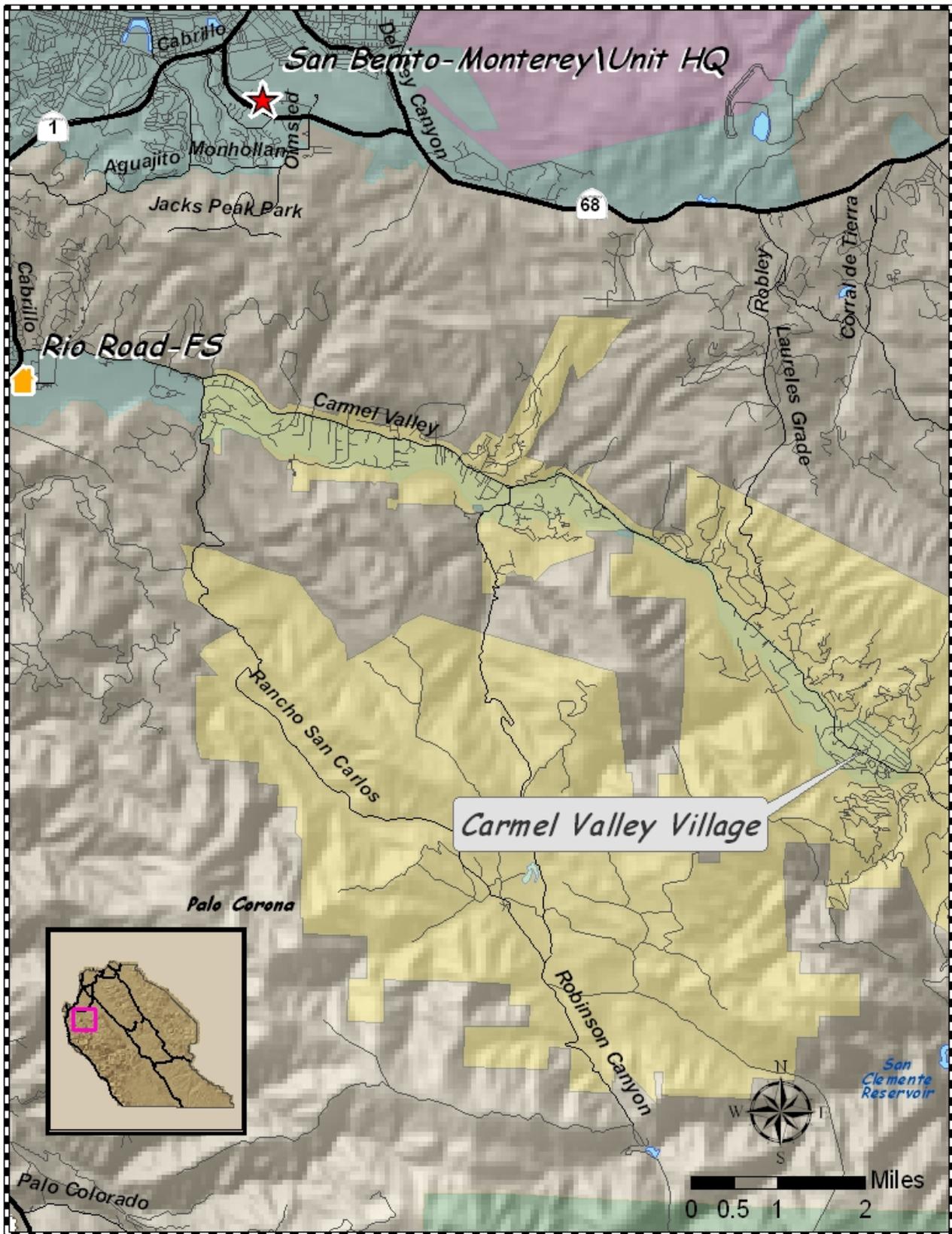
- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual inspection of all electrical transmission and distribution lines over 750 volts to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4294 for wildland fuels clearance.
- Annual inspection and enforcement of fire safety and clearance requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 for at least 33% of structures within target area.
- Continue to provide chipper services as available to assist property owners in meeting the wildland fire safety requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 and reducing the overall wildland fuels load adjacent to identified assets at risk.
- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
- Identify "Safe Zones" within the target area to provide a safe refuge for residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency, and ensure dissemination of this information throughout the target area.
- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.

**Carmel Valley / Carmel Valley Village:**



## **Carmel Valley / Carmel Valley Village:**

This area is located in the western portion of the Unit on both sides of Carmel Valley Road from State Highway 1 west to the Sleepy Hollow subdivision. It is bordered by Jack's Peak and State Highway 68 on the north, Garland Ranch Regional Park on the south, City of Carmel-by-the-Sea on the west, and Cachagua Fire Protection District on

Assets At Risk (AAR) include a large number of single and multi-family residences and other rural structures. Carmel Valley Road is a primary travel route leading to and from the Monterey Peninsula from Hwy 101 in the Salinas Valley to Hwy 1 in Carmel. Several commercial/retail centers are located along Carmel Valley Road as well as the Rancho Canada, Quail Lodge, and Carmel Valley golf courses. Several wineries are also located in the area. Large areas of National Forest wildland / wilderness are located to the south of the target area. This area contains large plots of vegetation that has not burned in several years, resulting in a build-up of decadent mature fuel.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

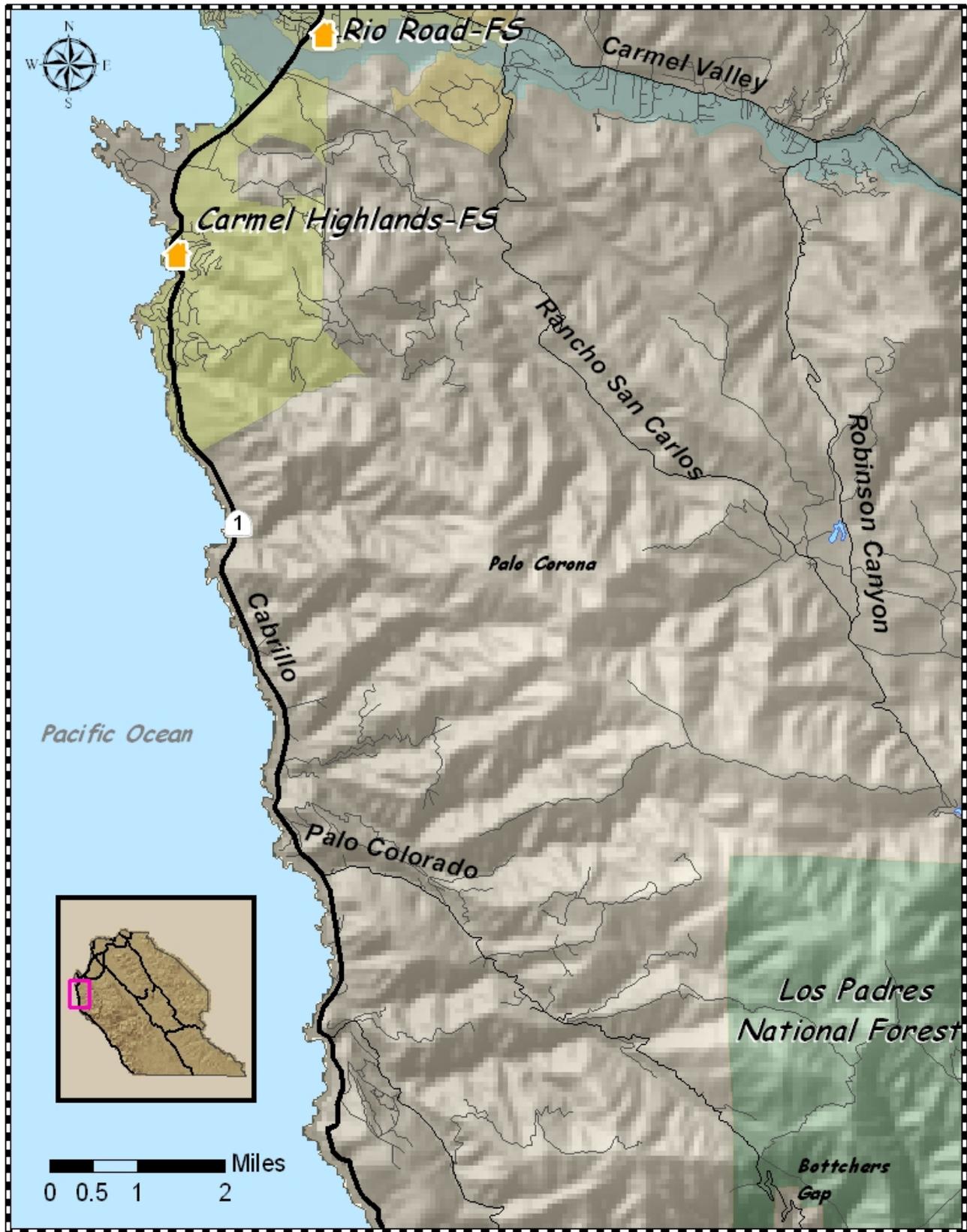
### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual inspection of all electrical transmission and distribution lines over 750 volts to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4294 for wildland fuels clearance.
- Annual inspection and enforcement of fire safety and clearance requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 for at least 33% of structures within target area.
- Continue to provide chipper services as available to assist property owners in meeting the wildland fire safety requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 and reducing the overall wildland fuels load adjacent to identified assets at risk.
- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
- Identify "Safe Zones" within the target area to provide a safe refuge for residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency, and ensure dissemination of this information throughout the target area.

- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.
- Work closely with the Monterey Fire Safe Council and local stakeholders to identify additional mitigating actions suitable for the area.

**Carmel Highlands / Palo Colorado Canyon:**





***Basin Complex June/July 2008***

### **Carmel Highlands / Palo Colorado Canyon:**

This area is located in the western coastal area of the Unit, and is bordered by the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea on the north, the Los Padres National Forest on the east, Andrew Molera State Park and Big Sur on the south and the Pacific Ocean on the west.

Assets At Risk (AAR) include single and multi-family residences and other rural structures, many located in remote areas with limited access. The Point Lobos State Reserve, Garrapata State Beach, and the California Sea Otter Refuge are also within this target area. Highway 1 is the only access/egress route for the target area.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

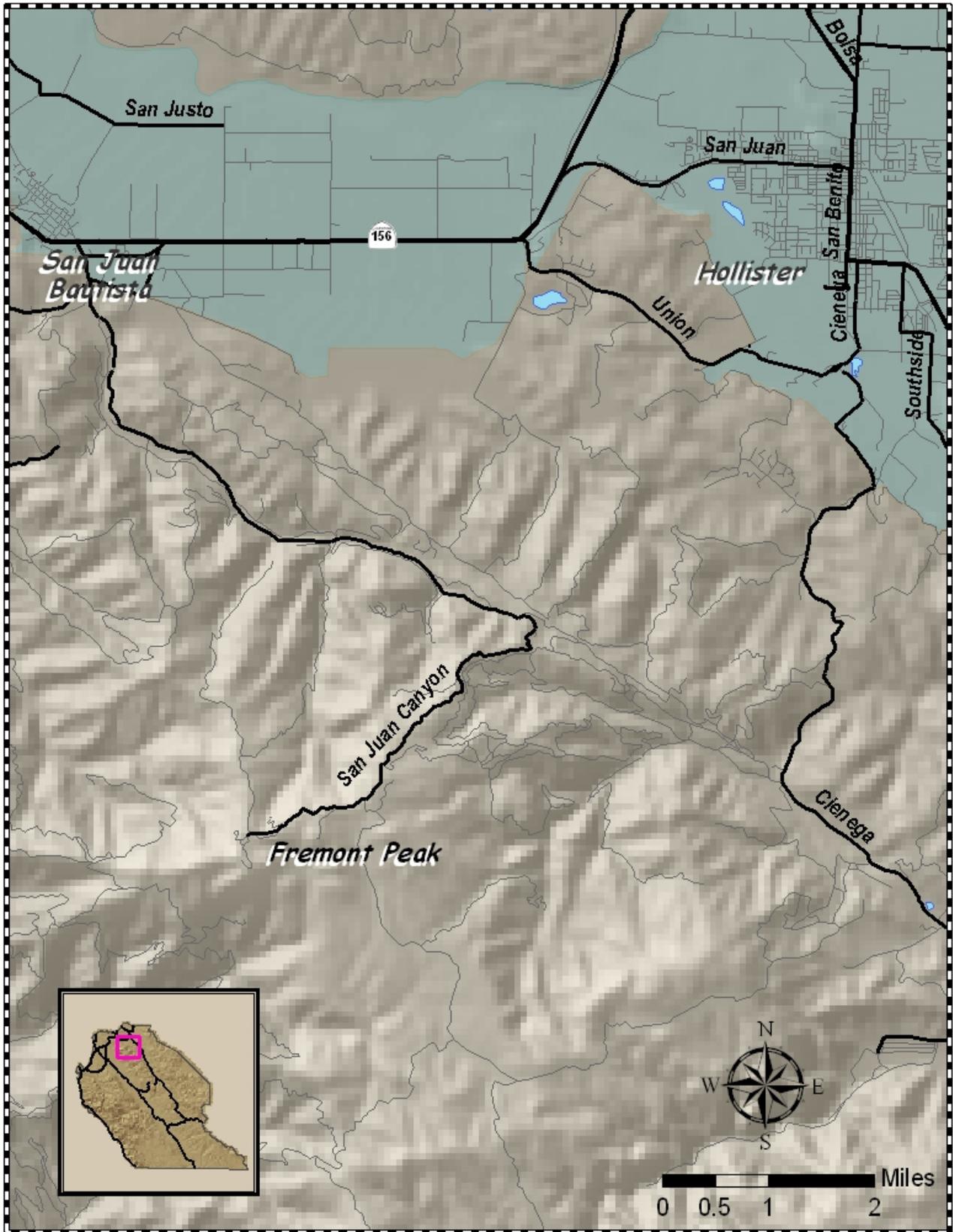
- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual inspection of all electrical transmission and distribution lines over 750 volts to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4294 for wildland fuels clearance.
- Annual inspection and enforcement of fire safety and clearance requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 for at least 33% of structures within target area.
- Continue to provide chipper services as available to assist property owners in meeting the wildland fire safety requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 and reducing the overall wildland fuels load adjacent to identified assets at risk.
- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
- Identify “Safe Zones” within the target area to provide a safe refuge for residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency, and ensure dissemination of this information throughout the target area.
- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.
- Work closely with the Monterey Fire Safe Council and local stakeholders to identify additional mitigating actions suitable for the area.

**San Juan Canyon:**



## **San Juan Canyon:**

This area is located southwest of the community of San Juan Bautista, and is bordered by State Highway 156 on the north, Fremont Peak on the west, Hollister Hills SORV Park on the east and Wildhorse Canyon on the south.

Assets At Risk (AAR) include single and multi-family residential structures, many located in remote areas with limited access, and several large ranches. Access to and egress from the entire target area is very limited.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

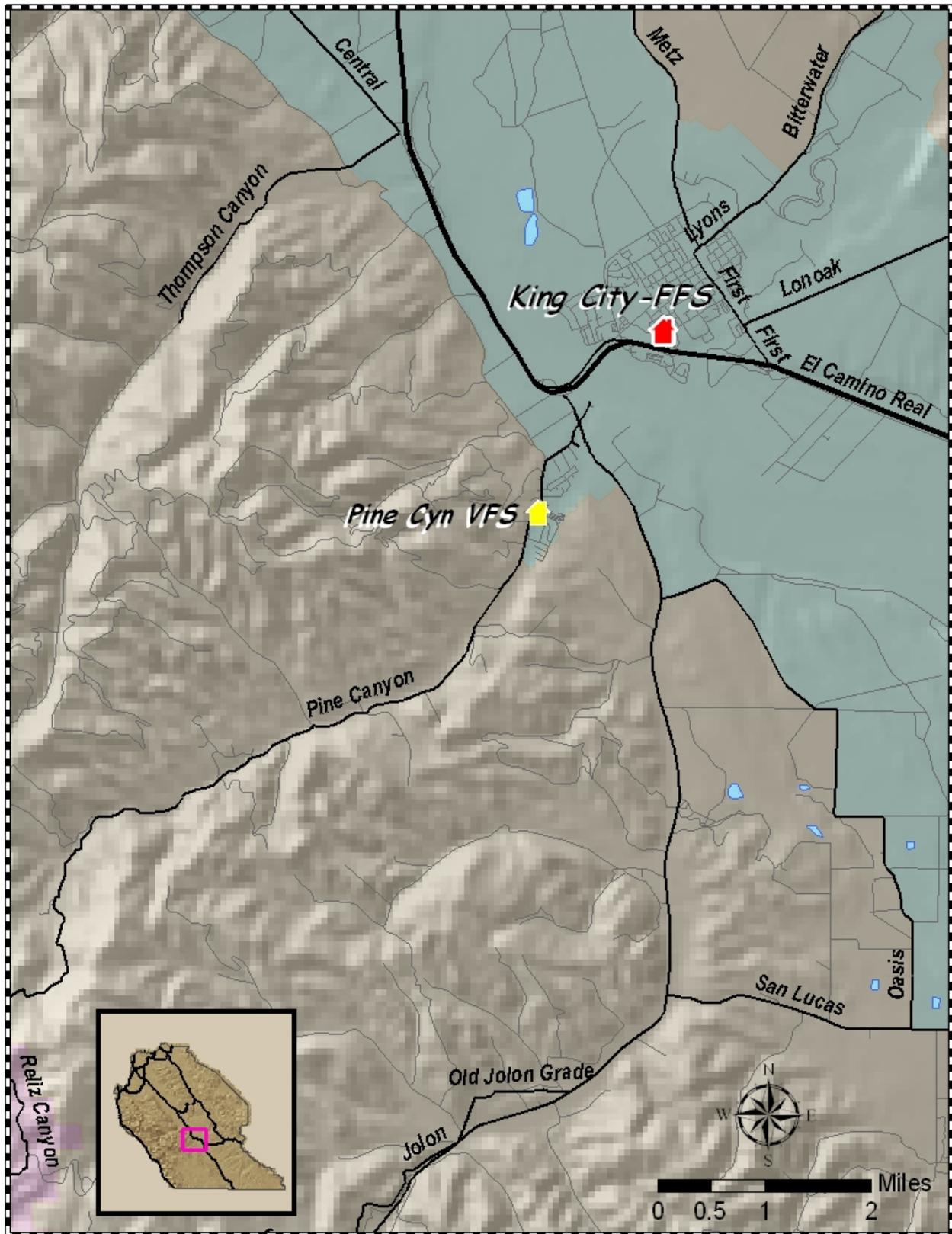
- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual inspection of all electrical transmission and distribution lines over 750 volts to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4294 for wildland fuels clearance.
- Annual inspection and enforcement of fire safety and clearance requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 for at least 33% of structures within target area.
- Continue to provide chipper services as available to assist property owners in meeting the wildland fire safety requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 and reducing the overall wildland fuels load adjacent to identified assets at risk.
- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
- Identify “Safe Zones” within the target area to provide a safe refuge for residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency, and ensure dissemination of this information throughout the target area.
- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.
- Work closely with the San Benito County Fire Safe Council and local stakeholders to identify additional mitigating actions suitable for the area.

# Pine Canyon: (King City)



## **Pine Canyon: (King City)**

This area is located southwest of the community of King City in southern Monterey County. It is bordered by Hwy 101 on the north and east.

Assets At Risk (AAR) include single family and multi-unit residential structures. Access to the area is limited and the potential for entrapment of residents and emergency responders is extreme. This area continues to grow with the construction of new residential sub-division projects in the planning stages.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

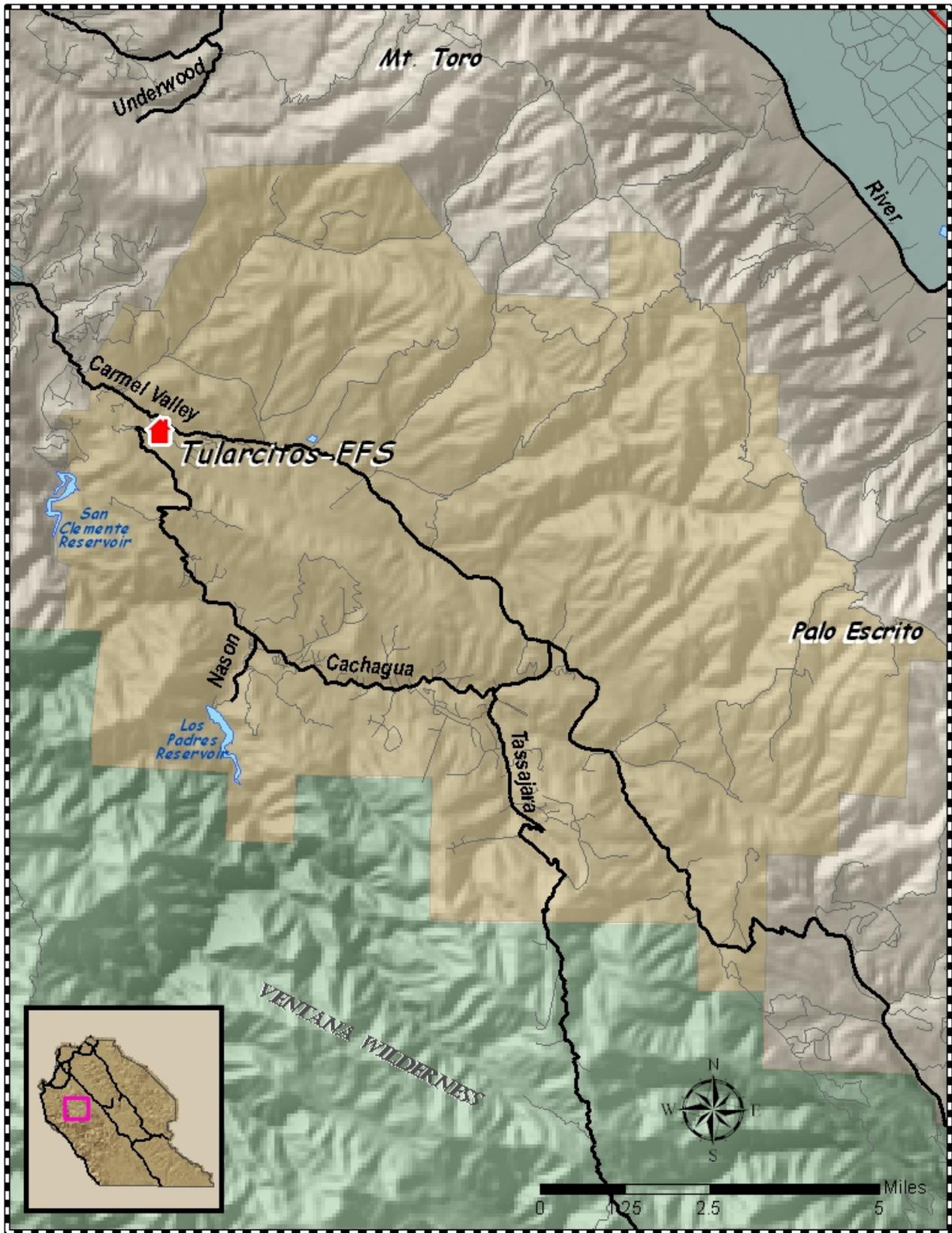
Ideally, this area will benefit from a combination of fuel modification, aggressive inspection, emergency planning, and public education.

### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following prescriptions have been identified as potential successful methods of achieving the Unit's Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual power line inspections to insure PRC compliance
- Targeted LE-38 inspections to achieve a minimum 33% of the structures in the Target area per year.
- Roadside fuel modification to insure egress / exit route safety and reduce the possibility of "roadside starts".
- Identify "Safety Zones" to insure that residents of the area have the ability to evacuate to a safe area during an emergency. Residents/ stakeholders will participate in the planning and placement of Safety Zones. Additionally, a "Wildland Fire / Emergency Pre-Plan" will be designed to prepare first responders and stakeholders during the initial attack of any fire. This is vital in that residents in the area are very limited when attempting to leave the area in case of an emergency
- Work closely with the Monterey County Fire Safe Council and local fire agencies to identify additional prescriptions suitable for the area.

Cachagua:



## **Cachagua:**

This target area is located in the western portion of the Unit, and is situated south of Carmel Valley Road and north of the Las Padres National Forest east of Carmel Valley Village. The area is served by the Cachagua Fire Protection District.

Assets At Risk (AAR) include single and multi-family residential structures, many which are located in remote areas with limited access, and several large ranches. Fire history in the area is minimal, leading to the overgrowth of decadent brush and light flashy fuels.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

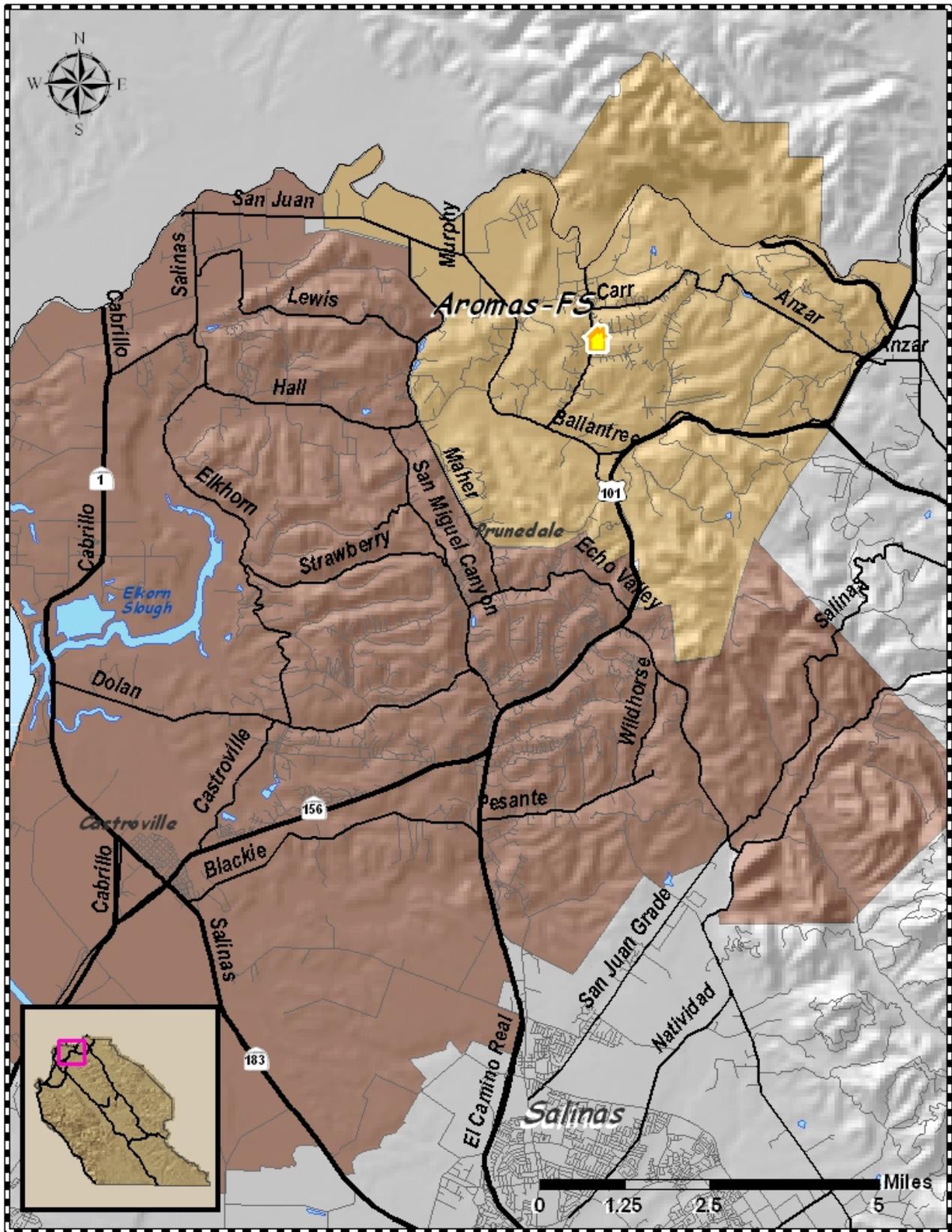
- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual inspection of all electrical transmission and distribution lines over 750 volts to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4294 for wildland fuels clearance.
- Annual inspection and enforcement of fire safety and clearance requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 for at least 33% of structures within target area.
- Continue to provide chipper services as available to assist property owners in meeting the wildland fire safety requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 and reducing the overall wildland fuels load adjacent to identified assets at risk.
- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
- Identify "Safe Zones" within the target area to provide a safe refuge for residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency, and ensure dissemination of this information throughout the target area.
- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.
- Work closely with the Monterey Fire Safe Council and local stakeholders to identify additional mitigating actions suitable for the area.

North Monterey County / Aromas:



## **North Monterey County / Aromas:**

This area is located in the northwestern part of the Unit, situated west of State Highway 101, south of State Highway 129, north of State Highway 156, and east of the Pacific Ocean. It includes the communities of Aromas, Pajaro, Las Lomas, Prunedale, and Moss Landing.

Assets at Risk (AAR) include the four major highways noted above. Each of these routes is vital to vehicular traffic in the region. Although considered a “Rural” region, the area contains a large amount of single-family dwellings, ranchland and commercial/retail properties. Additionally, the Moss Landing power plant and Moss Landing Harbor are located on the western edge of the target area. Moss Landing and Zmudowski State beaches and the Elkhorn Slough provide scenic, recreation, and wildlife refuge. The potential for a large damaging fire in this area is increased dramatically due to the large number of eucalyptus trees throughout the area.

### ***Target Area Goals:***

- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

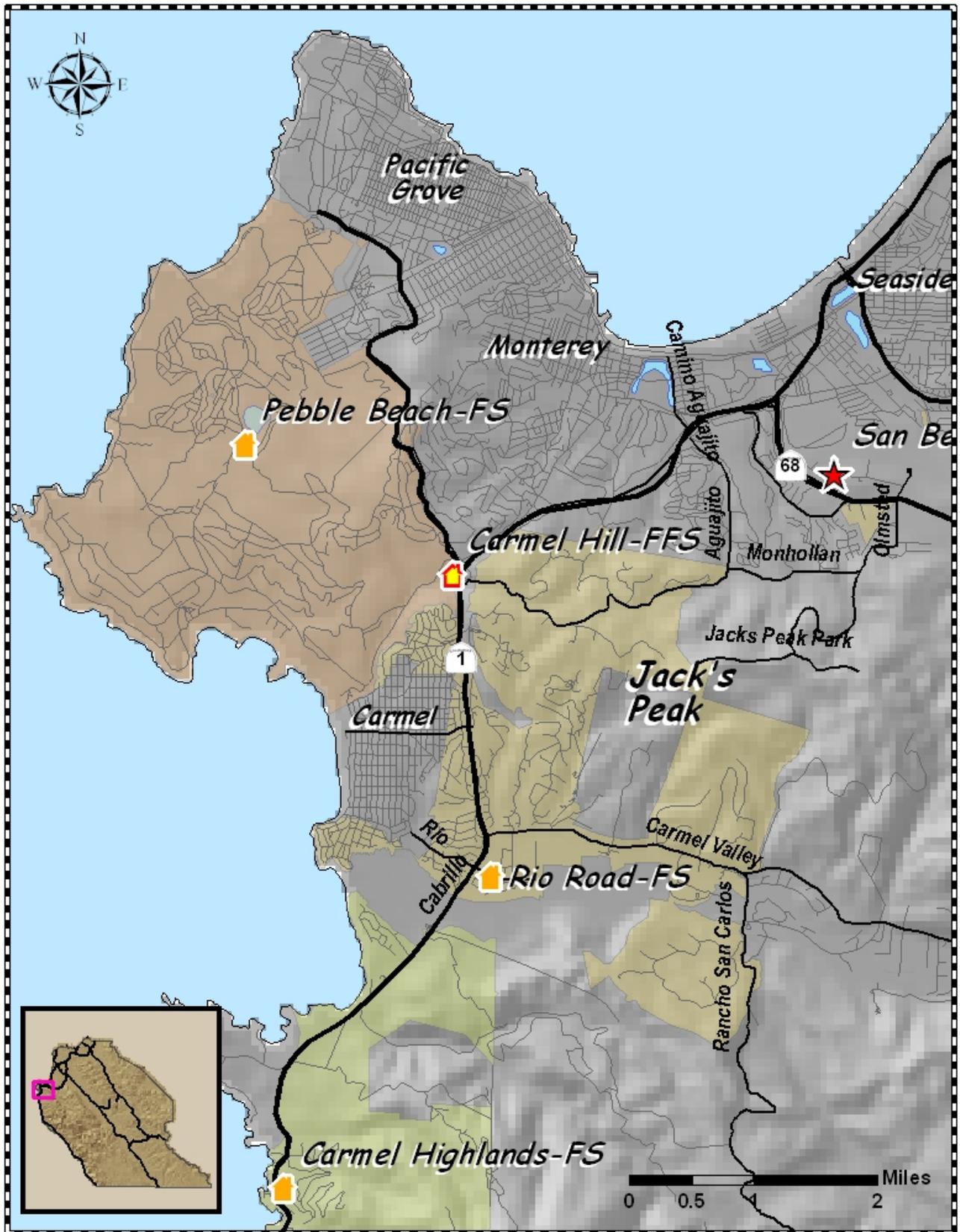
### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

- Annual inspection of all electrical transmission and distribution lines over 750 volts to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code Sections 4292-4294 for wildland fuels clearance.
- Annual inspection and enforcement of fire safety and clearance requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 for at least 33% of structures within target area.
- Continue to provide chipper services as available to assist property owners in meeting the wildland fire safety requirements of Public Resources Code Section 4291 and reducing the overall wildland fuels load adjacent to identified assets at risk.
- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
- Identify “Safe Zones” within the target area to provide a safe refuge for residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency, and ensure dissemination of this information throughout the target area.

- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.
- Work closely with the Monterey Fire Safe Council and local stakeholders to identify additional mitigating actions suitable for the area.
- Implementation and completion of the Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District / North County Fire Protection District LE-38 Inspection program.

Jack's Peak / Pebble Beach:



### **Jack's Peak / Pebble Beach:**

This area is located on the Monterey Peninsula in the western portion of the Unit, and is bordered by the Pacific Ocean on the west, the City of Monterey on the north, Carmel Valley and the Highway 68 corridor on the east, and the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea on the south. This area represents one of the most scenic and affluent communities in California.

Assets at Risk (AAR) for this area are varied, including single-family residences, resort areas, championship golf courses, and areas of spectacular scenic beauty. Highway 1 is the primary north-south travel route, providing access to Big Sur and other coastal areas to the south. The potential for a large damaging fire in this area is high. The vegetation lends itself to "crown" type timber fires and the roads in the area can be confusing. The entire target area has limited access and egress.

#### ***Target Area Goals:***

- Reduction of available wildland fuels, particularly adjacent to identified Assets at Risk (AAR) and primary access/egress routes
- Increased public awareness and education relative to wildland fire threat and defensible space

#### ***Potential Mitigating Actions:***

The following actions have been identified to achieve the Unit Fire Plan goals for this Target Area:

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- Reduction and/or removal of wildland fuels along primary access/egress routes to reduce the incidence of roadside ignitions, and to ensure safe access and egress by firefighters and residents in the event of a wildland fire emergency.
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- Encourage development and distribution of wildland emergency plans for specific sub-areas of the target area. Such plans should identify access and evacuation routes, safe zones, water sources, helibases and helispots, command posts, staging areas, and/or any other significant element of a wildland fire strategy for the target area that can be pre-planned and identified.

- Continue enforcement of the PBCSD Fire Defense Plan to ensure compliance and maintenance of emergency access routes, designated open space areas, and undeveloped parcels.
- Work closely with the Monterey Fire Safe Council and local stakeholders to identify additional mitigating actions suitable for the area.

**2008 Defensible Space Inspection Summary:**

Number of STATE defensible space inspections	7,040
Number of STATE SECOND TIME defensible space inspections	46
Number of STATE THIRD TIME defensible space inspections	16
Number of STATE violations corrected	68
Number of LOCAL defensible space inspections	250
Number of STATE defensible space violations	375
Number of LOCAL defensible space violations	12
Number of STATE defensible space citations	0
Number of LOCAL defensible space citations	0
Number of Fire Prevention related education hours	1,500
<b>Number of Fire Prevention person contacts</b>	<b>7,470</b>
Number of Fire Prevention news releases	32
Acres treated by mechanical means	749
Acres treated by prescribed burn	0

The San Benito – Monterey Unit has been very proactive in gaining defensible space compliance by aggressively doing LE-100 inspections in the interface areas. Public reaction has been positive as residents are educated on the various ways they can be compliant with the law and still maintain an attractive landscape that will assist fire personnel in the event of a wildfire in their neighborhood. Our ability to keep fires small with minimal damage in and around structures has proven that more residents are becoming fire safe and our education efforts are working.

### **Stakeholders:**

Stakeholders are defined as any person, agency or organization with a particular interest, or “*stake*,” in fire safety and protection of assets from wildfires.

- **Local Fire Agencies**

- Big Sur Volunteer Fire Brigade
- Cachagua Fire Protection District
- Carmel-By-The-Sea Fire Department
- Carmel Valley Fire Protection District
- Cypress Fire Protection District
- Gonzales Fire Department
- Greenfield Fire Protection District
- King City Fire Department
- Marina Department of Public Safety
- Mid-Coast Fire Brigade
- Monterey Fire Department
- Monterey Peninsula Airport District Fire Department
- Natural Resources Conservation District
- North County Fire Protection District
- Pebble Beach Community Services District
- Pacific Grove Fire Department
- Presidio of Monterey Fire Department
- Salinas Fire Department
- Salinas Rural Fire Protection District
- Seaside Fire Department
- Soledad Fire Department
- South Monterey County Fire Protection District
- United States Dept. of Agriculture - Forest Service
- United States Bureau of Land Management
- Hollister Fire Department
- San Juan Bautista Fire Department

- **Fire Safe Councils:**

Monterey Fire Safe Council  
2221 Garden Rd.  
Monterey, CA 93940  
Office: (831) 333-2600  
[info@firesafemonterey.org](mailto:info@firesafemonterey.org)

The Monterey Fire Safe Council is very active with projects in both the planning and implementation stage. MFSC projects include:

- A. Partington Ridge Sudden Oak Death Removal
- B. Residential Chipping Programs
- C. Rancho Tierra Grande Demo Garden
- D. Monterey County CWPP

San Benito Fire Safe Council  
San Juan Bautista, California  
Scott Fuller, Chairperson  
[scott@sanjuanoaks.com](mailto:scott@sanjuanoaks.com)

The San Benito Fire Safe Council is very active with projects in both the planning and implementation stage. SBFSC projects include:

- A. Hollister Fire Station #2 - Fire Safe Demo Garden
- B. Aromas Fire Station - Fire Safe Demo Garden
- C. San Juan Canyon Safety Marker project
- D. GIS / Mapping project
- C. Residential Curbside Chipping Program
- D. Fire & Life Safety Message signs / Public Education
- E. San Benito County CWPP

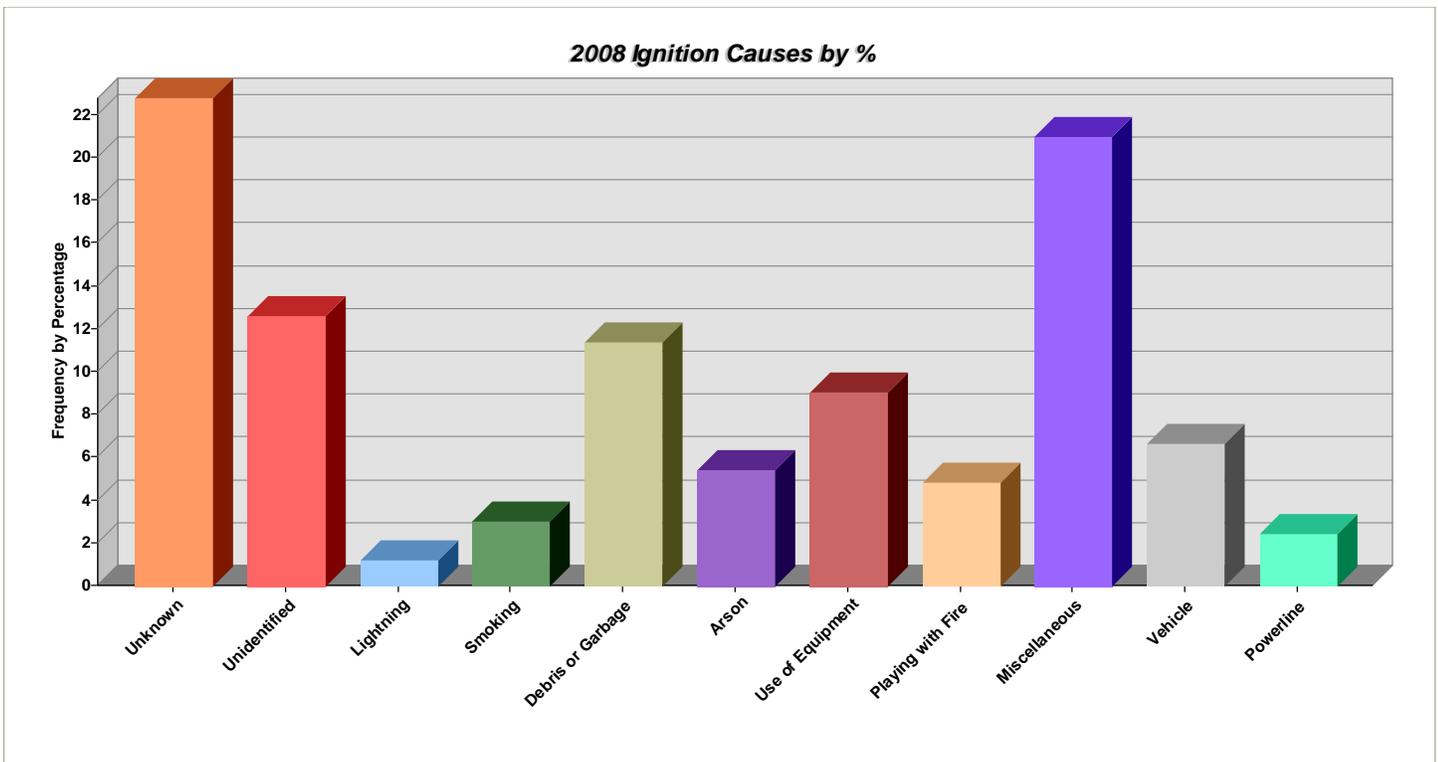
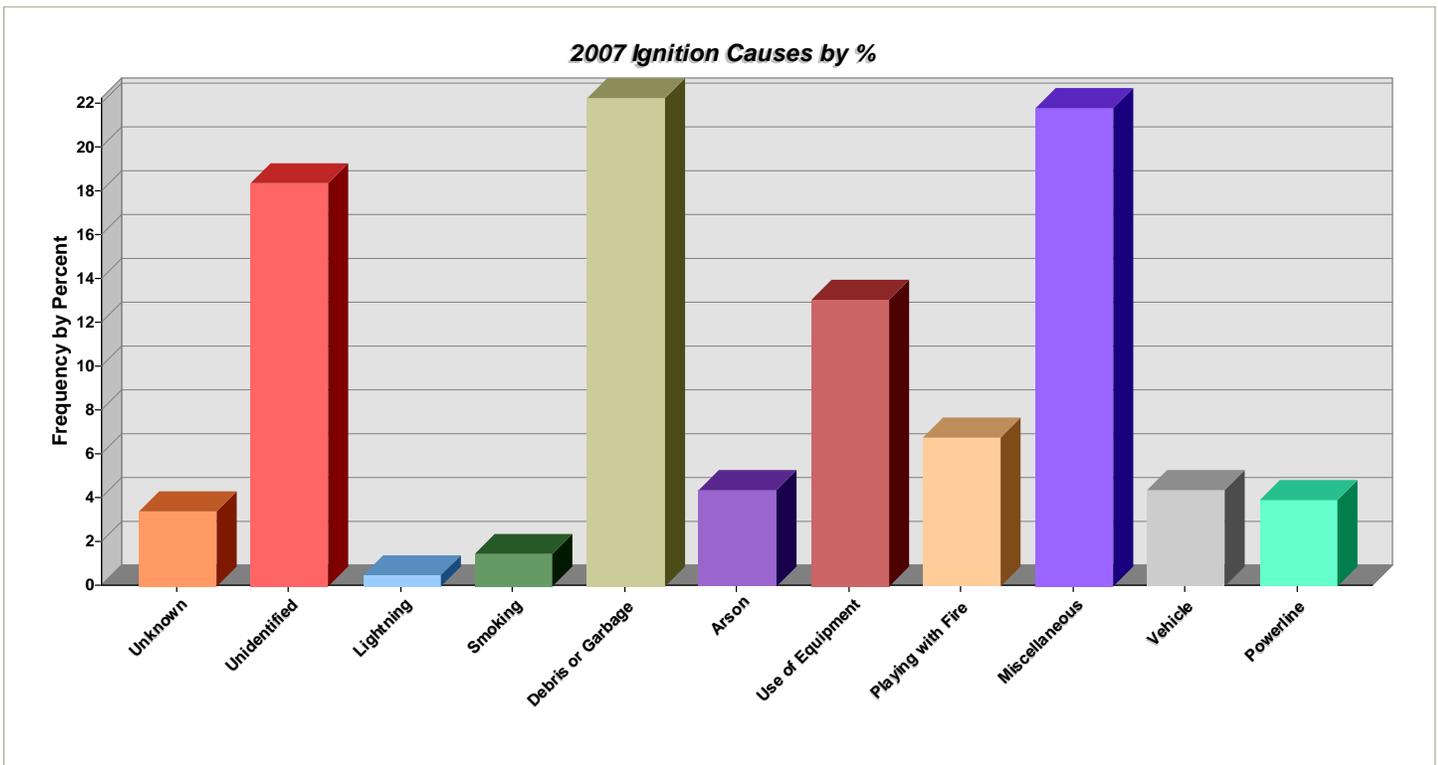
- **Government Agencies**

- Bureau of Land Management
  - California Department of Parks and Recreation
  - California Department of Transportation (CalTrans)
  - California Highway Patrol
  - San Benito County Dept. of Parks and Recreation
  - San Benito County Dept. of Public Works
  - San Benito County Office of Emergency Services
  - San Benito County Sheriffs Office

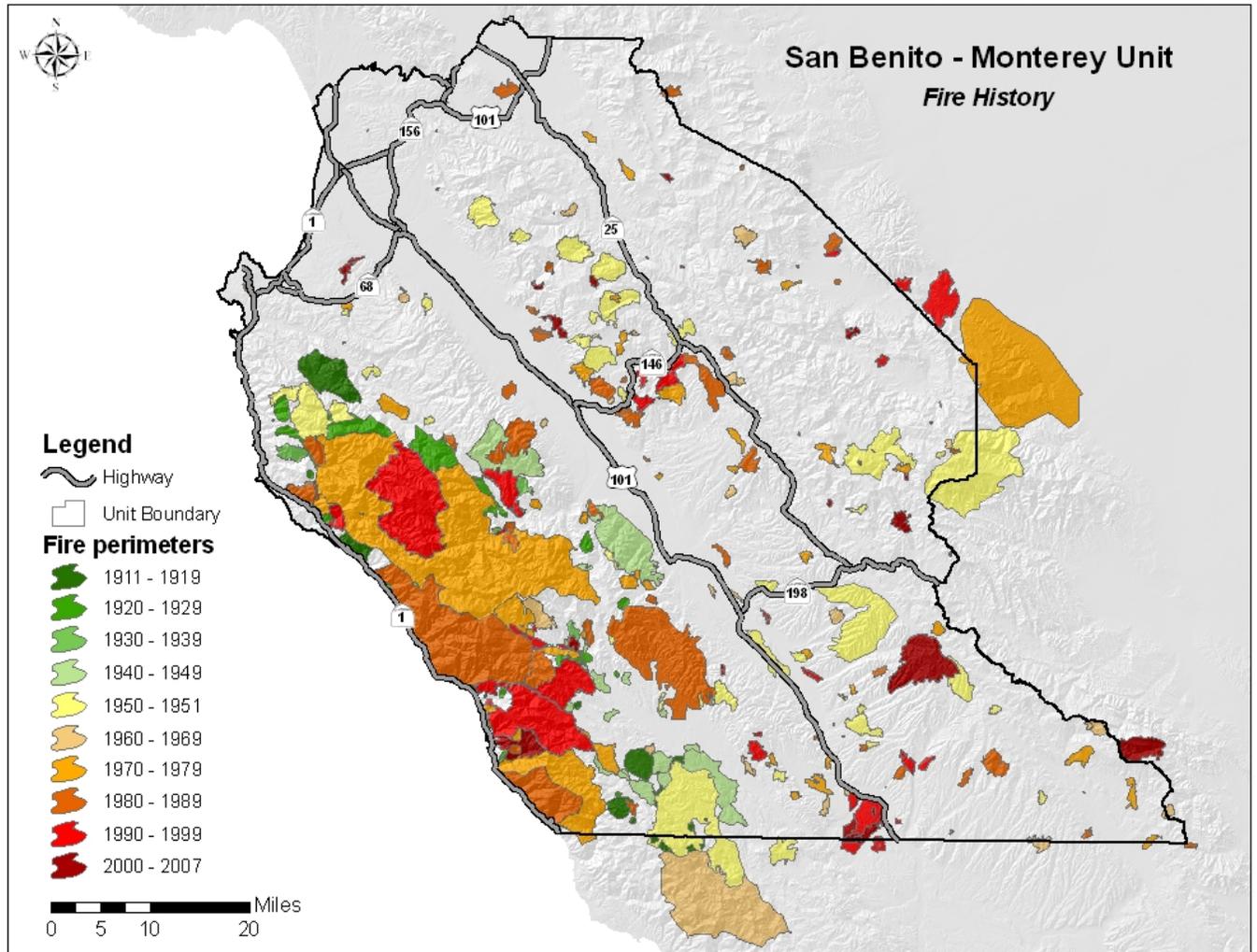
- **Other Stakeholders**

- Pacific Gas & Electric Co.
  - Cal-Am Water

**Fire Cause Summary:**



**Fire History**



### **Residential Chipping & Public Education Program**

The popularity of the Residential Chipper Program continues to grow each year making communities safer to live in the wildland urban interface areas. On average, approximately 500 residents throughout San Benito and Monterey counties participate in the free curbside chipping service. The noticeable increase in compliance of fire department inspection programs and the ability to keep fires small has proven the program's success.

The Residential Chipper Program has been a positive way to increase public awareness of the hazards of living in the wildland urban interface giving firefighters a way to educate them in reducing the flammable vegetation around their homes. Residents are able to talk one on one with fire department personnel on what they can do to keep their homes and communities safe by minimizing fire threat. Public education has been vital in getting residents to embrace the program.

San Benito – Monterey Unit has been sponsoring the program through personnel hours and utilizing the Unit's brush chipper. As the program expands into new areas, the Fire Prevention Bureau intends to continue to seek federal grant funding in the future to help with fuel reduction and education in communities that are at risk throughout the San Benito and Monterey counties.

### **Vegetation Management Program:**

The Vegetation Management Program (VMP) is currently in transition. In 2008, VMP was impacted by, among other things, changes in the state budget, changing Unit priorities and assorted other constraints. The objectives of past projects typically were, among other things, fuel reduction, range improvement, wildlife habitat improvement and increased water yield. However, due to changing priorities and the current version of the Unit Fire Management Plan, VMP may begin to evolve more toward the following:

- Smaller projects near targeted assets at risk.
- Move away from an emphasis on broadcast burning and move toward smaller pile burning and possibly mechanical fuel treatment.
- The program may be limited to simply providing wildland safety and protection zones near high value assets.
- Potential future projects may involve more pre-screening in an effort to more effectively select projects that accommodate the Unit Fire Management Plan.

Where possible, the goal in the Unit is to continue traditional controlled burning in areas of the Unit. However, in response to the urban interface issues and assets at risk, VMP may now focus more on small scale, intensive treatment projects near or adjacent to homes. This approach comes with a price in that it is riskier, requires more planning, more resources and, inevitably, more time to physically pursue the project. These types of projects require intensive use of personnel and/or mechanical equipment. The result is small areas treated at high expenses compared to large-scale burning projects.

Unexpected opportunities can alter vegetation management priorities. As the majority of VMP projects are located on private lands with the cooperation of private landowners, an unexpected request for a project may alter priorities. If a landowner in an area designated for fuels reduction efforts expresses interest in a project, it may move a project in an area not designated for fuels reduction efforts to a lower priority. Inevitably, VMP will most likely continue to evolve over time in an effort to keep up with an ever-changing world.