

2009 Riverside Unit Fire Management Plan

Assets at Risk

The primary goal of fire protection in California is to safeguard the wide range of assets found across wildland areas. These assets include life and safety, structures, range, recreation, hydroelectric power, watersheds, soil, water storage, water supply, scenic value, timber, air quality, historic buildings, non-game wildlife, game wildlife, and infrastructure.

A closer look at a specific asset at risk in Riverside County, wildlife habitat, reveals the complexity involved with assessing and managing for these assets. Riverside County is home to numerous endangered plant and animal species, all of which are affected by fire in some manner. Endangered species play a critical role in the ecosystem and must be factored into the equation when ranking assets. Managing for these species and their habitat is often in direct conflict with the management of other assets such as the protection of lives and property. The attached asset rankings map displays how these assets are ranked within the county.

ASSET AT RISK	PUBLIC ISSUE CATEGORY	LOCATION AND RANKING METHODOLOGY
HYDROELECTRIC POWER	PUBLIC WELFARE	1.) WATERSHEDS THAT FEED 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)
FIRE FLOOD WATERSHEDS	PUBLIC SAFETY PUBLIC WELFARE	WATERSHEDS WITH A HISTORY OF PROBLEMS OR PROPER CONDITIONS FOR FUTURE PROBLEMS. RANKS ARE BASED ON AFFECTED DOWNSTREAM POPULATION
SOIL	ENVIRONMENT	WATERSHED RANKED BASED ON EROSION POTENTIAL
WATER STORAGE	PUBLIC WELFARE	WATERSHED AREA UP TO 20 MILES UPSTREAM FROM WATER STORAGE FACILITY, RANKED BASED ON WATER VALUE AND DEAD STORAGE CAPACITY OF FACILITY
WATER SUPPLY	PUBLIC HEALTH	1.) WATERSHED AREA UP TO 20 MILES 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 SYSTEMS (HIGH RANK)
SCENIC VALUE	PUBLIC WELFARE	FOUR MILE VIEWSHED AROUND SCENIC HIGHWAYS AND ¼ MILE VIEWSHED AROUND WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS, RANKED BASED ON POTENTIAL IMPACTS TO VEGETATION TYPES (TREE VERSUS NON-TREE TYPES)
TIMBER	PUBLIC WELFARE	TIMBERLANDS RANKED BASED ON POTENTIAL DAMAGE BY FOREST INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS (FIA) REGION AND OWNERS.
RANGE	PUBLIC WELFARE	RANGELANDS RANKED BASED ON POTENTIAL REPLACEMENT FEED COST BY REGION/OWNER/VEGETATION TYPE
AIR QUALITY	PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC WELFARE	POTENTIAL DAMAGES TO HEALTH, MATERIALS, VEGETATION, AND VISIBILITY; RANKING BASED ON VEGETATION TYPE AND AIR BASIN
HISTORIC BUILDING	PUBLIC WELFARE	FROM STATE OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION, RANKED BASED ON FIRE SUSCEPTIBILITY
RECREATION	PUBLIC WELFARE	UNIQUE RECREATION AREAS OR AREAS WITH POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO FACILITIES, RANKED BASED ON FIRE SUSCEPTIBILITY
STRUCTURES	PUBLIC SAFETY PUBLIC WELFARE	RANKING BASED ON HOUSING DENSITY AND FIRE SUSCEPTIBILITY
NON-GAME WILDLIFE	ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC WELFARE	CRITICAL HABITATS AND SPECIES LOCATIONS BASED ON INPUT FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
GAME WILDLIFE	PUBLIC WELFARE ENVIRONMENT	CRITICAL HABITATS AND SPECIES LOCATIONS BASED ON INPUT FROM THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS
INFRASTRUCTURE	PUBLIC SAFETY PUBLIC WELFARE	INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DELIVERY OF EMERGENCY AND OTHER CRITICAL SERVICES (E.G. REPEATER SITES, TRANSMISSION LINES)

2009 Riverside Unit Fire Management Plan

Water quality has proven to be another example of a critical asset within Riverside County. Water stored in reservoirs within the county is supplied to businesses and residences throughout the Los Angeles Basin as well as the Inland Empire. Maintenance of water quality is crucial to Riverside County's 1.5 million residents and the support of its largest business, agriculture. Public consumption, recreation, and hydro-electricity are all affected by the quality of water. There are 8 reservoirs within the county that supply water for drinking, recreation, or hydro-electricity. They are: Lake Perris, Lake Mathews, Vail Reservoir, Lake Hemet, Canyon Lake, Lake Elsinore, Lake Skinner and Diamond Valley Lake. The following is a summary of the assets at risk, by Battalion for Riverside Unit. The information primarily is in consideration to the potential for large and damaging wildland fires, and the potential for a significant amount of structures damaged.

Battalion 1 – Perris

Significant damage would most likely be seen in the east side of the Perris Valley between Station 3 (Nuview) and Station 54 (Homeland), as there are some high dollar homes in the area. The potential for large and damaging fires, in the potential amount of structures lost, is more of a problem in the Good Meadow area. This is due to the large amount of mobile homes and scattered single-family dwellings in the Good Meadow area. The mobile homes, coupled with scattered structures presents a significant exposure problem in the event of a fast moving grass fires.

Battalion 2 – Lake Elsinore

The primary assets at risk in B-2 are homes interspersed in the WUI. There is also a set of major electrical transmission lines on the East side of I-15 that pass through the County Ecological preserve. I-15 can and will be affected in the event of a major fire incident on either side of the freeway causing potential closures and economic/traffic impacts. Following any major fire occurrence on the Trabuco District, a severe winter will pose flooding and life safety risks. The West portion of the Battalion has suffered several major fires in recent history to include the Decker canyon fire in August of 1959 which claimed the lives of 5 firefighters, and the Ortega fire in 1988 which burned 16,000 acres from Orange County into Lakeland Village. The valley also experiences a unique weather pattern in the summer months called the "Elsinore effect". Valley floor heating creates a thermal low which draws a strong onshore flow over the Ortega Mountains and down into the valley creating strong down slope/down canyon winds during the heat of the day.

Battalion 3 – Beaumont

The assets at risk within Battalion 3 are predominately residential and recreational. The primary recreational assets are located in Poppet Flats, and Bogart Park in Cherry Valley. One of the areas at risk is the Morongo Indian Reservation. In this area, there is poor hazard reduction compliance, arson issues, and high amounts of off-road vehicle use. A fire in the Banning Water Canyon is a risk to the water supply of the water district as well as a threat to the San Bernardino National Forest Wilderness and the Community of Oak Glen. Additionally, annual maintenance of fire roads including the International Truck Trail, Mile-High Truck Trail, and the Cherry Truck Trail, has been completed allowing critical access to the

2009 Riverside Unit Fire Management Plan

areas. Fires in these areas can be expected to burn through multiple burning periods.

Battalion 4 – Corona

The major assets at risk from a Santa Ana River bottom fire are the structures that line the bluffs overlooking the river, which would be susceptible to a fire coming out of the river bottom, and potential wildlife habitat. There is a problem gaining access to a good portion of the river bottom.

A small portion of the Chino Hills is located along the west end of the County line and on a normal fire day we are able to contain a fire there to 100 acres or less. When there is a Santa Ana wind event, a fire has the potential to run into Orange County rapidly and threaten hundreds of homes in the Yorba Linda/Carbon Canyon areas. The Chino Hills State Park covers just over 13,000 acres of the Chino Hills and holds recreational values and wildlife habitat.

The Dawson Canyon and Spanish Hills areas consist of the hills south of Home Gardens running east to Lake Hills and running south basically along the east side of I-15 to Lake Street. The assets at risk generally consist of the approximately 35 homes located in the two areas.

The assets at risk in the foothills that run along the Cleveland National Forest (Trabuco Ranger District) from the Orange County line to the Battalion 2/4 dividing line consist of the numerous housing developments that are adjacent to the wildland areas and the numerous houses built in some of the canyons and hillsides.

Battalion 5 – San Jacinto

The major assets at risk within Battalion 5 are the residential areas of the San Jacinto Valley, and the community of Sage, located near Station 28. The biggest risk currently facing Battalion 5 is the west-facing slope below the communities of Idyllwild and Pine Cove. A repeat of the 1974 Soboba Fire is now possible due to fuel conditions. Also at risk in Battalion 5 are the foothills surrounding Simpson Park, located south of the community of Hemet. A fire starting at the east end of Simpson Park, in conjunction with Santa Ana wind conditions, has the potential to be a multi-million dollar loss fire.

Battalion 11 - Mountain

Station 23 – Pine Cove

The assets at risk in the Pine Cove/Idyllwild area include residences, business, and a significant number of camps, which are typically occupied by children throughout the summer. The potential problems faced in the communities include: difficult ingress and egress, potential for smoky conditions and limited visibility coupled with narrow; winding roads, power lines throughout forested and residential areas, and steep rocky terrain.

2009 Riverside Unit Fire Management Plan

Station 29 – Anza

The assets at risk in the Anza area are primarily the large number of homes scattered throughout the brush fields in the valley. All of the large public assets, such as the Trinity Boys Home property, propane storage facility, schools, and the community itself are well protected with large areas of defensible space.

With the predominately east wind influence present, any fire started within the brush fields to the south and east ends of the valley will have the potential for a large damaging fire due to the response times of both initial attack engines and extended attack engines. This with the scattered homes in these areas will cause a chance of property loss. The northern portion of the valley has large stands of brush Fuel models 4 and 6 that can be influenced by winds both east and west that can push fire through the areas up the south slopes of Thomas and Cahuilla Mts. to the USFS lands. This area all so has scattered homes through out the brush areas. There has been no real large fire history with the valley area in the past 15- 20 years.

Station 30 – Pinyon

The major assets at risk located in the Pinyon area consist of scattered, residential single-family dwellings located. Also included is the BLM Santa Rosa National Monument.

Station 53 – Garner Valley

Assets at Risk include scattered residences, community areas and several campgrounds and recreation areas. A fire near Lake Hemet would affect the local tourism and commerce of the area as well as provide an evacuation hazard for people at the campgrounds and Lake. Fuels reduction projects and thinning has reduced the fire threat for some of the area, but persistent drought has left an abundance of dead and down fuels in areas that have not been cleared or thinned..

Station 77 – Lake Riverside

Aguanga is a rural community and within the last year a large increase in private dwellings has been noticed. Several senior trailer parks, an elementary school, casino, and a private extreme sports camp are located within its boundaries. San Bernardino national forest skirts the northern boundaries of Station 77's Primary Response Area.

Battalion 13 – Menifee

Battalion 13 is 42 square miles and has roughly the following boundaries: North of Murrieta city, South of Perris city, West of the Winchester area and just East of Elsinore (halfway down Railroad Canyon Road).

The area with the highest potential for large and damaging fires is in the area of Menifee, Station 68's PRA. The primary housing construction in the area of Cottonwood Canyon is single and doublewide mobile homes. The hazards include, but are not limited to: Limited access and egress, limited water supply, and housing construction.

2009 Riverside Unit Fire Management Plan

The area south of Bundy Canyon Road may also pose a problem, however it is at least a north facing aspect. During north wind conditions, coupled with a wildland ignition, the potential exists for fire to rapidly spread south to Murrieta.

Battalion 15 – Temecula

Station 12 – Temecula

Major assets at risk in the Temecula area include the De Luz area (A major Avocado producing region) inter-mixed with very high dollar housing and the Santa Margarita river drainage, which runs from Temecula to the Pacific Ocean. Old Town Temecula is also at risk, due to prevalent westerly afternoon winds, which have pushed fire downhill into Temecula in the past.

Additionally, a community of homeless has set up a decent size encampment at the mouth of the Margarita drainage. The potential is here as everywhere in the county for a large high dollar fire. If there were a start in the Santa Margarita drainage, it would be difficult to achieve initial attack success, due to fuels, topography, and accessibility.

Station 75 – Bear Creek

The major assets risks within Station 75's Initial Attack area (SRA) include hundreds of residential structures with a minimum square footage of 4,000 feet up to a maximum of 12,000 square feet on five-acre parcels in the LaCresta and Tenaja area. This area is a significant watershed and environmental sensitive area. The 6,500-acre Santa Rosa Nature Conservancy contains over 10 miles of roads only accessible by Type III engines is also entirely within Station 75's initial attack area. Recreational areas include Tenaja Falls and a portion of the Wildomar Off Highway Vehicle area on the Cleveland National Forest, both of which are located in the Initial Attack area. There are also numerous equestrian facilities and trails in the LaCresta area.

A significant potential for a large destructive wildfire exists within Station 75's area. This potential includes reasons listed above, a lack of any significant recorded fire history, and climatic conditions relating to the daily coastal influences. There are also several large communities with hundreds of significantly sized residences within the wildland urban interface and only two routes of ingress or egress in the event of an emergency. The general population frequently uses significant recreational areas and opportunities to access the National Forest areas. In the event of a wildfire there is a significant reflex time to augment required resources to affect evacuations and structure protection necessary in the area.

92 – Wolf Creek

Major assets at risk within Station 92's first in area include hundreds of custom and ranch style residential structures with some equestrian activity. Accessibility and water supplies/sources to these residential structures is good. Another area is the Pala/Temecula Grade, where there is a very heavy brush load, and an active real estate market has generated large, high dollar homes in the area. There are also two smaller and older style developments/communities, which have limited access and poor water supplies. As a general rule, access to the residential structures can be made by Type I engines, however access to the wildland is limited to Type III engines.

2009 Riverside Unit Fire Management Plan

96 – Glen Oaks

Major assets at risk within Station 96's first in area include the Glen Oaks area and the Temecula Wine Country (A major grape / wine producing region) inter-mixed with very high dollar housing. This area also has a significant watershed and environmentally sensitive areas.

Battalion 17 – Cajalco

The major assets at risk within Battalion 17 are scattered residential areas in the Mead Valley, Glen Valley, Lake Matthews, and Gavilan Hills areas and the two large Ecological Reserves the Lake Matthews Estelle Mountain Reserve and Harford Springs Reserve. The structures are primarily single family homes from mobile homes to multi million dollar homes. The property surrounding the Lake Matthews Reserve has an established Fire Plan. Also included is threat of a major fire running through the surrounding areas of the Lake Matthews Reservoir which is a drinking water reservoir for Southern California. The potential water run off and sediment could cause an issue.