

# Memorandum

To: Candace Gregory, Region Chief  
California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection  
Southern Region

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[www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)

From: Kirk Swartzlander, Chief  
California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection  
Southern Region- Tulare

Subject: 2009 Cal Fire / Tulare Unit Fire Management Plan

Tulare Unit has completed the Fire Management Plan for 2009. We are using the plan as our guide to reduce the risk of large damaging fires within the Unit, as well as catalog past, present, and future projects that not only look towards long range planning, but also act as a reminder to maintain pre-suppression infrastructure that has been in place for almost sixty years. This memorandum provides the status on where TUU is in terms of Fire Plan assessments, data validation, and its integration into daily operations. The following identifies the current status of Fire Management Plan issues:

- **Status of Fire Plan data layer validations and Assessments**

- \* Fuels: *Not complete*
  - \* Ignition Workload Analysis: *Need to update 2006-2009*
  - \* Severe Fire Weather: *Not completed*, need RAWS adjustment to accurately validate.
  - \* Assets at Risk: *Completed*
- Fire Plan Assessment outputs are consistent with Unit Fire Plan staffs assessment of the priority areas.

- **Fire Plan Integration into Daily Operations**

Projects identified in previous Fire Plans have cataloged projects completed and identified future projects. Our goal is to have an identified project being worked on within the field every day. The most affected areas include:

- Camp Operations:

- Fire Management Plan activities account for less than ¼ of camp project work.
- \* Field Battalion Operations: - Generate GPS data for pre-attack maps & accurate fire history.
  - Identify areas for fuel reduction projects.
  - Post education / information signs to get our message out.
  - Maintain TUU's Fire Control Road system which covers 176 miles.
- **Notable successes include:**
    - \* Lake Kaweah, Lake Success, and North Fork Drive "Rat Trail" Project(s)
      - These fuel breaks contain road side ignitions annually.
    - \* Mt. Home State Forest Fuel Break.
- **Notable hindrances include:**
    - \* Delays in contract support
    - Difficult to coordinate project start dates
    - Cooperators lose interest and confidence
    - Opportunities and momentum are lost
    - Funding only available through Non Profit agencies
    - \* Change of ownership and property splits on established and projected fuel reductions sites
    - \* San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
      - \$5.40 per acre smoke mitigation fee discourages perspective participants
      - Lack of adequate burn windows when project is in prescription
    - \* Staff support for current and prospective projects
      - GIS specialist
- **Key Fire Plan Players include:**
    - \* Chief, CAL FIRE Tulare Unit
    - \* Pre-Fire Engineer
    - \* VMP Forester I
- **Field Support**
    - \* Division Chief, Mountain Division
    - \* Division Chief, Mt. Home CC
    - \* Field Battalion, Chiefs
    - \* Station Captains
- **Staff Support**
    - \* Division Chief, Administrative Officer
    - \* Region Pre-Fire Battalion Chief
    - \* Region Contracts staff
    - \* Sacramento Business Services

The goal of the Tulare Unit is to make the Fire Plan a relevant document while utilizing it to prevent large and damaging fires. A key element in the plans success will be to streamline the contract process to take advantage of cooperators interest, momentum, and on the ground opportunities. While we plan for and develop new projects, our primary focus will be to obtain funding for the maintenance of existing projects and pre-suppression infrastructure that is in place.

The Fire Plan is in the process of undergoing a change to make this a working document that is useful to field personnel while incorporating data and technology that was previously unavailable. This transformation will require buy in and input from the field Battalions, but should make the Units Fire Plan goals and priorities clearly understood at all levels. Changes are continually being made to make The Fire Plan a tool which will assist the newer employees in becoming familiar with pre-suppression projects which exist within each Battalion.

*Kirk Swartzlander*

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