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December 16, 2003

“California State Watershed Health Initiative”

Statement of Problem

California’s privately owned urbanizing native forests and watersheds have been protected rather than managed. This has created unhealthy forests and watersheds susceptible to destructive fires, insect infestations and diseases. The State’s privately owned forests are largely overstocked and subject to stress resulting from the typical drought cycles associated with a Mediterranean climate. Combined with the additional impacts of urban development, the health of our State’s privately owned forests and watersheds is rapidly deteriorating and threatens the future existence of communities, local natural resources, water quality and the economy of the State of California.

Proposed Solution

Based upon values at risk and liabilities, caused by unmanaged forests and watersheds, enforceable regulatory standards which recognize standards for the promotion of a healthy fire resistant forest and watersheds are needed. This proposal focuses on the relationships between the number trees per acre, forest land productivity and the reduction of ladder fuels which promote forest fires and the impacts of development in watersheds.

The Uniform Fire (UFC) and the Uniform Building Codes (UBC) provide minimum fire safe standards for new construction. The Public Resources Code (PRC) contains language for such minimum building standards as road widths, turning radii, water flow, and addressing. Additionally the PRC and local weed abatement ordinances establish minimum residential weed clearance standards. These standards have been created to protect life and property.

This proposal is intended to create language within the Public Resources Code which would acknowledge that unmanaged private forest lands that exceed specific stocking or tree numbers per acre (density) and site productivity classification are a public nuisance. As a public nuisance land owners would be required to abate or manage said lands, or the State would impose fines or take action to remedy the nuisance at cost to the landowner. Unmanaged forests are increasingly susceptible to destructive fires, insect infestations and forest diseases which are remedied at great cost by all California residents.

Compliance with this new regulation would require, rather than persuade, forest landowners to meet minimum and maximum forest stocking or tree numbers per acre standards. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection would be charged with enforcement of this regulation and its standards. Inspection of all unincorporated forest land parcels would occur every 5 years

This proposal is also intended to create language within the Public Resources Code which would set minimum standards for development within watershed lands, including those contained wholly or in part within incorporated city limits, which would ensure the vitality, health and functionality of those lands as watersheds. Funding for tree removal matching grants would be available only to cities and counties that agree to adopt ordinances, zoning and building codes and planning policies that ensure fire wise construction.

Housing, commercial and retail development may be limited based on criteria such as degree of slope, vulnerability to loss from wildland fire, water quality and drainage impacts as well as other negative impacts on watershed functions. Paving limitations or permeable paving alternatives could also be required to ensure that adequate watershed function will be maintained and that Storm water, debris and flooding will be minimized.

Consequence of Inaction

Inaction will see the continued build-up of unmanaged forest fuels in State Responsibility Area forests and watersheds throughout the State. The result will be the perpetuation of overstocked, stressed forests and watersheds that are susceptible to destructive and increasingly expensive wildfires, insect infestations, and diseases, which affect public safety and watershed resource values. The lack of minimal state wide development standards in watersheds have allowed cities and counties to approve development in areas of the state without adequate protection of watersheds increasing costs for firefighting and significant impacts to the state's water quality and supply. The fiscal impact of these decisions is borne by taxpayers statewide.

ALTERNATIVE

CAL FIRE and its cooperators historically have pursued public education efforts to achieve public support for forest management on private forest lands of all sizes. These efforts have had limited success. The continued urbanization of California forest land and watersheds requires immediate action. There are no other methods to address this expanding problem and its impacts on SRA watersheds. Legislation is required. Education and regulatory enforcement provided by CAL FIRE and its cooperators is required to affect long term change and reduce the cost of the consequences of imperiled forests and catastrophic fire.

Ensuring the health and vitality of California's forests and watersheds will result in more natural and fire resistive forests and watersheds. Appropriate land management and building standards will reduce human and property loss to wildfire with resultant savings in the cost of fighting wildfires.

Others Affected

Cities and counties, planning agencies, code enforcement and local fire protection agencies, water agencies and districts and watershed groups and authorities.

History

Our national and state fire policies were largely established following the large life and property loss fires that occurred in the late 1800's to 1910. These policies established the goal of suppressing all wildfires at ten acres or less. This has resulted in the exclusion of the beneficial effects of wildfire in forests and watersheds contributing to the overstocking of these lands and their susceptibility to drought impacts. Additionally, land management and planning decisions in these lands have been made by local government without adequate consideration of the impacts on watershed functions. "The State, as a quasi sovereign, has a right to protect a waterway from the impacts of private property owners." Oliver Wendell Holmes. Land use decisions in watersheds, by local governments, have negatively impacted the citizens of California living outside the local government's jurisdiction. Those impacts have been reduced water quality and supply, soil erosion, flooding and the increased costs of wildland fire suppression.

Fiscal and Economic Impacts

The costs of wildland fire suppression have been increasing in California on an annual basis driven largely by the increased efforts required to protect lives and property as development has encroached into the wildland areas of the state. Other fire impact costs, which have not been calculated on a statewide basis, include among others availability and cost of property insurance, flood control impacts, water quality and water supply as well as species habitat and re-forestation. For example following the 2003 fires in San Bernardino County water agencies determined that:

- Total runoff is likely to increase by more than 10% and peak storm flows will increase about 5 times normal.
- Sediment loads carried down stream could be 30 to 50 times normal. This may take years to remove.
- Flood control basins will likely be breached and areas without flood control basins may have catastrophic flood and debris damage.
- Long duration increases in water turbidity including fine sediment may be carried far down stream complicating groundwater discharge.
- A 2-10 fold increase in Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) or salts with increased flows could result in as much as 500,000 tons of added salt in the Santa Ana River and groundwater basins. The runoff water is needed for recharge or consumptive use, significant treatment requirements to remove or mitigate this TDS.
- 20,000 tons of nitrates and phosphorous formerly bound in soil and from airborne deposition will be released into the peak storm flows and make its way into groundwater.
- There will be significant transport of uranium and its radiological progeny downstream in surface groundwater increasing the cost of radon and uranium treatment and future monitoring.
- Increases in organic compounds, including toxic and carcinogenic compounds from partial combustion of forest materials will decrease usability of 70% of the Santa Ana Region's primary water source.
- Sedimentation of the lands used by the San Bernardino kangaroo rat and the Santa Ana woolly star fish will cause choking turbidity reducing the useable habitat for the Santa Ana sucker fish.
- Estimated costs to mitigate the fire effects in the Santa Ana watershed range from \$500,000,000 to \$800,000,000.

**Forest Care
Program Description
October 8, 2009**

Appendix. #3

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Goal: To secure forest health and fire safe communities through continuous fuel reduction on private parcels of land by encouraging landowners to reduce fuels in the short term and to maintain the fuel reduction in the long term.

Objective: Educate private landowners of the benefits of fuel reduction for fire safety of their property and the community as well as the benefits of a healthy forest.

- An outreach program will be implemented to provide a financial incentive to private landowners within BDF and on parcels less than 20 acres to reduce hazardous fuels and promote a healthy forest. Priority will be given to a landowner or parcel that lies within a hazardous fuels area or has been identified in a Community Wildfire Protection Plan.

Objective: Develop and implement a program and associated systems that can be modeled state wide where similar fuel conditions and community dynamics exist.

- San Bernardino National Forest Association (SBNFA) in conjunction with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) will be responsible for the development and implementation of an incentive program for the thinning of pre-commercial, green trees on parcels of private land, forested lots within the San Bernardino National Forest (BDF).

Objective: Education of local communities, visitors, and regional communities of the benefits of a healthy forest and the role of fuel reduction in its maintenance.

- Work in conjunction with SBNFA to develop an outreach capability by utilizing a traveling, interactive forest exhibit and offers opportunities for experiential learning through monitoring and maintenance of existing community fuel breaks.

RESPONSIBILITIES

See attached letter of agreement between CAL FIRE and SBNFA

Partnership Structure

Forest Care is delivered as a partnership. For the purposes of expansion and maximizing efficiency, both partners are co-locating in a single office space in a centralized location to the communities served by the program. The work-share is outlined in the Specific Activities section and the individual organizational structures are shown below.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES

CAL FIRE will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Maintain Registered Professional Foresters (RPF) or RPF supervised staff members for field evaluation of potential projects, educate landowners, assist landowners in marking projects and confirm projects are completed to standards on parcels less than one acre.
2. Evaluate potential projects, educate landowners, oversight of contract Registered Professional Forester's (RPF's) work, and confirm projects are completed to standard on parcels 1-20 acres.
3. Conduct education on forest health and fire safe topics and market the green tree thinning program at community events, public meetings and interagency meetings.

4. Complete the necessary environmental review through a combination of CAL FIRE staff and contractors.
5. Oversight of the overall project and coordination with other hazardous fuels reduction projects in the area through additional staff positions.

SBNFA will be responsible for the following activities:

1. Establishment as a central public resource for potential participants.
2. Develop marketing plan and materials to communicate about program to target audiences.
3. Develop educational materials for participants to aid them in achieving the long term project objective of healthy forest maintenance.
4. Conduct education on forest health and fire safe topics and market the green tree thinning program at community events, public meetings and interagency meetings.
5. Provide a centralized process for handling a potential of 5,000 stakeholders' requests for assistance.
6. Design database and administer the housing and managing data for confidentiality purposes and future needs of the communities involved.
7. Development of an automated tool for documenting and tracking of potential landowner's participation, contracts, funds available, funds committed, and funds expended.
8. Generate reports from the automated tool described above for both CAL FIRE and SBNFA reporting needs and tracking and reporting of matching funds.
9. Provide staff for grant administration, grant tracking, processing applications and contracts, promoting program with landowners, and phone contact with landowners.
10. Provide consulting forestry firm with necessary information to conduct field surveys of projects, obtain signed contracts and review completed projects.
11. Provide staff and procedures to manage the schedules of CAL FIRE project staff and contracted RPF in field evaluations and meeting with landowners and ensure that all parties work together to complete projects in a timely manner.
12. Process signed contracts.
13. Receive reimbursement requests.
14. Provide forester reimbursement application for field review.
15. Process landowner reimbursement requests and make payments.
16. Reporting to CAL FIRE and USFS on activity of the project. Various other performance measures regarding timeframes and data production.
17. Ongoing monitoring and evaluating project progress toward meeting goals and objectives.
18. Contracting with a consulting RPF forestry firm for marking, layout and filing harvest documents with CAL FIRE for parcels 1-20 acres in size.
19. Coordination with local Agencies on fuel break maintenance and monitoring needs, and volunteer recruitment and coordination to accomplish needs.

Work by private landowners will need to be performed to the specified standards. Once the work is complete a reimbursement request will be submitted by the landowner to SBNFA controlling the reimbursement funds. Next, verification by CAL FIRE that the project meets the program standards will be documented and noted for reimbursement to the private landowner via the SBNFA process for disbursement of funds. Reimbursement will be at 75% of the private landowner's costs or the maximum cap rate, whichever is less.

San Bernardino Unit
Fire Safe Council Stakeholder Rooster

Appendix. #3

San Bernardino County

**Angelus Oaks Fire Safe Council
Fire Safe Council**

P.O. Box 116
Angelus Oaks, CA 92305
Office: (909) 794-6247

**Arrowhead Communities Fire Safe Council
Council**

PO Box 630
Rim Forest, CA 92378
Office: (760) 387-2955
Office: (909) 337-3383

Big Bear Valley Fire Safe Council

P.O. Box 2860
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315
Office: (909) 585-7662

Carbon Canyon Fire Safe Council

2005 Grand Avenue
Chino Hills, CA 91709
Office: (909) 902-5280 x231

Lytle Creek Fire Safe Council, Inc.

P.O. Box 94
Lytle Creek, CA 92358
Office: (909) 466-7388

Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council (MRFSC)

PO Box 303
Rim Forest, CA 92378
Office: (909) 337-6844

Oak Glen Fire Safe Council

PO Box 820
Oak Glen, CA 92399
Office: (800) 686-8677

Rancho Cucamonga Fire Safe Council

5840 East Ave
Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Office: (909) 948-5325

Wrightwood Fire Safe Council

6000 Cedar St
Wrightwood, Ca.
Office: (760) 249-3206

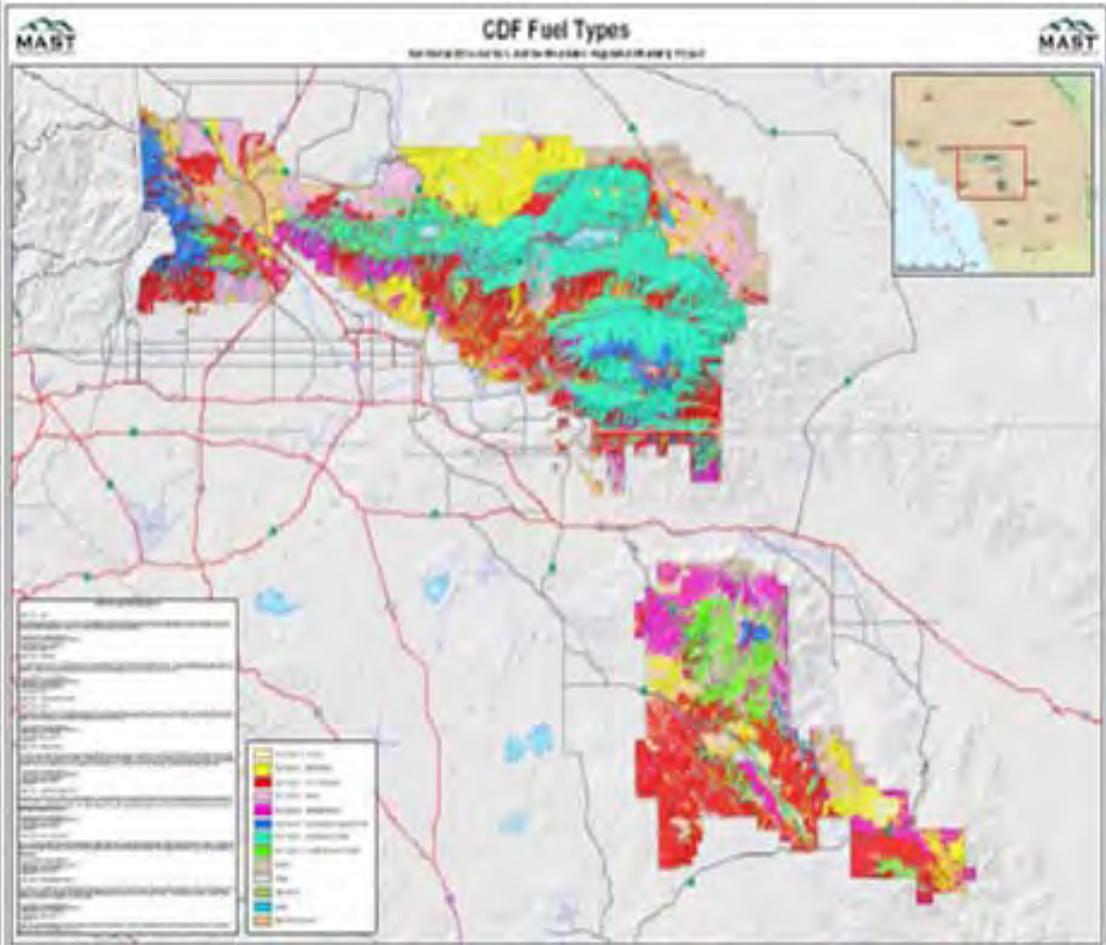
Inyo/Mono Counties

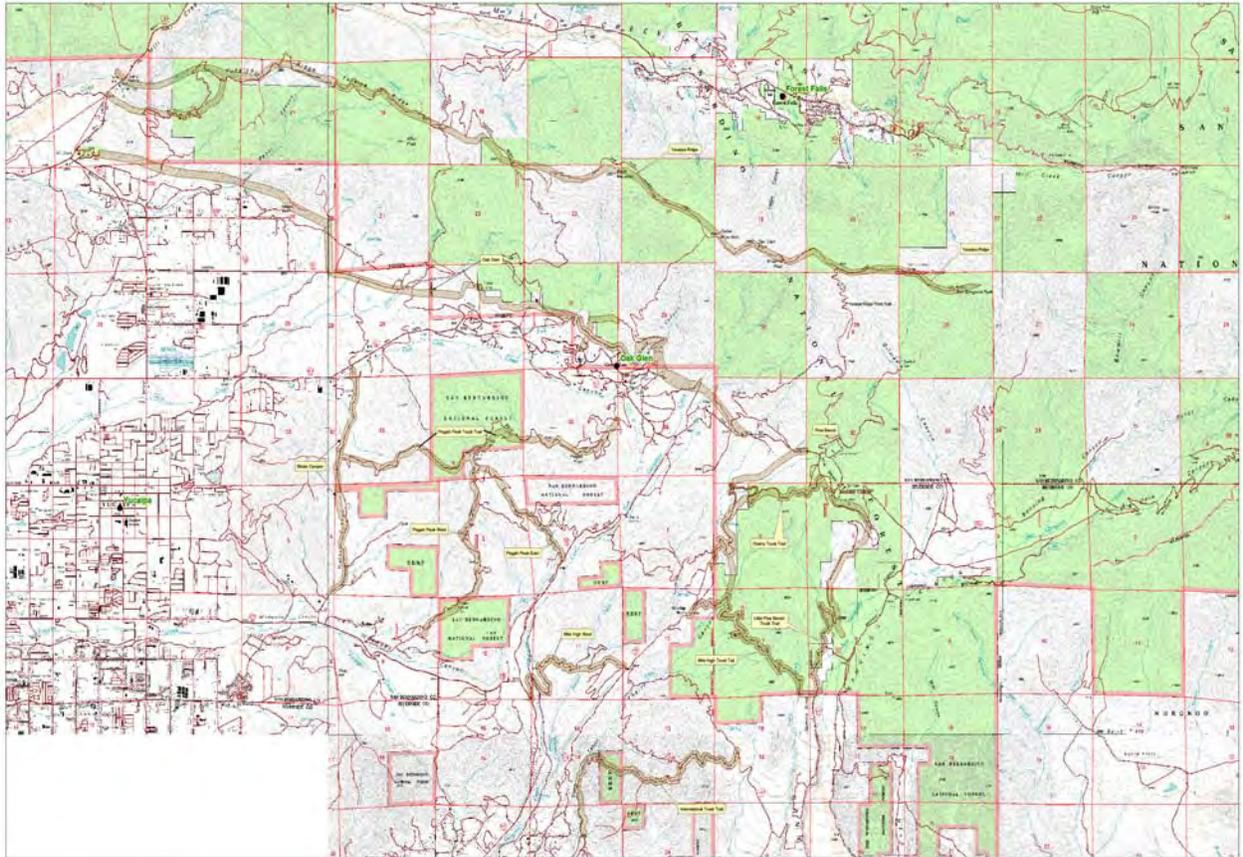
Eastern Sierra Regional

76 Canyon Drive
Bishop, CA 93514
Office: (760) 872-3004

Wheeler Crest Fire Safe

129 Willow Road
Swall Meadows, CA 93514



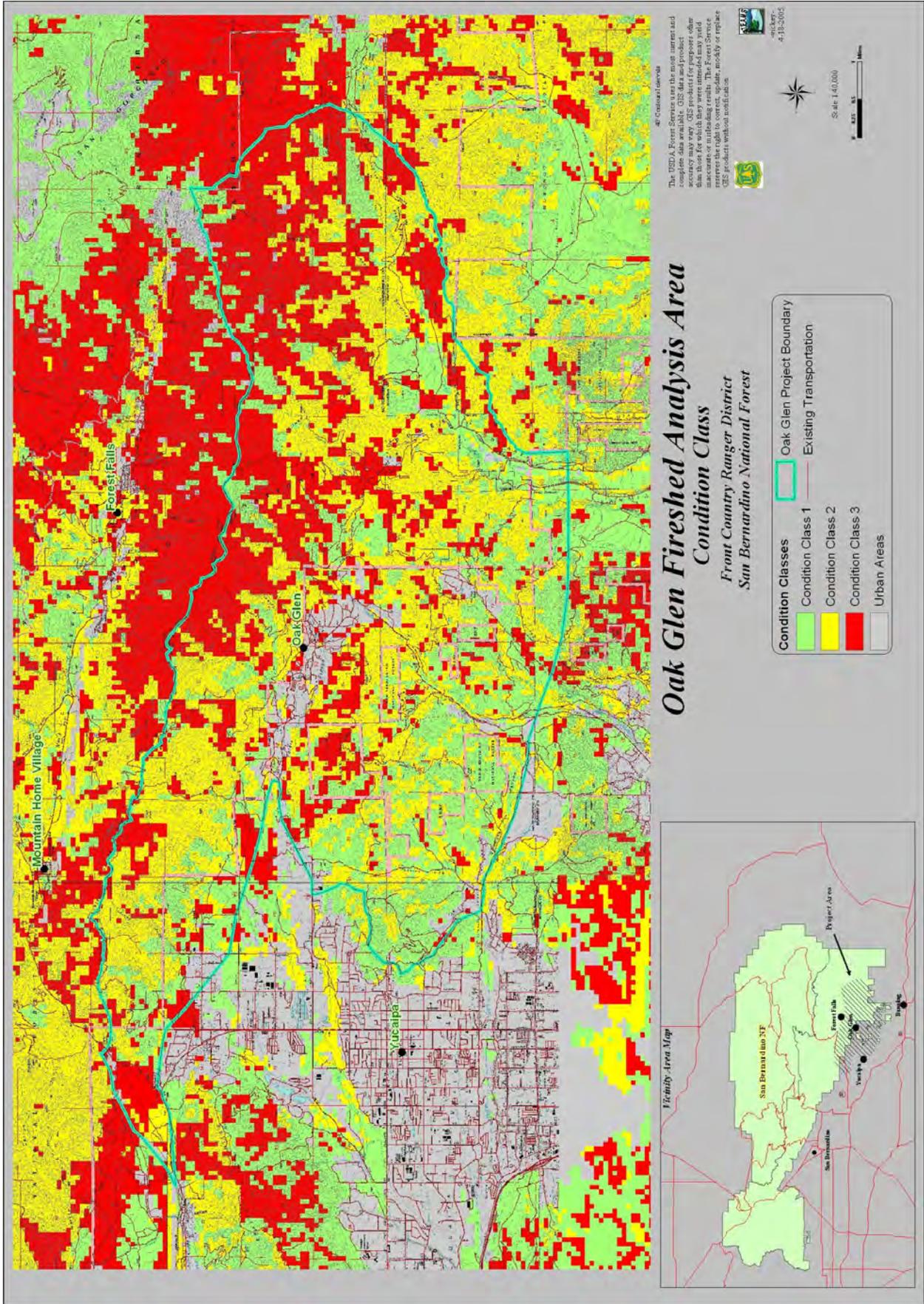


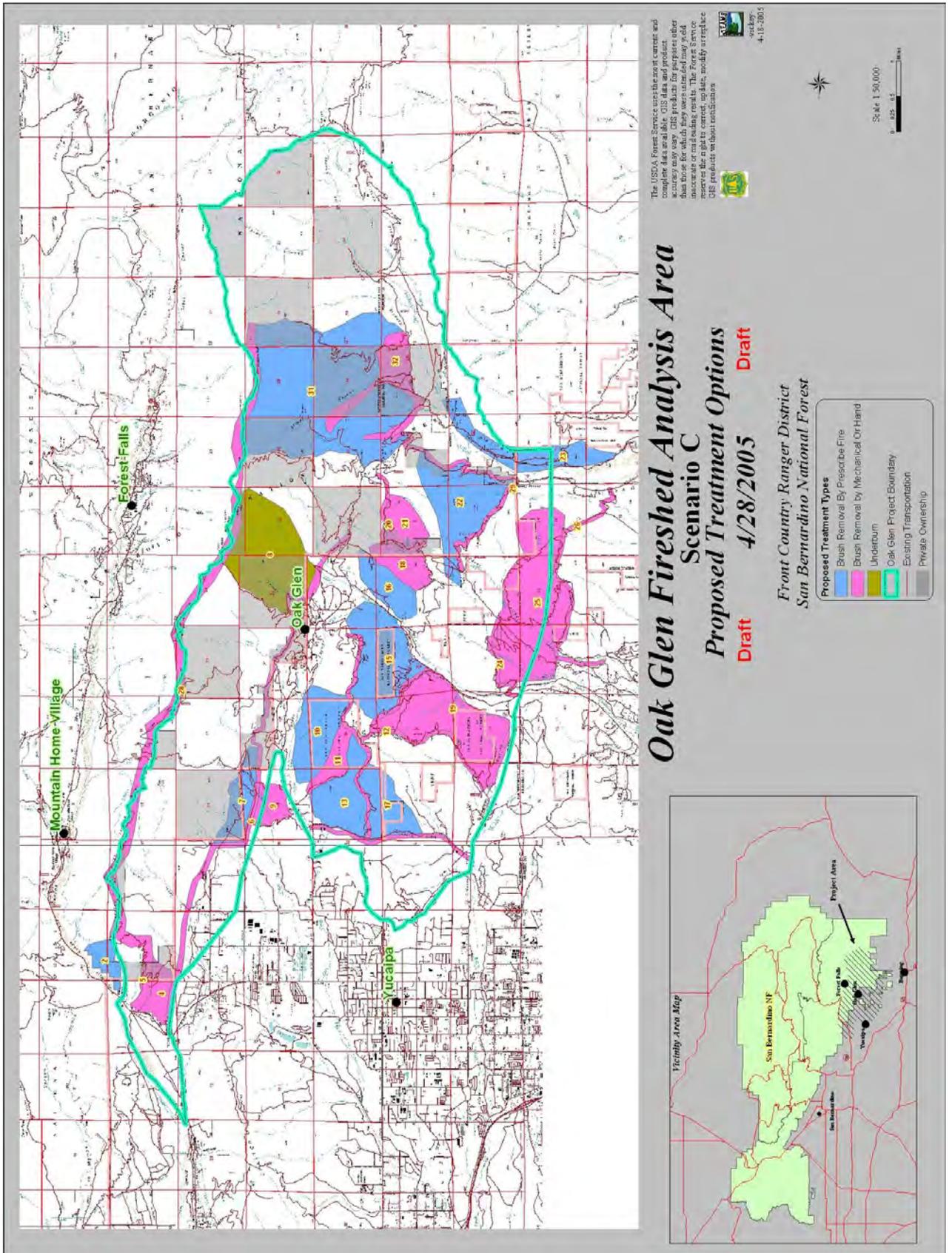
Oak Glen/Banning Community Defense Project Fuel Breaks

3/20/2006

Front Country Ranger District
San Bernardino National Forest







Oak Glen Fireshed Analysis Area

Scenario C

Proposed Treatment Options

Draft 4/28/2005 Draft

Front Country Ranger District
San Bernardino National Forest

- Proposed Treatment Types**
- Brush Removal By Prescribe Fire
 - Brush Removal by Mechanical Or Hand
 - Underbroom
 - Oak Glen Project Boundary
 - Existing Transportation
 - Private Ownership

