

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Fire Sieges of 2003 and 2007 were, unquestionably, significant historical events that emblazed an indelible mark onto all the citizens in San Diego County and the entire state of California. These fires cost the lives of citizens and firefighters, destroyed thousands of homes and business, and burned nearly a half a million acres. The economic and environmental impacts were astounding – these fires were measured in billions of dollars. The cost of fire suppression was record setting, the cost and losses to homes and business severely impacted property owners, government and the insurance industry, and the environmental impacts to the watersheds, wildlife, habitat, and the general diversity of the landscape, to name a few, are altered for decades. There is no question about the need for a pro-active Pre-Fire/Resource Management Program in San Diego.

The San Diego Unit Pre-Fire/Resource Management Program normally funds one Fire Captain to serve as the Pre-Fire Engineer to draft and coordinate the Unit' Fire Plan and one Forester II to serve as Unit Forester and coordinate the Fire Plan and resource programs. Currently the Unit is directly benefiting from the Hazardous Fuels Treatment grant from the USFS State and Private Forestry Services. This grant provides funding to support one Forester I, two Forestry Assistant II position, one Office Technician, and one Battalion Chief as Retired Annuitant. Another bonus for the Unit: CAL FIRE statewide Archaeology Program provides one full-time archaeologist based out of Monte Vista Headquarters. As of July 2009 all positions were filled with the exception of the Forester I position, and this position will be filled as of December 1, 2009. Certainly, this increased staffing will directly increase productivity; in terms of planning, implementing and tracking of fuels treatment and resource management projects.

For the duration of the Unit's 2009 Fire Plan, Pre-Fire/Resource Management staff will focus on completing the Active Projects, finalizing the environmental review of the Planned Projects, and reassessing the Unit's needs of the Future Projects. Successful implementation of the Fire Plan is dependent upon the active engagement of the staff, crews, engine companies, Battalion Chiefs, Division Chief, Unit Chief, and all the stakeholders. The San Diego Unit is actively committed to the Fire Plan.

As a final note, this document is being submitted at the end of November 2009 and the fire season has been relatively quite in San Diego County. As staff works on Unit's 2009 Fire Plan, they also are looking forward to revamping and incorporating local ideas to create refreshed, high quality Unit Fire Plan in June 2010. Equally important is to develop a refreshed Fire Plan that considers the Unit's capacity to support and implement the Fire Plan.