

SUPPORT BUREAUS

OTHER PROGRAMS THAT NEED FUNDING WITHIN THE BUTTE UNIT

Magalia Reforestation Center – Forester / Dave Derby

Purpose Statement

The Magalia Camp, formerly the Butte Fire Center, has been slated for closure. This decommission process will conclude in February, 2011. The facility will continue to act as a regional training facility for CAL FIRE's northern region.

During the period when CAL FIRE/CCC hand crews were operating from the Butte Fire Center they averaged 65,000 emergency response hours per year responding to fires, rescues, floods, vehicle accidents, and other public service needs. BFC also served as a designated incident base for large fires supplying feeding, sleeping areas, command post functions, staging and communications.

The void created by not having a Conservation Camp within Butte greatly impacts the CAL FIRE Butte Units firefighting and emergency response capabilities. There is a substantial loss to public service in the form of fuel reduction and community service work within Butte County.

The goal is to create a Conservation Camp within Butte staffed with firefighting hand crews capable of all-risk, fire, flood, or rescue, emergency response and reimbursable public service fuel reduction and community service work.

Emergency Command Center – Battalion Chief David Hawks

Purpose Statement

The Butte Unit Emergency Command Center (BTU ECC) provides command and control services, as well as “pre arrival” emergency medical services, for all of the unincorporated areas of Butte County, in addition to the Cities of Oroville, Biggs, Gridley, the El Medio Fire Protection District, and the Mooretown Indian Rancheria. The BTU ECC is also the CAL FIRE Fire Command and Control center for State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands within Butte County.

Furthermore, the BTU ECC is the OES Fire Operational Area Mutual Aid Coordination center for Butte County. As the Operational Area Coordinator, the BTU ECC has responsibility to coordinate all fire mutual aid requests for all jurisdictions within Butte County. This responsibility also gives the BTU ECC the authority to directly obtain resources from all neighboring counties including Yuba, Sutter, Plumas, Glenn, Colusa, Tehama, and Lassen.

In 1995, the BTU ECC processed 12,024 incidents. In 2009, 15,507 incidents were processed, an increase of over **29%** in 12 years. The BTU ECC is currently staffed with five Fire Captains, seven Communications Operators, and one Battalion Chief. This staffing has remained fairly constant since 2005, and allows for three person staffing during shift hours, and generally two person staffing “wide awake” during the night shift, and the ECC Duty Captain available close by.

Objectives

- ◆ Continue to provide quality command and control services, as well as excellent customer service, to all of our customers.
- ◆ Pursue staffing increases to support increases in daily incidents, as well as increasing job complexity, and to provide for relief dispatchers.
- ◆ Pursue cooperative agreements with other departments and agencies to enhance efficiency of resource command and control, within Butte County.
- ◆ Pursue available technology to more efficiently conduct command and control operations.
- ◆ Cooperate fully and effectively with allied agencies.

Mission

The mission of the Oroville Emergency Command Center is to provide a consistent, accurate, timely, and coordinated command and control system. “We will provide support, direction, and communications with our ultimate goal being the best service possible to all who depend on our team.”

Vegetation Management Program (VMP) – Battalion Chief Jeff Harter

Many of the VMP projects undertaken in the Unit have been within state wildlife areas. Due to the existing land use patterns within the Unit and the increasing population densities in Butte County, it is anticipated that the emphasis of the Vegetation Management Program will continue to focus projects in rural areas. Future projects will expand on state wildlife areas with high assets at risk in wildlife enhancement.

Active VMP projects include the following:

Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI): Goal of 1050 acres to be treated in the Butte and Tehama County area north of the community of Cohasset along the timber road known as the H Line. This project will treat under story growth of manzanita and pine needle accumulation along a 16 mile shaded fuel break maintained by SPI. Total cost of project is \$49,189.44 with 73.16 percent paid by CAL FIRE.

Gray Lodge Wildlife Refuge VMP: Goal of 6000 acres to be treated. Located 6 miles west of Gridley, in Butte County, this project enhances the wildlife habitat managed by the California Department of Fish and Game. Reduction of over grown cat tails and other plant species are burned to create feed and open space for annual migrating waterfowl that visit the refuge each year. The population of waterfowl in the refuge has significantly increased since the burning has been conducted. Total cost of project is \$32,749.41 with 54 percent paid by CAL FIRE.

The VMP program is expanding the burning to the Dry Creek, Howard Sough, Llano Seco Units along Butte Creek on California Fish and Game Lands. Over 2,000 acres of waterfowl and animal habitat will be treated. Other areas we are working with California Fish and Game are Oroville Wildlife Area, Table Mountain and Darby Unit. Each of these areas is unique by vegetation type and topography.

Fire Prevention Bureau – Battalion Chief Todd Price

(EDUCATION, ENFORCEMENT & PLANNING)

Purpose Statement

The Butte Unit Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for public education, public information, fire hazard abatement, life safety and fire investigations. Each of these programs are important facets of a well balanced fire prevention program. Additionally, the Fire Prevention Bureau works closely with the Fire Protection Planning Bureau to ensure that common fire prevention interests are met.

Over the past few years a number of fires have been caused by using machinery like lawn movers to cut standing dead grasses. While doing this kind of weed abatement, fires start in a number of ways. These include mower blades striking rocks, mower exhaust igniting grass, mechanical failures to pulleys and improper fueling techniques.

To combat what appear to be preventable fires caused by mowers, the Department has developed brochures for public distribution, which provide detailed information about the hazards of mowing dry grass, and how to take preventative measures. In addition, the Prevention Bureau has developed a Public Service Announcement to address the problem. The PSA focuses on the factors contributing to the problem, including mowing during warm weather, and what steps can be taken to help prevent these types of fires.

The Fire Prevention Bureau will continue to support the fire investigation needs of the Unit, assisting with complex fire investigations such as those involving fire fatalities, commercial structures, arson, or detailed follow-up investigative work. Through the fire investigation process, specific fire cause problems will be addressed utilizing focused prevention efforts of education and enforcement programs.

The Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) in the fire prevention bureau have the responsibility of instituting appropriate cost recovery and law enforcement on negligently and criminally caused fires. Officers are responsible for instituting follow up investigations and creating case reports for incidents that presumed negligent or criminal. Officers are required where appropriate to make arrests and present cases reports to the District Attorney.

Fire Prevention Positions:

Pre Fire Engineer (PFE)

The PFE is responsible for the implementation of the Butte Fire Management Plan. This document serves as a blue print for pre fire management projects including fire safe and evacuation planning and hazardous fuel reduction projects. The PFE uses GIS technology to conduct assessments of the Unit's geographical fire hazard areas and produces mapping requests for hazard reduction projects. The PFE works with fire safe councils and monitors financial expenditures for the Proposition 40 and HR 2389 Grants. These grants are used for various community base fuel reduction projects.

Fire Protection Planning (FPP)

The FPP is an investigator who is responsible for the enforcement of Public Resources Code (PRC) 4290 (with in SRA), 4291, the Butte County Improvement Standards, and when applicable the CAL FIRE Code on all use permits. The FPP attends

Inter Department Review, Planning Commission, Pre Development, Users Group, Board of Supervisors, and other meetings pertinent to Fire Protection Planning. The FPP provides current fire safe building requirements to all Butte County Contractors, Engineers and Architects.

Hazard Abatement Officer (Program suspended due to budget Cuts)