

# *Unit Strategic Fire Plan Riverside Unit*



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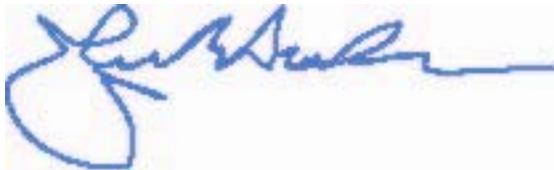
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**SIGNATURES**

**Unit Strategic Fire Plan developed for Riverside Unit**

This Plan:

- Was collaboratively developed. Interested parties, Federal, State, City, and County agencies within the Unit have been consulted and are listed in the plan.
- Identifies and prioritizes pre fire and post fire management strategies and tactics meant to reduce the loss of values at risk within the Unit.
- Is intended for use as a planning and assessment tool only. It is the responsibility of those implementing the projects to ensure that all environmental compliance and permitting processes are met as necessary.



June 13<sup>th</sup> 2011

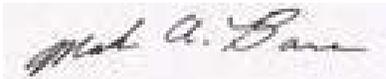
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**Unit Chief**

John R. Hawkins

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**Date**



June 13<sup>th</sup> 2011

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**Pre-Fire Engineer**

Captain Mark Barr

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**Date**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### ***Executive Summary***

Although this plan applies to the entire Unit, the 2011 Riverside Unit Pre-Fire Management Plan strongly reflects the continuing State of Emergency that exists in the San Jacinto Mountains (Battalion 11) within the Unit. Unit personnel, including the Unit Chief, Deputy Chief – Western Operations, Bautista Division Chief, Pre-Fire Division Chief, Pre-Fire Battalion Chief, Pre-Fire Engineer, unit foresters, and Riverside County Fire Department Office of Emergency Services are working diligently with the Mountain Area Safety Task Force (MAST) to come up with solutions to mitigate this problem. Although Pre-Fire activities continue in other parts of the county through the shifting of resources, the focus of our activities has been and must continue to be these communities and watersheds within the mountainous area until the unprecedented threat can be sufficiently mitigated.

In spite of the emphasis on the San Jacinto Mountain communities, Pre-Fire projects have also been planned and implemented on State Responsibility Area (SRA) lands in and adjacent to the San Bernardino and Cleveland National Forest. We plan to expand our Pre-Fire work into the areas of Anza, Sage, Aguanga and the Elsinore Front Country with a focus on evacuation routes and community defense projects. A number of cooperative projects have taken place with many more being planned. We have also been treating fuels on Multi-Species Habitat Preserves and other public lands within State Responsibility Area (SRA) but not proximal to any national forest.

Within Riverside County, CAL FIRE has a long standing cooperative fire protection agreement with the County. It is referred to as the CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department. The Riverside County Fire Department and Riverside County Office of Emergency Services benefit from a strong integrated, cooperative, regional fire protection system. The system is strong because of the additive organizational factors provided by the State, County, partner cities, and community services district. Many “large-fire after-action reports” have recommended an integrated system such as ours however, few other areas enjoy these benefits. We are very proud of the support provided by all of our elected and appointed officials. You are the benefactors of that support.

The Fire Department originated in the early 1930's and evolved into an integrated system in 1946. CAL FIRE has been a major component from the beginning. Partner cities began joining the department in 1978. We now enjoy the partnership of 20 cities and the Rubidoux Community Services District. In the last two years, the communities of Wildomar and Menifee, Eastvale, and Jurupa Valley have chosen to incorporate and join our cooperative system.

We operate 93 fire stations that serve unincorporated communities and cities throughout the 7,206 square miles of Riverside County. From those fire stations, the Fire Department provides full service, municipal and wildland fire protection, pre-

hospital emergency medical response by paramedics and EMT's, technical rescue services and response to hazardous materials discharges. About 83% of the 350 incidents we respond to on average each day are medical emergencies and about 13% are to fires. The other 4% of incidents include technical rescues and hazardous materials incidents. The Fire Department maintains two highly-trained hazardous materials response teams. Our two hazardous materials teams are located near the communities of Winchester and North Bermuda Dunes. They respond county-wide to any hazardous materials discharge including explosives, poisons, environmentally destructive elements, and weapons of destruction emergencies.

### **Plan Concept and Process**

The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) have drafted a comprehensive update of the Fire Plan for wildland fire protection in California. The planning process defines a level of service measurement, considers assets at risk, incorporates the cooperative interdependent relationships of wildland fire protection providers, provides for public stakeholder involvement, and creates a fiscal framework for policy analysis.

### **Goals and Objectives**

The overall goal of the Pre-Fire Management Plan is to reduce total government costs and citizen losses from wildland fire in the Riverside Unit by protecting assets at risk through focused pre-fire management prescriptions and increasing initial attack fire fighting success. The Fire Plan has five strategic objectives:

1. Create wildfire protection zones that reduce the risks to citizens and firefighters.
2. Include all wildland areas, not just the state responsibility areas, with planning and mitigation efforts. Analysis will ultimately include all wildland fire service providers - federal, state, local government, and private. This is the long-term strategy. This plan is primarily focused on the CAL FIRE Direct Protection Area (DPA) of the Riverside Unit; however the current extreme fuel conditions existing in the San Jacinto Mountains require the Unit to also include the SRA within U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management DPA. DPA is simply defined as the agency having jurisdiction for wildland fire protection.
3. Identify and analyze key policy issues and develop recommendations for changes in public policy. Analysis will include alternatives to reduce total costs and/or increase fire protection system operational effectiveness.
4. Describe the wildland fire protection system in fiscal terms. This can include all public/private expenditures and potential economic losses.
5. Translate the analysis into public policy.

### **Fire Plan Framework**

The five major objectives form the basis of an ongoing fire planning process to monitor and assess Riverside County's wildland fire environment. They include:

1. Wildfire Protection Zones; these zones are buffers around the community to reduce citizen and firefighter risks from costly and damaging fires.

2. Initial Attack Fire Fighting Success; This measure can be used to assess the department's ability to provide an equal level of protection to lands of similar type, as required by Public Resources Code 4130. This measurement is the percentage of fires that are successfully controlled before unacceptable costs are incurred.
3. Assets Protected; The assets addressed in the plan are citizen and firefighter safety, watersheds and water, timber, wildlife and habitat (including rare and endangered species), unique areas (scenic, cultural, and historic), recreation, range, structures, and air quality.
4. Pre-fire Management; this is the process that assesses alternatives to protect assets from unacceptable risk of wildland fire damage. Project alternatives may include a combination of fuels reduction, ignition management, fire-safe engineering activities, and forest health improvement to protect public and private assets.
5. Fiscal framework; this is a tool for assessing and monitoring the cost effectiveness of the wildland fire protection systems.

### **Pre-Fire Management Plan Applications**

- Identify those areas of concentrated assets and high risk for state, federal, and local officials and for the public
- Allow wildland fire service providers to create a more efficient fire protection system focusing on meaningful solutions for identified problem areas.
- Give citizens an opportunity to identify public and private assets to design and carry out projects to protect those assets.
- Identify, before fires start, where cost-effective pre-fire management investments can be made to reduce taxpayer costs and citizen losses from wildfire.
- Encourage an integrated intergovernmental approach to reducing costs and losses.
- Enable policy makers and the public to focus on what can be done to reduce future costs and losses from wildfires.

## ***2011 RIVERSIDE UNIT GOALS***

- Move foreword with current and planned Pre-Fire projects.
- Expand our area of operation beyond the San Jacinto Mountain Communities and begin planning of new projects in High Risk SRA and Local Responsibility Area (LRA) areas.
- Resume maintenance of historic truck trails, fuel breaks and water tanks.
- Maintain fuel breaks around critical infra structure (communication sites) and high risk residential areas.

**A: UNIT DESCRIPTION*****The Fire Situation******General Description***

The Riverside Unit has not experienced a major wildland fire since the Esperanza Fire burned more than 40,000 acres in October of 2006. The massive Freeway Fire in 2008 started in extreme northwestern Riverside County, but burned most of it's acreage in surrounding counties. The absence of large fire events in Riverside County during this time period cannot be attributed to any one reason; certainly aggressive, effective initial and extended attack suppression efforts, fire prevention efforts and / or pre-fire projects can be listed as contributing success factors. The Riverside Unit experienced the same extreme fire weather events of 2007 and 2008 as did San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles and other Southern California counties but did not suffer a major wildfire even though the number of fire starts may have been more than in surrounding counties.

During the October 2007 Southern California Fire Siege, four different major fires threatened to move into Riverside County from adjoining counties. The Rice, Poomacha and Ammo fires burning in San Diego County and the Santiago fire burning in Orange County were all poised to make potentially strong runs into Riverside County when the Santa Ana Wind reversed which has caused many problems in the past. Riverside CAL FIRE Unit Chief/Riverside County Fire Department Fire Chief John Hawkins ordered a Strategic Contingency Planning Team be formed which included members from CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire, Riverside County Office of Emergency Services and the Riverside County Sherriff's Office. The team members worked to assist some of the Incident Command Teams on the adjacent major fires with their contingency planning while developing the Riverside County Strategic Contingency Plan which covers the southern and western borders of Riverside County. Three community informational meetings were held during these threatening fires to advise and inform local residents. Meetings were in the City of Temecula, 5000 attendees; Temescal Valley, RivCo (Sup's Buster & Tavaglione), 500 attendees and Riverside Count-San Jacinto area, 200 attendees.

This plan is currently being expanded to cover additional areas of the county and is being incorporated into the Mobile Data Computing Solution in order for responding command resources to have ready access to this critical, pre-planning information.

The Riverside Unit has an elevated potential for large fires in 2011. The Energy Release Component (ERC) at our weather station facilities are predicted to spike to extreme levels after the traditional "June Gloom" marine layer gives way to normal hot summer temperatures and low relative humidities. This is expected to happen at the end of June

2011. A “bad” Santa Ana season in the fall could then blow high winds over a very dry and flammable fuel bed.

## ***General Description of Desired Future Condition***

### ***San Jacinto Mountains***

- Reforestation efforts will help restore species forest stand structure and composition back to an uneven-aged mixed conifer stand.
- Reforestation efforts will aid preventing erosion and protect water quality.
- Shaded fuelbreaks are a method of protecting communities from catastrophic fire by removing (Brush) ladder fuels and while retaining larger mature trees
- Generally, tree height growth is a function of tree genetics, soil moisture and site quality; while tree diameter growth, is a function of stand stocking or number of trees per area.
- An overall goal of 40-80 Trees per Acre (TPA) is recommended, and staff is currently working to educate the public on the concept of Basal Area/Acre as the preferred method for determining stocking standards.
- Fire behavior is a function of fuel, weather and topography. The fuel loading and type of fuels can be treated so that the risk of catastrophic fire is mitigated.
- Our goal is to manage the watershed resulting in a more fire safe and healthy forest and chaparral ecosystem.

### ***Vegetative Wildfire Fuels***

Wildland fuels (live and dead vegetation) are a key component of fire behavior. The various fuels found in California have specific characteristics, which allow fire behavior analysts to categorize them based on how they burn. The Fire Behavior Prediction System (FBPS) was the method chosen for categorizing fuels for the fire plan process. This method classifies fuels into 13 different fuel models, each of which has specific physical and burning characteristics. The models include 3 grasses, 4 brushes, 3 timber and 3 slash fuel types. Custom fuel models have also been developed from these basic models to take into account the variations found in desert areas and wildland areas with an urban component. The fuel models are used to label current and historic fuels. Historic fuels, those fuels that existed prior to a significant wildfire or VMP burn, are important because they tell us what the climax vegetation and fuel type will be for a particular area. The historic fuel models are used to label the Unit’s planning belts in the fire plan. Current fuel models are used along with slope class, ladder fuel component, crown closure, and difficulty of control rating to derive the fuel hazard rank for each quad 81. It has been determined that in California no wildland fuel can be considered to have a low hazard rating, so the adjective descriptions only include medium, high or very high.

During the last few years in Riverside County, as well as San Bernardino and San Diego, we have seen dramatic and historic changes in our montane chaparral and timber fuel types. The persistent drought, bug kill, frost kill, and disease have killed huge stands of timber and brush spread over tens of thousands of acres in our wildland areas. Tree and brush mortality has become the number one fuel problem for our County. Mortality mapping is constantly being updated cooperatively through the MAST using GIS technology.

### ***Battalion 1 – Perris***

Generally Battalion 1 consists of a light grass in the populated areas on the west and east sides of the Battalion. The medium fuels are in some of the same areas, but also exist in the more sparsely populated areas, such as Santa Rosa Mine Road and Juniper Flats/Lakeview Hills.

### ***Battalion 2 – Lake Elsinore***

The Battalion 2 area east of Interstate 15 is comprised mainly of Fuel Model 1 that has a significant fire history. The West portion of the Battalion consists of a mix of SRA, Local Responsibility Area (LRA), USFS and BLM lands under CAL FIRE DPA and USFS land with Federal DPA. This area is known collectively as the Ortega or Elsinore Front country and is bordered on the South by La Cresta and to the North by the Battalion 2/4 border. This area poses one of the greater fire risks in Riverside County and consists primarily of a Fuel Model 4 (Coastal Chaparral). There are portions of this area with significant fire history and areas that have no recorded fire history. The area also includes considerable brush stands where past droughts have created major vegetation mortality areas.

### ***Battalion 3 – Beaumont***

The fuels in Battalion 3 are vary widely, ranging from grass, coastal sage scrub, Chamise, Russian thistle to scrub oaks. In the area north of Cherry Valley, Manzanita is the predominate fuel. The South area of the Battalion, on the Northern slopes of North Mountain and the San Jacinto Mountain foothills have been primarily reduced to annual grasses with some larger pockets of coastal sage and chaparral, due to fuel model conversion from recent fires.

### ***Battalion 4 – Corona***

In the Santa Ana River bottom there is a continual bed of fuels just east of the Van Buren Boulevard Bridge in Pedley extending west to Highway 71 along the county line. The river bottom fuel load is made up of annual grasses, bamboo; various brush species and various types of trees. In the Chino Hills area annual grasses are abundant, with small patches of brush and a few oak/sycamore trees in the canyon areas. Most of this area was burned in the 2008 Freeway Fire. In the Dawson Canyon and Spanish Hills areas the fuels are annual grasses and light brush. These hills have been burned numerous times over many years, with the exception of a few canyons. Because of the light fuel load, the large fires in this area have been predominantly wind driven. In the foothills that run along the Cleveland National Forest the fuels are generally light grasses mixed with heavy brush. CAL FIRE and USFS have been maintaining the fuel breaks that run along the North Main Divide Truck Trail and down several main subordinate ridge lines into the Temescal and Corona Valleys.

### ***Battalion 5 – San Jacinto***

The fuels in Battalion 5 below 2000' in elevation mostly consist of grasses and coastal sage scrub (Fuel Model 2). Above 2000' in elevation the fuel type is dependent on the length of time since the last fire, i.e. less than 20 years ago – grass and medium brush (Fuel Model 6), greater than 20 years ago - heavier mixed brush (Fuel Model 4). A high dead to live ratio exists in the mature chaparral fuels due to the persistent drought over the last few years.

### ***Battalion 11 – Mountain***

**Station 23 – Pine Cove** (SRA in USFS BDF DPA)

The fuels in the Pine Cove/Idyllwild area are composed of mature chaparral with a mixed conifer forest over story. The predominant understory species include Manzanita, chaparral whitethorn, deer brush and Chamise. The tree over story consists of mixed stands of Jeffery Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Coulter Pine, Incense-Cedar, White Fir and Sugar Pine. There is no recorded fire history for the area since fire records started being kept around 1924; therefore it is assumed the vegetative community is at least 75 years old and very dangerous. The danger is much worsened by the persistent drought killed vegetation.

**Station 29 – Anza**

The fuel types in the Anza area consist of approximately 25% Fuel Model 1 mostly located on the valley floor on the Cahuilla Indian Reservation and along the Cooper Cienaga Truck Trail to the south. Fuel Model 4 is approximately 30%, intermixed in areas through the valley. Fuel Model 6 is approximately 45%, consisting of larger stands of Manzanita and red shank with plant height as high as 10-15 feet on average. Overall, the area has a grass under story, which is 12-18" in height. The grass is also matted down, which adds to the fuel loads. The red shank is showing new stringy bark, which adds to the ladder fuels in the brush fields.

**Station 30 – Pinyon** (SRA in BLM CDD DPA)

The fuels in the Pinyon area consist of Fuel Models 4 and 6, with patches of Fuel Model 1 located throughout. A fuels reduction project has thinned and removed fuels along Hwy 74 and around some communities, to allow safer egress from the mountain. A very large, relatively unbroken Red shank fuel bed exists in this area.

**Station 53 – Garner Valley** (SRA in USFS BDF DPA)

The persistent drought has left an abundance of dead and downed fuels as well as a high dead to live ratio in the chaparral fuels. The understory and grass crop is continuous. The brush that is not dead is showing normal growth this year. Some areas have had fuels reduction projects to thin and remove fuels near transportation corridors and communities and camping areas. .

**Station 77 – Lake Riverside**

The Lake Riverside area is located between Aguanga and Anza. The fuels near Highway 79 and Highway 371 consist of grass (Fuel Model 3) and progressing northeast on Highway 371 the fuels change into Fuel Model 4.

***Battalion 13 - Meniffee***

Battalion 13 is 42 square miles and roughly follows the following boundaries: north of the Cities of Murrieta and Wildomar, south of City of Perris, west of the Winchester area and northeast of the City of Lake Elsinore. The fuels consist of light native California vegetation, i.e. brush. The area is surrounded and interspersed with a healthy grass crop that has already "turned".

***Battalion 15 – Temecula*****Station 12 – Temecula**

The fuels in the Temecula area include annual grasses (Fuel Models 1 and 3) and brush species Chamise, sage, buckwheat (Fuel Models 4, 5 and 6). Fuels in at the

extreme southwest part of the area include Avocado orchards and many fields of mature Chamise stands.

### **Station 75 – Bear Creek**

Within the SRA of Station 75's Initial Attack (IA) area there are Fuel Models 1 and 3 (Short and tall annual grasses) along with Fuel Models 4, 5, and 6 (Chaparral and dormant brush including Chamise and coastal sage). Many large, over mature areas of standing Chamise exist in this area.

### **Station 92 – Wolf Creek**

Station 92's fuels are generally made up of annual grass, chaparral and, dormant brush including Chamise and coastal sage. At the south end of the area is a large area of relatively old Chamise brush.

### **Station 96- Glen Oaks**

Station 96's fuels are generally made up of annual grass, chaparral and, dormant brush including Chamise and coastal sage.

### ***Battalion 17 – Cajalco***

Battalion 17 is located between Perris Valley to the East and Temescal Valley to the west. The battalion also contains two Ecological Reserves, the Lake Matthews Estelle Mountain Reserve and the Harford Springs Reserve. The fuels in the area consist mostly of annual grasses and coastal sage scrub with some pockets of chaparral species in canyons and on the northern slopes.

## **B: UNIT PREPAREDNESS AND FIREFIGHTING CAPABILITIES**

During the Peak Staffing period Riverside Unit has 93 Stations staffed with 1,200 paid personnel and 300+ Volunteer Reserve Firefighter personnel available to staff the following resources:

State resources include: 11 Battalion Chiefs, 9 fire stations with 14 Type 3 Engines, 17 Hand Crews, 1 air attack base including 1 Air Attack, 1 Type 2 Helicopter, 2 Type 3 Air Tankers, 3 Dozers.

County resources include: 30 Battalion Chiefs, 81 Type 1 Engines, 5 Type 2 Engines, 1 Dozer, ??? Water Tenders, 8 Truck Companies, 2 Medic Squads, 8 Medic Ambulances, 2 Haz Mat Teams and 2 Breathing Support Units.

### **Dispatch Agreements With The Following Departments:**

- Pechanga Fire Department
- Morongo Fire Department
- Idyllwild Fire Protection District.

### **Automatic Aid Agreements:**

- Cabazon Band of Mission Indians dated May 5, 1998
- City of Hemet dated September 2, 2008
- City of Corona (for Hazmat Responses) dated October 10, 1995
- Idyllwild Fire Protection District dated May 23, 2000 - An Auto Aid, in addition to a Cooperative Agreement for Dispatch & Communications Services just approved by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors
- City of Murrieta dated March 25, 2008
- Morongo Band of Mission Indians dated December 21, 1999 - Is an Auto Aid, in addition to a Cooperative Agreement for Dispatch & Communications Services dated August 1, 2000.
- Orange County Fire Authority dated June 1, 1999
- Pechanga Band of Luiseno Mission Indians dated November 1, 2001 - An Auto Aid, in addition to a Cooperative Agreement for Dispatch & Communications Services dated November 9, 2010.
- City of Palm Springs dated September 6, 1978
- City of Redlands dated July 27, 2010

**Mutual Aid Agreements:**

- California Rehabilitation Center (Norco) dated November 20, 1984
- Chuckawalla Valley State Prison Fire Department dated December 3, 1991.
- City of Corona (for Hazmat Responses) dated October 10, 1995
- Imperial Valley dated August 13, 2001
- Mutual Aid Pact between La Paz County, AZ; San Bernardino County; Riverside County; and the Colorado River Indian Reservation dated July 19, 1989
- March Air Force Base dated July 27, 2005
- Niland Fire District dated September 3, 1991

**SECTION II: COLLABORATION**

**A: COMMUNITY / AGENCIES / FIRE SAFE COUNCILS**

Representatives involved in the development of the Unit Strategic Fire Plan are included in the following table. Their organization and title are indicated below:

**P Plan Development Tea**

ORGANIZATION	REPRESENTATIVE
San Bernardino National Forest	Division Chief Dan Felix
Cleveland National Forest	Chief Caralton Joseph
Bureau of Land Management	Chief Nickie Washington
US Fish & Wildlife Service	Karen Cleary Rose
CAL FIRE	Unit Chief John Hawkins
California Department of Fish & Game	Brennan, Kevin
California Department of Parks & Recreation	
California Department of Transportation	Jody Mueller
California Highway Patrol	Sergeant Ed Casillas
Riverside County Sheriffs	Sheriff-Coroner, Stanley Sniff
Riverside County Fire Department	Riverside County Fire Chief John R. Hawkins
Riverside County TLMA	Director George Johnson
Riverside County Parks & Recreation	Director Scott Bangle
City of Banning	City Manager Andy Takata
City of Beaumont	City Manager Alan Kapanicas
City of Calimesa	City Manage, Randy Anstine
City of Canyon Lake	City Manager Lori Moss
City of Corona	City Manager, Brad Robbins or Corona Fire Chief, David Waltemeyer
City of Desert Hot Springs	City Manager Rick Daniels
City of Hemet	City Manager Brian Nakamura
City of Lake Elsinore	City Manager Bob Brady
City of La Quinta	City Manager Tom Genovese
City of Moreno Valley	City Manager Henry T. Garcia
City of Murrieta	City Manager Rick Dudley or Fire Chief Matt Shobert
City of Norco	City Manager Beth Groves or Interim Fire Chief Dave Carlson

City of Palm Springs	City Manager David Ready or Fire Chief Scott Ventura
City of Palm Desert	City Manager John Wohlmuth
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>REPRESENTATIVE</b>
City of Perris	City Manager Richard Belmudez
City of Riverside	City Manager Bradley Hudson or Fire Chief Steven Earley
City of San Jacinto	Interim City Manager Tim Hults
City of Temecula	City Manager Shawn Nelson
Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council	Executive Director Edwina Scott
Southwest Riverside County Fire Safe Council	President Dan Maticiano
Habitat Conservation Groups	Regional Conservation Authority
Utility Companies	

## **COLLABORATION**

### ***Mountain Area Safety Task Force (MAST)***

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), in cooperation with all of the agencies and individuals in the Riverside County Mountain Area Safety Task Force (MAST), have teamed up to mitigate an unprecedented emergency facing the forested mountain communities. Multiple years of severe drought combined with drastically overstocked tree stands have resulted in tremendous rates of tree mortality due to bark beetles in and around the communities. In March 2002, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors declared a local emergency. In March 2003, Governor Davis concurred with the County and issued a State of Emergency Proclamation. Those emergency declarations are still active in 2011.

The MAST was formed to mitigate the threat to life, property, watershed and the ecosystem. The San Jacinto Mountain area is currently Riverside Unit's single greatest threat to SRA, (even though much of it is within federal DPA) and is the number one priority of the Riverside Unit. This is not only for the protection of life, property and resources, but to protect the lives of CAL FIRE and other agency firefighters and law enforcement personnel that may be called to fight a fire or conduct large-scale evacuations in communities within the San Jacinto Mountains or on transportation corridors leading to and from the mountain area.

In addition to CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department, the MAST consists of members from many agencies, groups and elected officials: Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council; U.S. Forest Service; Riverside County Fire Department; Natural Resource Conservation Service; Idyllwild Fire Protection District; Riverside County Board of Supervisors; Riverside County Office of Emergency Services; State OES; Riverside County Flood Control; Southern California Edison; Senator Feinstein; Congresswoman Bono-Mack;; Assemblymen Manuel V. Perez 80<sup>th</sup> District and Brian Nestande 64<sup>th</sup> District; California Department of Fish and Game; California Department of Transportation; Riverside County Transportation Land Management Agency; South Coast Air Quality Management District; Pine Cove/Idyllwild/Fern Valley/Lake Hemet

Water Districts; Riverside County Waste Management; Pine Cove Property Owners Association; UC Co-op Extension Service; Riverside County Sheriffs Office; California Highway Patrol. The MAST is organized using the Incident Command System (ICS) with a unified command; formal Incident Action Plans (IAPs) are produced and followed by the MAST members.

**A: ASSETS AT RISK**

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 2.2 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 hydroelectricity. They are: Lake Perris, Lake Mathews, Vail Reservoir, Lake Hemet, Canyon Lake, Lake Elsinore, Lake Skinner and Diamond Valley Lake.

The impact of fire to the assets at risk in Riverside County are numerous. They include danger to human life; homes damaged or destroyed and increased risk to firefighters mitigating these incidents. Also, damage to infra structure like roads, power lines, water wells and communications sites, loss of range land, live stock, watershed, critical habitat and recreational lands as well as economic losses due to disruption of transportation and commerce.

The following is a summary of the assets at risk, by Battalion for the Riverside Unit:

***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 Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) areas. 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 USFS Cleveland National Forest Trabuco Ranger District, a severe winter will pose flooding and life safety risks to lower lying areas. 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 6 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 13 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 vehicular 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 normally 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 and beyond. The Chino Hills State Park covers just over 13,000 acres and provides 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 numerous 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 wild land areas and the numerous houses built in some of the canyons and hillsides. Thousands of homes exist in this area.

### ***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 slopes below the communities of Idyllwild and Pine Cove. A repeat of the 1974 Soboba Fire is now possible due to aging and increasing fuel conditions. Also at risk in Battalion 5 are the areas south of Diamond Valley Lake, specifically Avery Canyon, Gibbel road and Polly Butte, and 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 very destructive fire.

### ***Battalion 11 - Mountain***

#### ***Station 23 – Pine Cove***

The assets at risk in the Pine Cove/Idyllwild area include densely spaced 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.

### **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 an east wind influence prevailing, any fire started within the brush fields to the south and east ends of the valley will have the potential to be a large damaging fire due to the fuel and weather conditions and the limited number of immediately available initial attack fire resources.. Coupled with the scattered homes in these areas, a major fire will lead to significant 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. into USFS DPA. This area all so has scattered homes through out the brush areas. There has been no real large fire history in the Anza 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 could significantly affect the local tourism and commerce of the area as well as present an evacuation risk for people at the campgrounds and Lake. Fuel reduction projects and thinning has reduced the fire threat for some of the area, but persistent drought has left an over abundance of dead and down fuels in areas that have not been cleared or thinned.

### **Station 77 – Lake Riverside**

Lake Riverside is a gated community with numerous large homes set on large parcels that create significant interface issues around the community's perimeter. An inadequate water supply available for firefighting throughout the community is an inhibiting factor in the event of a significant fire.

Aguanga is a rural community that has shown within the few years a large increase in private dwellings. Several senior trailer parks, an elementary school, casino, and a private extreme sports camp are located within its boundaries. The 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, possible lack of residential hazard reduction clearance and housing construction.

The area south of Bundy Canyon Road may also pose a problem, however it is at least a north facing aspect that normally reduces the fire behavior due to fuel shading. During north wind conditions, coupled with a wild land ignition, the potential exists for fire to rapidly spread south to Murrieta from the Menifee area.

### ***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 historically pushed fire downhill into Temecula Community 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 limited 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 La Cresta and Tenaja areas. 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 3 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 La Cresta 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 wild land urban interface and only two routes of ingress or egress in the event of an emergency. The non-resident 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 a formerly active real estate market 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 1 engines, however access to the wildland is limited to Type 3 engines.

## **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) intermixed 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.

**B: COMMUNITIES AT RISK**

\*Federal threat status indicates that communities are near or adjacent to Federal Land.

	<u>Place Name</u>	<u>County Name</u>	<u>Federal Threat</u>	<u>Federally Regulated</u>	<u>Year</u>
1	Aguanga	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
2	Anza	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
3	Banning	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
4	Beaumont	Riverside		✓	2001
5	Cabazon	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
6	Calimesa	Riverside			2001
7	Canyon Lake	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
8	Cathedral City	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
9	Cherry Valley	Riverside		✓	2001
10	Coachella	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
11	Corona	Riverside		✓	2001
12	Desert Hot Springs	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
13	East Hemet	Riverside		✓	2001
14	El Cerrito	Riverside			2001
15	Gilman Hot Springs	Riverside		✓	2001
16	Glen Avon	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
17	Hemet	Riverside		✓	2001
18	Highgrove	Riverside			2001
19	Home Gardens	Riverside			2001
20	Homeland	Riverside			2001
21	Idyllwild-Pine Cove	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
22	Indian Wells	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
23	Indio	Riverside		✓	2001
24	Juniper Flats	Riverside		✓	2001
25	La Quinta	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
26	Lake Elsinore	Riverside		✓	2001
27	Lakeland Village	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
28	Lakeview	Riverside		✓	2001
29	March Air Force Base	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
30	Mead Valley	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
31	Mira Loma	Riverside			2001
32	Moreno Valley	Riverside		✓	2001
33	Morongo Indian Reservation	Riverside	✓	✓	2001

34	Mountain Center	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
35	Murrieta	Riverside			2001
36	Murrieta Hot Springs	Riverside			2001
37	Norco	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
38	Nuevo	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
39	Palm Desert	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
40	Palm Desert Country Club	Riverside		✓	2001
41	Palm Springs	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
42	Pechanga Indian Reservation	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
43	Pedley	Riverside			2001
44	Perris	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
45	Pinyon Pines	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
46	Quail Valley	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
47	Rancho Mirage	Riverside		✓	2001
48	Riverside	Riverside		✓	2001
49	Romoland (Ethanac)	Riverside			2001
50	Rubidoux (West Riverside)	Riverside			2001
51	Sage	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
52	San Jacinto	Riverside		✓	2001
53	Sedco Hills	Riverside			2001
54	Snow Creek	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
55	Sun City	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
56	Sunnyslope	Riverside			2001
57	Temecula	Riverside		✓	2001
58	Thomas Mountain	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
59	Thousand Palms	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
60	Torres Martinez Indian Reservation	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
61	Valle Vista	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
62	White Water	Riverside	✓	✓	2001
63	Wildomar	Riverside		✓	2001
64	Winchester	Riverside		✓	2001
65	Woodcrest	Riverside		✓	2001

**A: FIRE PREVENTION*****Defensible Space/Fire Safe Inspections***

The Riverside Unit conducts Fire Safe Inspections (Public Resources Code or PRC Section 4291) on structured parcels utilizing the CAL FIRE Form LE-100 program throughout the unincorporated areas of the county. The Form LE-100 contains a compilation of codes, from both the Public Resources Code and the Riverside County Ordinance 787, which adopts the California Fire Code. This allows for the utilization of PRC 4291, and some more specific regulation required by the County Ordinance.

As a part of the MAST Organization the private lands in the San Jacinto Mountains are being inspected by three different agencies, the CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire, the United States Forest Service, and the Idyllwild Fire Protection District.

**Hazard Reduction Inspection Reports 2009 & 2010**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Number of Inspections	34380	32896
Number of Compliance	888	1455
Number of Violations	4122	3637

These numbers reflect inspections in LRA and SRA by Riverside County Fire and CAL FIRE

**Hazard Reduction Inspection Reports by DPA**

<b>DPA</b>	<b>LRA</b>		<b>SRA</b>	
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Number of Inspections	11157	10520	23223	22376
Number of Compliance	693	716	195	739
Number of Violations	2243	1911	1879	1726

***Hazardous Vegetation Inspections on Vacant Parcels***

Riverside Unit also conducts inspections and enforcement on vacant parcels in the unincorporated areas of the County utilizing Riverside County Ordinance 695 in both the SRA and LRA. The Hazard Abatement section of the Fire Prevention Bureau is staffed by Riverside County funded personnel which conduct the inspections and enforcement. Unlike the Residential Hazard Reduction/Defensible Space Program (Form LE100) those properties that are in violation and not corrected by the property owners are abated by Riverside County Fire Contractors and later billed as a special assessment on their property tax bill.

The program's current primary inspection area focuses on the Western portion of Riverside County. It currently does not include the High Fire Hazard Areas of Sage and Anza or the San Jacinto Mountain communities. Implementation in these areas would require additional authority and funding for the Hazard Abatement Office. Advances in geographic information technology and mobile computing would assist the Hazard Abatement Program in advancing into these areas as well as streamlining the current inspection processes. In 2010, a fire occurred in the "La Sierra" area quickly moving upslope threatening homes, abatement under Ordinance 695 along with residential hazard reduction inspections in this area assisted in saving structures.

**Riverside County Ordinance 695 Inspection Reports 2009 & 2010**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Parcels Inspected	38868	35847
Notices of Violation Mailed	6897	10351
Parcels cleared by Contractor	730	1332

***Dead, dying or Neglected Orchards Inspections***

Riverside Unit conducts inspections for dead, dying and neglected orchards under Riverside County Ordinance 772. Due to the increase in water costs and the economic times many thriving orchards have been left to die and in turn have created a hazardous fire concern since many of these orchards lie in close proximity to housing developments. The Hazard Abatement Staff inspects and enforces this ordinance, if a property is determined to be in violation of the Ordinance the owner is sent a Notice of Violation and the property is posted as such. If the property owner does not abate the property themselves a contractor is hired to abate the property and the property owner is billed and/or a special assessment is placed on their property taxes. During 2010, fifteen (15) orchards were posted for abatement with two of those being abated by a hired Contractor.

***Railroad Right Away Inspections***

In 2010 the Riverside Unit began conducting inspections along railroad right of ways under Public Resource Code 4296.5 and utilization of the Railroad Fire Prevention Guide. A five (5) year fire history was conducted to identify inspection criteria. It was determined thirty (30) railroad caused fires were identified with ten (10) of those being SRA and the remaining twenty (20) in the LRA. All violations were corrected.

**Railroad Right Away Inspection Report 2010**

Mile of track Inspected	195
LRA Violations	7
SRA Violations	4

***Powerline Inspections***

Riverside Unit conducts Powerline Inspections under Public Resource Code 4292 (vegetation clearance around poles) and 4293 (vegetation clearance around power lines) in cooperation with Southern California Edison, Banning Electric and Anza Electric. The inspections are completed by the Hazard Abatement Staff. All violations were corrected.

**Powerline Inspection Reports 2009 & 2010**

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Poles Inspected	343	10979
PRC 4292 Violations	27	27
PRC 4293 Violations	1	17

\*Due to staffing shortages inspections were not entirely completed in 2009

***Open Burning***

Riverside Unit has a problem with persons burning debris and/or burning without a permit. In the Riverside Unit, a permit for burning is required for tumbleweeds, pit style BBQ's and agricultural burning. Riverside County Ordinance 787 CFC Section 105.6.30 requires a permit for open burning unless the fire is for recreational purposes.

When it is determined a person conducted open burning without a permit a citation is issued. One hundred and eight-four (184) citations were issued in 2010 under County Ordinance 787 for burning without a permit. Continued enforcement and coordination with the Public Information Bureau will be necessary to reduce the number of persons burning debris and reduce the amount of fires caused by their unsafe practices. Education in other languages such as Spanish may assist this issue.

### ***Equipment Caused Fire***

In the Western portion of Riverside County equipment caused fires uniformly occur everywhere. As the Form LE100 statistics and the Hazard Abatement Office statistics show the number of property owners in violation of hazardous vegetation on their property is very high. In turn this requires the property owner to abate the property utilizing equipment many times during the incorrect time of the day, using unmaintained equipment or not equipped with spark arrestors. The Public Information Bureau has assisted in educating the public on the proper manner to use equipment through press releases. Cost recovery for incidents determined to be equipment caused are being pursued at the local and/or CAL FIRE Region level. Continued education and coordination with the Public Information Bureau will be necessary to reduce equipment caused fires. More signage along major roadways may better address this issue.

### ***Children Playing With Fire***

Fires caused by children playing with fire are prevalent across the County. The Riverside Unit has personnel from the Fire Prevention Bureau assigned to administer the Juvenile Fire Setter's Program. This program is designed to assist these children in their curiosity about fire and educate them on the dangers associated. Children are either voluntarily placed into the program or placed in the program through the Juvenile Court System. Continued education is necessary at a minimum the grade school level in the dangers of fire to reduce the amount of fires caused by children.

### ***Fire Closure Areas***

The Whitewater Canyon fire closure area is the most active for persons violating. It is enforced cooperatively with the Bureau of Land Management and Fire Prevention Staff. Signs are displayed each year when the closure takes effect and they are many times destroyed and even more times ignored. Seventy-two (72) citations were issued by Fire Prevention Staff for violating the fire closure under Riverside County Ordinance 787. In 2011 more signs will be placed in a more permanent and visible fashion to assist in deterring the public from violating the closure as well as continued enforcement. Other fire closure areas include Reinhardt Canyon, Ramona Bowl & Bautista Canyon, North Mountain & Indian Canyon, Minto Way, as well as Lakeview. Fire closure maps in **appendix D**.

## **- ENGINEERING & STRUCTURE IGNITABILITY**

### ***Ordinances Regarding Construction***

The Riverside Unit has adopted the 2000 Edition of the California Fire Code, which specifies various requirements for the development of new construction within the County. The Fire Protection Planning Bureau of the Riverside County Fire Department is responsible for ensuring new developments within the county meet the various ordinances pertaining to building homes in the wildland. These ordinances include PRC

§4290, PRC 4291, Riverside County Ordinance 787.6, and the 2010 California Building Code, Chapter 7A, Materials and Construction Methods For Exterior Wildfire Exposure.

Unit Staff are working with the local Fire Safe Councils to disseminate information and educate the public on the message of Firewise home construction practices. The Form LE-100 program at the station level provides for a one-on-one contact with residents. This is the opportunity for residents to discuss what they can do to ensure their homes survivability in the event of a catastrophic wildland Fire.

## **- INFORMATION AND EDUCATION**

### ***Public Information & Education Bureau***

The CAL FIRE - Riverside Unit Public Information Bureau offers several outreach and public education/awareness programs. Our audiences and methods of education and outreach typically include, but are not limited to:

- K-5 Child Education Programs such as “9-1-1 for Kids,” “Learn Not to Burn,” “I Spot Something Hot,” and “Stop-Drop-and-Roll.”
- The elderly - FEMA’s “Preparing Makes Sense for Older Americans” brochure.
- Community Groups via community meetings presented by Public Information/Education staff and fire station personnel.
- FireSafe Councils via planning meetings and workshops with Pre-Fire Management staff and Public Information/Education staff.
- M.A.S.T. organization via monthly planning and preparedness meetings with Pre-Fire Management, OES, and Public Information/Education staff.
- Monthly fire preparedness and safety message contributions to community newsletters, print, and television media, along with the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website.
- The “Ready-Set-Go” interactive web-based preparation guide for homeowners. Access is available via [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org), [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org), and the [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov) websites. This program has been presented at all of our partner city council meetings, CSA meetings, and unincorporated communities by affected Battalion Chiefs, fire station personnel, and Public Information/Education staff. A “Ready-Set-Go” handbook is part of this preparedness campaign and has been distributed at community safety fairs throughout the County/Unit.
- Working collaboratively with the Fire Prevention Bureau to inform the public about arson arrests and assistance in seeking information on potential arson suspects via news releases. Working with children in the Juvenile Firesetter Program. Installing prevention/education based road signs.

The CAL FIRE/Riverside Unit and Riverside County Fire Department are proactive in efforts to raise awareness of the multitude of fire-prone areas in our jurisdiction and the threats they pose. By maintaining informational road signs and utilizing the

[www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) and [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov) websites, we have the ability to not only provide current incident information but the ability to communicate our fire prevention messages. In February 2011, the CAL FIRE/Riverside Unit implemented a “Twitter” social networking account that links the “follower” back to our website to be informed of significant incidents that may affect the follower’s community – always with an attached safety message regarding wildland fire preparedness, evacuation information, brush clearance requirements, hazard mitigation information, or a myriad other regional or seasonal messages. To date, we have nearly 900 followers of our “CALFIRERRU” Twitter account and tens of thousands of readers of the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website.

Future plans to provide fire safety education to the public include:

- Fire safety messages provided on freeway frontage billboards.
- PSA’s displayed in movie theaters, on shopping carts, on grocery store and gasoline station monitors, and streaming video on our [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website and [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).
- Continued fire safety school programs.
- Presence at community events and safety fairs.
- Radio, television, and print media PSA’s.
- Continued and expanded presence in the social media market.

## **B: VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

### ***Vegetation Management Program Projects***

#### ***Summary of the Vegetation Management Program***

The Riverside Unit integrated its Vegetation Management (VMP) and Pre-Fire Engineering Programs in January 1998 and created a Pre-fire Management Division. This integration has combined the planning and assessment tools developed for the 1995 California Fire Plan with the resources of the Vegetation Management Program (VMP) in order to implement fire hazard/fuels reduction projects in the most appropriate areas of Riverside County. The VMP Program has been used very successfully for fire hazard reduction in Riverside County since the program was first created. The use of fire weather, fire history, and fuels information provided through the Fire Plan provides a foundation to explain and justify to management and to the public why we are spending limited VMP resources and staff time in these high fire hazard areas.

The focus of VMP in Riverside County has historically been and will continue to be directed at fire hazard/fuels reduction and ecological restoration projects. The presence of numerous endangered species throughout Southern California has made burning for native habitat restoration a valuable tool. In most cases, these restoration burns also lend themselves to reduce fuel loads that pose a fire hazard to adjacent urban development. There is very little grazing activity in the county and therefore burning for range improvement has not been a priority. Pre-fire staff is assisting several ecological reserves with the development of fire management plans that will involve fuels management as a

component; additionally these plans assist fire managers in pre-planned control objective during wildfire events. Chipping is also a very appropriate tool that is used, particularly where there are smoke sensitive issues or where there is too great a threat to use prescribed fire.

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) grants from the USDI Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and similar (USFS) United States Forest Service grants are often required to help finance these critical projects. These grants are awarded on an annual basis and must meet the criteria set forth by each agency.

## ***Past Projects***

### ***Lake Mathews VMP***

The Management Plan for the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Reserve specifies the use of prescribed fire to reduce or eliminate the non-native annual grasses and return the landscape to the native grass and sage scrub species. The vegetation within the Reserve is comprised primarily of non-native annual grassland, with smaller areas of mixed chaparral, coastal sage scrub, and California juniper woodland. Ultimately, VMP plans will be developed to implement prescribed fire on the 6,478 acres within the northern half of the Reserve. The area has been divided into forty-three (43) prescribed fire units that will be burned on a rotational basis that best mimics the natural fire cycle. Three units totaling 500 acres were scheduled for burning during the spring of 2002. However, numerous lawsuits prevented any work from occurring on that project. It is currently suspended pending a resolution of those legal issues.

In spring 2003, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) approached CAL FIRE about conducting VMP burns on lands owned by MWD in the Lake Mathews Project area. We are currently working with the MWD environmental consultant in pursuing the identification of specific project units in order to proceed with environmental review.

### ***Tenaja VMP***

The Tenaja VMP project is located west of Murietta along the De Luz Creek drainage south of the intersection of Tenaja Road and Avenida La Cresta. The northern and eastern portion of the project is comprised mostly of large residentially zoned parcels. The central and southern project area is conservation and park land primarily covered with chaparral plants on the slopes and Engelmann Oak woodlands in the drainages.

The purpose of the Tenaja VMP is to reduce hazardous fuel loading in the upper De Luz Creek watershed. Historically, large fires initiating in the De Luz, Fallbrook, and Camp Pendleton areas have burned with the prevailing on shore winds and threatened the now developed areas on the Santa Rosa Plateau. This project is part of a larger plan to reduce the fuel loading adjacent to the plateau communities of Tenaja and La Cresta. Prescribed burning has taken place on the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve immediately to the east since 1987 and additional projects are planned to the northwest on both state responsibility lands and the Cleveland National Forest within the next three years. Combined, these projects will provide a significant buffer against fires moving with the onshore prevailing winds from the south and west toward these now heavily developed communities.

Specifically, the Tenaja VMP will use prescribed fire to treat 364 acres of watershed in and adjacent to the De Luz Creek drainage. The northern end of the project will tie into Tenaja road and a newly constructed fuelbreak along the Rancho California Road easement. The west and east flanks will primarily utilize existing road systems with some new hand line construction. The southern end of the project area is steep with no existing roads and will therefore involve mostly construction of hand line. The interior vegetation will be burned in a mosaic pattern to develop age classes that are less likely to sustain major wildfires and enhance wildlife habitat.

The primary objectives of the prescribed burn project are to reduce fuel loading in the chaparral plant species and develop a mosaic of age and species diversified vegetative cover. An overall reduction in chaparral fuel loading of 50 to 80% is desired. Engelmann oak woodlands will not be treated and will be protected from adjacent burning operations. Approximately 300 acres have been completed to date and as of 2003, the Tenaja project was incorporated into the Santa Rosa Plateau Reserve Project because the land involved was given to the Reserve. Additional acreage will be added to the remaining balance of 64 acres and it was slated for burning in fall 2003 or spring/summer 2004. Currently, the Tenaja project is held up in litigation. The project remains open, but with no foreseeable short-term resolution to the lawsuits.

### ***Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Core Reserve***

The Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain (LMEM) Core Reserve is located in western Riverside County and is currently 11,232 acres in size. The Reserve's current configuration and management structure has its origins in a 1996 Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the Stephen's Kangaroo Rat. The Reserve Management Committee (RMC) is comprised of representatives from the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, the Bureau of Land Management, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency, and the Center for Natural Lands Management.

The 1993 fire management plan serves as a foundation and model to expand the planning effort into the LMEM Core Reserve. In May 1998, the RMC initiated the expanded fire management planning effort in cooperation with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The expanded plan, completed in the spring of 1999, addresses pre-fire fuels management and fire suppression planning issues as they relate to the protection of public safety and endangered species habitat management.

Pre-fire management projects will focus on the implementation of prescribed fire on 6,478 acres within the northern half of the reserve. The area has been divided into forty-three (43) prescribed fire units that will be burned on a rotational basis that best mimics the natural fire cycle. Pre-fire management efforts in this area will focus on fuelbreaks, weed abatement and focused fire prevention activities aimed at keeping fire out of the area in order to facilitate regeneration of native species. In 2004 prescribed fire had been utilized on 1,006 acres in the reserve, and the plan remains open to continue the rotation of burning the prescribed fire units.

### ***Mount Baldy***

The Mount Baldy VMP (Mountain Center area) is an emergency fuels reduction project that will be done cooperatively with the San Bernardino National Forest. This 272-acre project represents a critical piece of ground that is the last remaining link tying the

former West Ridge II VMP project with the 1999 Mixing Fire. Without treating these fuels, which include large acreages of dead chaparral resulting from the drought, a fire starting along State Highway 74 in the Dry Creek area would be able to sweep uphill to threaten Mountain Center and Baldy Mountain Village. Although only 75 acres of SRA would be treated in this co-op project, these acres are critical to the project due to topography. Three-quarters of this project was completed in Fall 2003, and the remaining one-quarter is scheduled for Spring 2005.

### ***Water Canyon VMP***

This project consists of three treatment sites as follows: one (1) prescribed fire in the Water Canyon area, and maintenance of three existing un-maintained fuelbreaks surrounding the Oak Glen area.

The Oak Glen area surrounds Beaumont, an interface community identified in the August 17, 2001 Federal Register, Part III Department of Agriculture Urban Wildland Interface Communities document. The community and surrounding area is directly above wildland fuels with three or more homes/business structures per acre, five watersheds, power lines, transportation, and shared municipal services. The overall purpose is to modify or break up the fuels in such a way as to lessen catastrophic fire and its threat to public and firefighter safety and damage to property.

Local CAL FIRE crews and equipment were assigned to the three project sites to remove hazardous fuel buildup during non-fire season and provide maintenance of the sites during early fire season, and also conduct a prescribed fire.

This project was completed in 2009; the unit is involved with maintenance work in the project.

### ***Red Hill North / Red Hill South VMP***

The unincorporated community of Pine Cove, located in the San Jacinto Mountains of Riverside County, has a population of approximately 1500 permanent residents on 2200 improved parcels. Pine Cove is situated predominately on a western/southwest aspect of the San Jacinto Mountain range at 6200' elevation and is "mid-slope" between the San Jacinto Valley to the west at 1700' in elevation and San Jacinto Peak at 10,804' in elevation to the east. Lands owned and protected by the U.S.D.A. Forest Service/San Bernardino National Forest and San Jacinto State Park surround the community of Pine Cove.

The vegetative community is comprised of mature chaparral with a mixed conifer forest over story. The predominant under story species include Manzanita, Chaparral Whitethorn, Deer Brush and Chamise. The tree over story consists of mixed stands of Jeffery Pine, Ponderosa Pine, Coulter Pine, Incense Cedar, White Fir and Sugar Pine. There is no recorded fire history for the area since fire records started being kept around 1924; therefore it is assumed the vegetative community is at least 75 years old.

The Riverside Unit has re-entered into agreements with the current private property owners whose properties lie within the Red Hill Vegetation Management Program and established new projects such as the **Maxwell Trail** and **Point of Rocks VMP's**, which add protection from a fire spreading down slope into the communities from the north and east, project area encompasses 500 acres. In addition to maintaining the prescribed fuel loading levels completed, it is proposed that CAL FIRE increases the treatment area within the

same private properties to broaden the “shaded fuelbreak” and create a wider buffer of protection. The actual width of the treated area will vary depending on the type of vegetation and topography. The proposed fuel reduction project will be completed by piling dead vegetation, thinning brush and small trees with chainsaws and placing this material into small piles to be burned in cool weather or chipped where accessible. The net treatment area is approximately 750 acres.

This fuel reduction project is part of a larger plan to tie several fuel treatment projects together and thus provide a continuous fuel modification zone along the western edge of the San Jacinto Mountain communities. Doing so will better protect exposed communities and make roadways more safe for ingress of fire apparatus and egress of evacuated civilians.

These projects have the potential to reduce the damages from wildland fires spreading into the community of Pine Cove, Idyllwild, and Fern Valley. Fire history records indicate that fires in the surrounding area are traditionally slope and wind driven, burning in an easterly direction. The only exceptions to this historical data are those fires that are wind driven during a “Santa Ana” wind event.

The proposed project is intended to provide a buffer of protection to the communities of Pine Cove and Idyllwild by reducing fuel-loading levels and to provide an area to which fire suppression forces can safely take action on an encroaching fire.

The original 1991 Red Hill Vegetation Management Project was supported by the Idyllwild/Pine Cove Coordinated Resource Management Planning Group (CRMP) and by the Pine Cove Property Owners Association. The project was also well supported by the participating property owners. In addition, the 1991 Red Hill Vegetation Management Project was conducted in conjunction with the U.S.D.A. Forest Service/San Bernardino National Forest fuelbreak project that “linked” federal lands that separated the private property parcels of the original project.

Since this project was initially envisioned in the 2000 RRU Fire Plan, the massive tree mortality and resulting State emergency declaration for the area have occurred. Thousands of trees have died within the project area. Therefore, CAL FIRE is reentering the same project area on multiple occasions, as more trees die and future treatment will be required for several years to come. Insect control crews from Bautista and Oak Glen Camps as well as regular grade crews are working on this massive fuel reduction project.

### ***Poppet Flats VMP***

The rural community of Poppet Flats is located at the northern end of the San Jacinto Mountains, approximately six miles south of Banning west of Highway 243. Within the community there are over 400 private parcels, many of which contain occupied residences. The largest landowner is the Silent Valley Club, which is a 460-acre RV Park housing 850 campsites and 1150 storage units. It is not unusual for at least 5,500 recreationists to be present at the Silent Valley Club on major holiday weekend periods. Lands managed by the San Bernardino National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs surround most of the community. Access in and out is limited to Poppet Flats Road running out to Highway 243 on the east. Secondary access can be made to the southwest; however, it is unreliable due to locked gates at the Soboba Indian Reservation and lack of road maintenance.

Poppet Flats sits in a southwest-facing valley, which ranges in elevation from 3200 to 4000 feet. Numerous fires have started on the Soboba Indian Reservation below Poppet Flats as well as recent arson fires along Highway 243 to the northeast. The physical orientation and location of the community places it at extreme risk from the normal southwest wind driven fire as well as the "Santa Ana" wind driven fire from the east. Vegetation within and around the community is composed primarily of chaparral species such as Chamise and Manzanita, however, a significant cover of native California oak species is found along Poppet Creek. The age class of the vegetation varies since several large fires have burned in the area over the last three decades.

Phase one; completed July 2003 involved the construction of the fuelbreak and truck trail on private, National Forest, and BLM lands east of Poppet Flats Road. Phase two of the project completed the construction of a fuelbreak north and west of the community. The truck trail was re-constructed to allow access for Type 3 engines and vegetation cleared to create a fuelbreak with an average width of 100 feet. Actual width will varied in order to create a feathered, mosaic appearance. All cut material will be piled and burned or chipped. Vegetation Management Program (VMP) agreements will be re initiated with private property owners to facilitate work and address environmental concerns on their lands.

In addition to the perimeter fuel modification, a community-chipping program will continue facilitating the disposal of green waste generated by the property owners' annual weed/brush abatement activities. Chipping is accomplished by CAL FIRE fire crews using a State-owned chipper housed at Oak Glen Conservation Camp. Local residents within the community are very supportive of the projects. The Silent Valley Club, which is the largest private landowner within the project area, has committed their support through use of equipment and other resources. The San Bernardino National Forest and Bureau of Land Management are also committed to providing resources and support to the project. Recently, the Bureau of Land Management placed a Remote Automatic Weather Station (RAWS) just northeast of Poppet Flats. This will help better monitor weather conditions in this dangerous area.

This projects initial work was instrumental in protecting the community during the fatal Esperanza incident in 2006; few residences were lost directly in part of the fuels reduction surrounding the community by all agencies and home owners involved. See **appendix E** for a report on the effectiveness of the fuelbreak in the Esperanza fire.

## ***Current Projects***

### ***El Cariso and Decker Canyon Fuelbreaks Rancho Capistrano***

This project will involve the improvement of a fuelbreak in the El Cariso/Decker Canyon areas located along Highway 74 west of Lake Elsinore. The location of these communities puts them at extreme risk from wild fires burning under coastal or Santa Ana wind conditions in predominantly chaparral fuels. This project will reduce the fire hazard by modifying the fire environment and giving fire protection agencies points of access to initiate defensive and offensive control strategies around the community.

The project is divided into the following components:

El Cariso Fuelbreak: Establish a 100' wide fuelbreak completely around El Cariso Village. A fuelbreak was originally constructed in 1990 on State Responsibility Lands north of Highway 74. This fuelbreak is being reconstructed with a new segment added south of

Highway 74 in order to completely encircle the village. Cut material is being piled and burned or chipped on site. In June 2004, the El Cariso Fuelbreak was completed.

Decker Canyon Fuelbreak: Vegetation is planned to be thinned, pruned, and/or cleared within 50 feet of each side of the primary roads within Decker Canyon in order to improve access for fire equipment and escape routes for residents leaving the area. Cut material will be chipped and spread on site or piled and burned.

Cooperators in this project will include private landowners, the Cleveland National Forest, the Orange County Fire Authority and the Riverside Unit of CAL FIRE. This project is being planned; hopes are to see the projects be established by 2012. These projects will link a recently approved major fuel break system on the Cleveland National Forests, the North and South main divide truck trail/fuel break.

### **Lake Perris VMP**

Lake Perris State Recreation Area (LPSRA) is located in western Riverside County about 18 miles southeast of the city of Riverside. The project area is located at between 1600 and 1700 feet in elevation in the basin northeast of the lake. Lake Perris has approximately 2000 acres of grassland habitat. These grassland areas were highly disturbed in the past by grazing and agriculture and are currently dominated by non-native plants. The predominant plants are European annual grasses and mustards including Wild oats (*Avena* spp.), Bromes (*Bromus* spp.) and mustards (*Brassica* spp.). Also present, but less dominant are annual forbs including filaree (*Erodium* spp.).

The project implements prescribed fire within the LPSRA for the purpose of habitat restoration. This is part of a long-term management plan to restore fire to the LPSRA at intervals that mimic the natural fire cycle as closely as possible.

The specific objective of this project is to create conditions favorable to the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR) and other native wildlife species by removing European annual grasses and mustard and promoting the growth of low growing annual forbs and selected native grasses. Complete consumption, > 90% is desired, with removal of the annual grasses and mustard as well as their seed and accumulated litter from the burn unit.

The current project area covers 500 acres divided into four (4) burn units. Two of the units covering 281 acres were burned in 2010. In 2011 two additional units are planned to be burned for 250 acres. State Parks continues to approach CAL FIRE for additional burning opportunities within the park.

### **Southwest Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve VMP**

The Southwest Riverside County Multi-species Reserve incorporates approximately 15,000 acres in southwest Riverside County around Lake Skinner and north to the Diamond Valley Lake. The reserve is a composite of ownerships comprised of the Metropolitan Water District, Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District, and the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency. The reserve was established to enhance and protect endangered species habitat and protect the watersheds surrounding Lake Skinner and Diamond Valley Lake. A committee, comprised of a representative from each of the landowners as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game, is responsible for management decisions on the reserve lands.

The final plan was completed in 2008 and initiated use of prescribed fire and other fuels management projects including broadcast burning and shaded fuel breaks networks through out the reserve. In May/June 2010, 180 acres were burned contributing to a successful reintroduction of (SKR) Stephen Kangaroo Rats into those units. Much more is planned with possibilities of re-establishing native oak trees into areas farmed and stripped years ago. Fuels reduction throughout the project will afford protection to the surrounding communities of Sage, Hemet, Murrieta, and the Temecula Valley.

### ***Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve VMP***

The project involves prescribed burning on the Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve, which is located immediately west of Murrieta in the eastern foothills of the Santa Ana Mountain Range. A VMP plan was first developed for the Reserve in the mid-1980's and subsequent burn plans have been in place ever since. There are 402 acres covered under the current agreement.

Prescribed fire was introduced onto the reserve primarily to simulate natural fire cycles and characteristics that support native vegetation communities historically present in the area. The reserve is divided into numerous burn units that are randomly selected for burning each year. On average fire is returned to the same unit approximately every five to seven years, with between 100-200 acres being treated annually. In addition to the ecological benefits, these recurring cycles of fire generate plant communities with less dangerous wild fire behavior characteristics. They also develop vegetative age classes that will be less likely to create or sustain major wild fires.

Fuels are primarily annual grasses with oak woodland cover; however, chaparral is present in all or portions of several units. Project preparation work involves cutting of hand line and road maintenance to facilitate access and control lines. Burning is typically carried out using drip torches and aerial ignition devices. Management of the reserve has changed, and is now the responsibility of The California Department of Fish and Game, under the direction of a management committee. Ownership is comprised of The California Department of Fish and Game, The Nature Conservancy, the Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District. The new agreement with the Department of Fish and Game took effect in February 2004.

The burning on this project has greatly increased the re-establishment of local native grasses and a very healthy habitat area.

### ***Johnson Ranch VMP***

The Johnson Ranch VMP is 671 acres east of Murrieta and South of Lake Skinner. The Ranch is managed by the Center for Natural Lands Management. The Ranch is owned by the California Department of Fish & Game, Riverside County Regional Parks & Open-Space, The City of Temecula, and The University of California, Riverside.

Fuels are primarily annual grasses and non-native weeds. One of the goals is to re-establish native plants on the reserve. In establishing the plants, it is hoped that the animal habitat will increase the wildlife. Burning is typically carried out by hand ignition devices.

### ***Orchard/Lake Mathews VMP***

The Orchard/Lake Mathew VMP is 2,111 acres south of Lake Mathews in the Estelle Mountain Reserve. The reserve is owned and managed by Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency.

The fuels on the reserve are primarily grasses, but there are oaks and some coastal sage. The area of the VMP was used as orange and grape groves. The Conservation Agency is attempting to return the land to a native state. Broadcast burning is a tool that has helped eliminate non-native grasses and noxious weeds. In 2010, we burned 99 acres. Burning has been carried by hand firing control lines that are mowed with a scratch line included.

### ***List of projects for 2011***

- Skinner MSR VMP 1,214 acres, broadcast burning, shaded fuel break, chipping.
- Santa Rosa Plateau VMP 402 acres, broadcast burning,
- Johnson Ranch VMP 671 acres, broadcast burning.
- Orchard/Lake Mathews 2,111 acres, broadcast burning
- San Jacinto State Park VMP 200 acres, broadcast burning, shaded fuel break, chipping.
- Lake Perris VMP 250 acres, broadcast burning.
- Oak Glen VMP 1600 acres, shaded fuel break, chipping, pile burning.

### ***California Forest Practice Act – Exemptions and Emergency Notices***

There are numerous Timber Harvest Plan (THP) exemptions and emergency notices in effect that are resulting in thousands of trees being removed with 100% slash cleanup in most cases. This activity will have an enormous impact on reducing the staggering amount of fuel that has resulted from the drought and bark beetle outbreak. CAL FIRE Foresters have been busy conducting Forest Practice inspections on the timber operations occurring on private land.

The governor's emergency proclamation temporarily lifted the requirement for filing exemptions and notices with the State. However, all other provisions of the Forest Practice Act and Rules are in affect. It is estimated that tens of thousands of trees have been removed off of SRA lands in the last year by Licensed Timber Operators and tree service contractors and that thousands more trees need to be removed.

Along power line rights of way CAL FIRE foresters are working closely with Southern California Edison (SCE)-hired foresters and line clearing crews to ensure compliance with the forest practice rules. We are also working with government crews that are removing trees along state highways and county roads for the same purpose.

As part of the VMP program and the San Jacinto Zone of Infestation authorized insect control program, CAL FIRE conservation camp crews are also removing thousands of trees in compliance with the forest practice rules.

## ***Future Projects and Priority Rankings***

### ***Pinyon VMP***

The Pinyon Project is a proposed project to protect the community of Spring Crest, near Pinyon. The proposed project involves construction of fuelbreaks along the roads surrounding the community, and roads with in the community. This will provide for resident and firefighter safety, ease of ingress and egress during a fire, and increasing the defensibility of the homes in the area.

The contributors to the project will be CAL FIRE/RVC, USFS, and Private Landowners.

### ***Snow Creek VMP***

The Snow Creek area consists of 39 homes located at the base of the Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountain National Monument, which is now surrounded by federal/state land. This project has recently come to the Unit's attention. Staff is currently working with residents of the Snow Creek area, and other agencies; primarily BLM; in order to assist this rural community. The Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council has been in contact with the spokesperson for the area, and discussions are underway to bring them in as a chapter of the MCFSC.

#### ***The homeowners in the area have developed the following goals:***

- Create wildfire protection zones that reduce the risk to citizens and fire crews.
- To access all wildlands, not just state responsibility. Analysis will identify fed/state/local government & private properties. Identify high-risk areas.
- Identify key policy issues, recommendations to reduce total cost & losses by increasing fire protection system effectiveness.
- Strong fiscal policy focus.
- Translate to public.

#### ***Assets of Snowcreek Village:***

- Citizens lives
- Structures (homes and buildings)
- Historical (1900's)
- Indian Pictographs/Indian caves
- Human Burial Grounds (1918 grave marker)
- Desert Water Agency (east canyon)
- University of California Wildlife study area (west canyon)
- National Monument adjacent
- Pacific Crest Trail (passes thru Village)
- Community of Idyllwild
- Palm Springs Tram
- Major development due east (Highway 111)
- Endangered and non-endangered wildlife (owls, hawks, tortoise, big horn sheep, desert life)
- Vegetation (Milk Vetch endangered)
- Scenic
- Tourism/Commerce
- Electric power lines hillsides and canyons
- Bird watchers, artistry, recreation, etc.
- Transportation
- Air & water quality

#### ***Stakeholders***

- Homeowners
- Private land owners
- BLM National Monument
- State of California Department of Parks & Recreation, Fish & Game
- Desert Water Agency

- SCE
- University of California
- Resource Conservation
- USDI Fish & Wildlife
- Riverside County Fire Department
- Transportation land management agency
- Cities: Palm Springs, Cabazon, Idyllwild
- Habitat
- Conservation groups
- Historical societies
- Tourism
- Commerce

### ***New planned projects for 2011***

- Simpson Park VMP 300 acres, thinning, broadcast burning.
- El Cariso/Decker Canyon VMP 800 acres, shaded fuel break, pile burning, broadcast burning.
- Communication Tower VMP Project 200 acres, shaded fuel break, pile burning, chipping.
- Rancho Capistrano VMP 100 acres, shaded fuel break, pile burning, chipping.

### ***Grants***

Significant Forest Health Enhancement Program and Hazardous Fuels Treatment grant funds have come to CAL FIRE in Southern California from the USFS. These funds have been used to augment our traditional programs, including VMP and CFIP by providing additional staff for planning projects and helping to cover operational costs. Additionally, Riverside County has received grants for increasing forest health, creating jobs, promoting biomass utilization, and reducing fire risk

### **FHEP**

The Forest Health Enhancement Program grants began in August 2003, and ran through December 2009. This grant was awarded to three CAL FIRE southern units (RRU, MVU, and BDU). In Riverside, project funding was limited geographically to the forested areas in the San Jacinto Mountain range. 46 projects of various scales and objectives were completed including: 465 acres of tree planting, 182 acres of mastication, and 545 acres of fuel reduction/forest health improvement projects using CAL FIRE crews or contractors. Projects not completed by the expiration of the grant were rolled into the Hazardous Fuels Treatment Grants I and II that began July 2008.

### **HFT**

Hazardous Fuels Treatment and Supplemental Hazardous Fuels Treatment grants were awarded to many units throughout the state. Riverside Unit has used these grants to hire resource management staff and fund CAL FIRE crews to complete FHEP projects and other vegetation management projects for the purpose of reducing hazardous fuels. A list of high priority projects are in **appendix B**.

### **County Grants**

Various grants have been awarded to Riverside County Fire. The funds have been used to augment biomass utilization, continue the Dead Tree and Slash Removal programs,

expand an existing CWPP, collaborate with and support Fire Safe councils, and plan and implement various fuel reduction/forest health projects including fuelbreak implementation and maintenance.

## A: DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS

***Moreno Valley Division*****Battalion 9**

Reche Canyon Area: Continue diligent LE 100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance to canyon.

San Timoteo Canyon Area: Continue diligent LE 100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to canyon. Enforce address posting. Inspect Rail Road Right of Way clearance.

Pigeon Pass / Box Springs Area: Continue diligent LE 100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to area.

Gilman Spring Area: Target the area for enforcement of existing laws for off road vehicle use, shooting and strip and burn stolen vehicles. These are primary causes of ignitions in this area.

March SKR Reserve: Continue working with Center for Natural Lands Management to remove invasive exotic grasses and weeds to restore native grass and forb communities. This restored habitat is important to the Burrowing Owl and the Stephens Kangaroo Rat. These native plant communities have significantly lower fuel loading than the invasive exotic grasses and weeds. This would produce much lower intensity fires.

San Timoteo Canyon Preserve: Continue working with BLM, RCA, Riverside County Parks, State Parks, and Riverside Land Conservancy to remove invasive exotic grasses and weeds to restore native grass and forb communities and manage chaparral communities. This restored habitat is important to the threatened and endangered plants and animals. These native plant communities have significantly lower fuel loading than the invasive exotic grasses and weeds. This would produce much lower intensity fires.

## ***North West Division***

### **Battalion 4**

Information and Education: Work with the public affairs bureau to improve public outreach and school programs to reduce the number of Playing with Fire and Equipment ignitions.

### **Battalion 14**

Information and Education: Work with the public affairs bureau to improve public outreach and school programs to reduce the number of Playing with Fire and Equipment ignitions.

### **Battalion 17**

Information and Education: Work with the public affairs bureau to improve public outreach and school programs to reduce the number of Playing with Fire and Equipment ignitions.

Estelle Mountain Reserve: Continue working with BLM, RCHCA, and Metropolitan Water District to remove invasive exotic grasses and weeds to restore native grass and forb communities. This restored habitat is important to the Burrowing Owl and the Stephens Kangaroo Rat. These native plant communities have significantly lower fuel loading than the invasive exotic grasses and weeds. This would produce much lower intensity fires.

## ***Oak Glen Division***

### **Battalion 3**

Pass Area:

Create Evacuation Safety Corridor for Highway 243 from Banning to Vista Grande.

Old Banning Idyllwild Road Area:

Target the area for enforcement of existing laws for off road vehicle use, illegal target shooting. Conduct PRC 4291 utility inspections from South Banning to Poppet Flats.

Poppet Flats and Twin Pines Areas:

Continue diligent LE 100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to area. Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE-100 program (Residential Structure Clearance) compliance. Continue community chipping program to reduce hazardous fuels in the WUI areas.

San Timoteo Canyon Area:

Continue diligent LE 100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to canyon. Enforce address posting. Inspect Rail Road Right of Way clearance.

San Timoteo Canyon Preserve:

Continue working with BLM, RCA, Riverside County Parks, State Parks, and Riverside Land Conservancy to remove invasive exotic grasses and weeds to restore native grass and forb communities and manage chaparral communities. This restored habitat is important to the threatened and endangered plants and animals. These native plant communities have significantly lower fuel loading than the invasive exotic grasses and weeds. This would produce much lower intensity fires

Oak Glen and North Mountain Areas:

Inspect and maintain truck trails, water cisterns and fuel breaks. Develop and implement fire safety plan for Bogart Park.

Morongo Indian Reservation:

With Morongo Fire Department, develop and implement reservation wide Fire Safety and Prevention Plan

### **Division wide:**

- Inventory existing approved truck trails. Develop and implement after storm inspection program for reimbursement and repair of related storm damage to existing truck trails. (FEMA and State, and federal declarations)
- Re-implement Battalion wide K-6 Smokey Bear education program

## ***Bautista Division***

### **Battalion 5**

Avery Canyon Area: Due to limited ingress and egress to the Avery Canyon Area there is a need to establish a secondary escape route from New Port Road east to Polly Butte.

Sage, Aguanga, Val Vista Area: Create Evacuation Safety Corridors on R-3 (Sage Road) from Saint Johns Grade to Hwy 79 South at Radec Junction and on Red Mountain Road by roadside fuel modification(s). Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE-100 program (Residential Structure Clearance) compliance. Set up community chipping projects.

Glen Oaks, Deportola Area: Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE-100 program (Residential Structure Clearance) compliance.

Wilson Valley Reserve: Continue working with Center for Natural Lands Management. to remove invasive exotic grasses and weeds to restore native grass and forb communities and manage chaparral communities. This restored habitat is important to the threatened and endangered plants and animals. These native plant communities have significantly lower fuel loading than the invasive exotic grasses and weeds. This would produce much lower intensity fires.

Soboba Indian Reservation:

Work with the tribal leadership, develop and implement reservation wide Fire Safety and Prevention Plan

### **Division wide:**

- Inventory existing approved truck trails. Develop and implement after storm inspection program for reimbursement and repair of related storm damage to existing truck trails. (FEMA and State, and federal declarations)
- Re-implement Battalion wide K-6 Smokey Bear education program

### **Battalion 11**

Anza, Aguanga Area: Complete or Create Evacuation Safety Corridors on all highways and major roads. Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE-100 program (Residential Structure Clearance) compliance. . Set up community chipping projects. Inspect and maintain truck trails and truck trail fuel breaks.

Battalion wide: Maintain and support completed, active and planned M.A.S.T. projects

Cahuilla, Ramona and Santa Rosa Indian Reservations:

Work with the tribal leadership, develop and implement reservation wide Fire Safety and Prevention Plan

**Division wide:**

- Inventory existing approved truck trails. Develop and implement after storm inspection program for reimbursement and repair of related storm damage to existing truck trails. (FEMA and State, and federal declarations)
- Re-implement Battalion wide K-6 Smokey Bear education program

## ***South West division***

### **Battalion 1**

Battalion 1 enjoys a Mediterranean climate, has a significant fire history of small fires, with two significant fires occurring within the last twenty years (Juniper Flats Fire and the Cerrito Fire). Annual grass, buckwheat and coastal sage comprises the majority of the fuel types found in Battalion 1.

### **Perris / Goetz Area**

- Continued diligent LE-100 effort in the SRA areas of Fire Station 1's first due.
- Work with BLM to reduce fuels along the San Jacinto Riverbed in Fire Station 1's first due through fuel reduction or a VMP program. This area was significantly cleaned up in 2010 of trash, tires, dilapidated vehicles and abandoned boats.
- Work with UCR to maintain a fuel reductions program around the exterior of the Motte-Rimrock Preserve, to prevent natural or man caused fires from spreading onto the Preserve, in Fire Station 1's first due.

### **Nuevo / Juniper Flats Area**

- The continued diligent LE-100 program for the Juniper Flats area and fire closure areas in Fire Station 3's first due.
- Semi permanent signage to denote fire closure areas in Fire Station 3's first due. Signs to be maintained posted and stored by fire station personnel.
- Work with Southern California Edison to establish lockable gates on the power line easement roads in Fire Station 3's first due. State locks to be placed in line with Edison locks to ensure fire department access. This will limit the number of vehicle fires spreading into the vegetation and unattended bonfires spreading into the vegetation in this area.
- Work with State Parks, DFG and DWR to ensure fuel reduction along the Ramona Expressway is undertaken and maintained.

### **Good Meadow Area**

- The continued diligent LE-100 program for the Good Meadow area in Fire Station 9's first due.
- Work with Good Meadow Elementary School / Public Affairs Bureau to establish school programs to reduce the number of PWF caused fires in Fire Station 9's first due. Also, to send home literature in Spanish language to educate the parents of the LE-5 process, to reduce the amount of illegal burns in Fire Station 9's first due.
- Work with BLM to increase enforcement of the BLM shooting area in Fire Station 9's first due (Steele Peak), post appropriate signage either warning the public of shooting caused fires or closing the area during fire season.

### **Homeland / Juniper Flats Area**

- The continued diligent LE-100 program in the Juniper Flats and SRA areas of Fire Station 54's first due.
- Place fire prevention sign at the Hwy 74 entrance to the Juniper Flats area, as well as two additional signs within the Juniper Flats area of Fire Station 54's first due.
- Work with County Fire OES and the Public Affairs Bureau to set up a town hall meeting in Juniper Flats area for fire safety educational purposes, and identify the possible need for the establishment of a Fire Safety Council in the Juniper Flats area.

## **Battalion 2**

Close coordination with the Southwest Firesafe Council has contributed to the success of the completed programs.

### **Fire Prevention**

- Continue to do outreach school programs with grant money and public requested presentations and tours.
- Work and support Public Affairs Bureau in placement and maintenance of Battalion fire prevention sign inventory.
- Continue LE-100 enforcement in high risk areas and coordinate with CNF on enforcement in USFS DPA areas.
- Conduct periodic multi-agency enforcement actions on various homeless camps in the Battalion that pose historically high fire risk.
- Complete the CWPP for the Southwest Firesafe Council area to include the mountain communities of Battalion 2.

### **Fuels Projects**

- Projects as listed in the 2009 remain as a goal with several currently in progress.
- Of significant interest is a long standing conceptual fuel break along the front country listed in the 2009 fire plan as the Elsinore Front Fuel Break. This fuel break would extend from roughly Wildomar to McVicker Canyon along the private/USFS boundary. This is a project that will require many personnel hours to pursue and has been supported by State Assembly and B.O.S staff in the past.

### **Currently in progress:**

- South Main Divide fuel break renewal
- El Cariso Village Fuel Break renewal
- Continue Truck Trail maintenance in cooperation with CNF/USFS and pursue truck trail maintenance with Riverside County Parks Multi Species Preserve on their property.

### **Complete:**

- Rancho Carrillo Dead Tree removal/chipping
- Rancho Capistrano Hazardous fuels removal/chipping.

## **Battalion 13**

### **Canyon Lake**

- Continue LE-100 program. Concentrate on north side of Canyon Lake as well as Meadowbrook area.
- Place fire prevention sign near off road access area north of fire station.
- Continue to work with BLM on fuel management and fire break projects on north side of station in sections 26 and 34 of Canyon Lake.

### **Menifee Lakes Station 76**

- Continue fire-prevention-education programs in grades K thru 3.
- Place fire prevention signs at Menifee Road x of Simpson at off road access.
- Place fire prevention signs on Scott Road between Briggs Road and Leon Road.
- Continue LE-100 program. Concentrate on SE roll area in sections 16,17 and 18. TS 6S, R2W.

### **Menifee Station 68**

There are 3 major areas of concern:

1) The area south of Scott Rd. and Bundy Canyon Rd. This area is a north facing aspect with limited access and limited water supply. East winds will push fire toward Wildomar, Murrieta and Lake Elsinore.

2) The Cottonwood Canyon area. This area, which is in the City of Wildomar, has limited access and egress and no water supply for fire suppression. Single and double wide mobile homes are seriously threatened by the overgrown **open space parcels** between improved lots.

3) The area west of Murrieta Rd. This area also has poor access, egress and water supply. East winds in this area will push fire through Cottonwood Canyon, into the City of Wildomar and Lake Elsinore. With north or south winds, fire be can pushed further into the City of Menifee, or over Bundy Canyon Rd. and into Murrieta City.

#### Priorities:

- Priority staff WT 68 24/7 during declared fire season.
- Ensure County and City responsibilities for road improvement are being met.
- New hydrants to be included with all improvements and construction.
- Maintain vegetation clearance along Cottonwood Canyon Rd. as a Safety Corridor to the north.
- Possible Fuel breaks, or maintenance of existing dirt roads south of Bundy Canyon Rd. between the City of Menifee and Murrieta.
- Continue code enforcement for unimproved lots.
- Place fire prevention sign on both Scott Rd. and Murrieta Rd.
- Dedicate Paloma Valley High School as an evacuation center.
- Clear brush and flammable vegetation from roadside shoulders.

### **Quail Valley Area**

- Continue Fire Prevention Education program with grades K-3.
- Place Fire Prevention signs at both main access points to Quail Valley.
- Continue and accelerate the weed abatement program for unimproved lots.
- Continue public education and LE100 enforcement of improved lots.
- Work with Riverside County Parks to implement fuel breaks and hazard reduction zones near residential areas at SE corner of Kabian Park.
- Continue enforcement of applicable laws and regulations regarding recreation and land use in the BLM area of Section 26, T5S, R4W, and west of Quail Valley.

### **Sun City Plan**

- Continue LE-100 inspections.
- Continue fire-prevention programs with grades K-3.

- Post signs at McCall x Valley, Chambers x Valley, McCall x Antelope, McCall x Aspel and Rousch Rd. x Valley.

## **Battalion 15**

### **Deluz Canyon**

Continue a thorough and **conscientious** LE 100 Program combined with an aggressive community education program using various media outlets and community meetings.

### **Tenaja area**

Continue a thorough and conscientious LE 100 Program combined with an aggressive community education program using various media outlets and community meetings. Work with the Fire Safe Council on various projects to protect and prepare the Tenaja community and surrounding areas.

### **Temecula Wine Country**

Continue a thorough and conscientious LE 100 Program combined with an aggressive community education program using various media outlets and community meetings.

### **Pala / Temecula Rd. & Rainbow Canyon areas**

Continue a thorough and conscientious LE 100 Program combined with an aggressive community education program using various media outlets and community meetings.

### **Johnson Ranch, Santa Rosa Plateau and Lake Skinner Reserves**

Continue working with California Department of Fish & Game, Center for Natural Lands Management RCHCA, Nature Conservancy, South West Riverside County Multi Species Reserve and Metropolitan Water District to remove invasive exotic grasses and weeds to restore native grass and forb communities. This restored habitat is important to the Burrowing Owl and the Stephens Kangaroo Rat. These native plant communities have significantly lower fuel loading than the invasive exotic grasses and weeds. This would produce much lower intensity fires.

### **Pechanga Indian Reservation**

City of Temecula Fire Department and the Pechanga Fire Department work collectively to develop a comprehensive fire prevention plan that upon implementation would be of mutual benefit to both the City Of Temecula and Pechanga tribal land.

### **Santa Margarita Drainage and surrounding City of Temecula areas**

The Santa Margarita drainage now lies within Temecula City limits. Work with University of San Diego (majority property owner) and The City of Temecula to develop and put into practice comprehensive fire prevention and fire management plan.

### **City of Temecula**

Continue the city wide fire prevention and safety education program using television, radio, printed mediums along with school, community service clubs, HOA and local events to inform and educate the public.

### ***Training Bureau***

The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Training Division is responsible in training 1,200 CAL FIRE career fire fighting personnel, 180 career County OES and support personnel and 300 Riverside County volunteer reserve firefighters. To accommodate all the training hours it takes to train this large work force the training is divided into three main components.

- Formal Training, either at Clark Training Center, Roy Wilson Training Center or Ione. This training can be classroom, field or a combination of both. Examples of formal training are CAL FIRE Basic Firefighter Academy, C-234 Intermediate Firing, Incident Management II, S-290 Intermediate Fire Behavior and Command 1B
- In Service Training (IST), this training is engine and truck companies coming to a training center and the entire crew going through drills or learning a new skill through classroom and hands on education.
- Self Training, by using the Riverside County network and a computer, firefighters complete self paced education programs through Target Safety. Target Safety allows the training division to reach a wide audience on specific subjects.

The Training Bureau continues to educate firefighters from the first year Firefighter 1's to the most seasoned veteran. The bureau uses instructors that have varying degrees of experience and expertise. The Riverside Training staff has been leaders in the state in implementing returnee firefighter training, and the Basic Firefighting Academy. The dedicated classrooms for fire training are used to instruct beginning, intermediate and higher level instruction.

Wildland fire training is extensive throughout the county. Outside of Earthquakes, Wildland fires are the largest and deadliest incidents our personnel respond to. The unit dedicates 25% of its training hours to wildland firefighting training. All aspects of wildland firefighting are taught throughout the year.

## ***Riverside Unit***

Battalion	Project Number	Project Name	Status	Estimated Completion Date	Project Type	Net
3,5&11	GT-163-RRU-201	CALTrans-Safety Corridor #1	Active	on-going	Fuel reduction along State Highways 243, 74,371, and 79 within the CalTrans right-of-way.	47
11	GT-163-RRU-202	Apple Canyon Ranch	Complete	01-May-11	Fuelbreak maintenance	65
11	GT-163-RRU-203	Point of Rocks: DFPZ & Hazard Tree Removal Phase 2	Proposed	01-Jul-13	Extension and maintenance of prior VMP fuelbreak around the Idyllwild community	0
11	GT-163-RRU-205	Spring Crest DFPZ	Proposed	01-Jul-13	Fuelbreak maintenance of prior VMP fuelbreak surrounding the Spring Crest community	0
11	GT-163-RRU-206	Hurkey Creek: Diseased Tree Removal & Green Tree Thinning	Active	01-Jul-13	Removal of dead and diseased trees to reduce fuels, minimize the spread of insect/disease, and increase public safety	33
3&11	GT-163-RRU-207	Hwy 243 & Hwy 74 Thinning/DFPZ: Fuels Reduction Project	Active	01-Jul-13	Fuel reduction on ownerships adjacent to Highways 74 and 243 to facilitate USFS fuelbreak continuity.	8
3	GT-163-RRU-210	Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP	Active	01-Jul-13	Fuelbreak and truck trail maintenance of prior VMP fuelbreak near the Oak Glen community	21
11	GT-163-RRU-212	RED Hill North DFPZ	Active	01-Jul-13	Fuelbreak maintenance of prior VMP fuelbreak surrounding the Pine Cove community.	19
11	GT-163-RRU-221	Riverside County Park Nature Trail Rehabilitation #1	Complete	10/1/2009	80+ dead trees and slash removed to reduce the fuel loading and increase public safety	25
11	GT-163-RRU-222	Lawler Lodge	Active	01-Jul-13	Fuel reduction along Highway 243 to create USFS/CALFIRE fuelbreak continuity.	6
11	GT-163-RRU-223	Nature Center Fuel Break Maintenance	Complete	8/31/2009	Maintained critical portion of existing fuelbreak. Early re-entry kept the cost and commitment of crews low.	22

Battalion	Project Number	Project Name	Status	Estimated Completion Date	Project Type	Net
3	GT-163-RRU-226	Poppet Flats Community Protection	Planning	01-Jul-13	Fuelbreak and truck trail maintenance near the Poppet Flats community	0
5	GT-163-RRU-228	Simpson Park VMP	Planning	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	0
N/A	GT-163-RRU-230	Public Education	Active	01-Jul-13	Educate public about fuel treatments, defensible space, prescribed burning, fire history, fire use, fire safety etc.	0
N/A	GT-163-RRU-232	Consultation / Technical Assistance	Active	01-Jul-13	Forest Practice, land assessment, environmental protection education, law and ordinance info, etc	0
11	GT-163-RRU-233	State Park Fuel Reduction	Complete	9/1/2009	State Park Campground fuel reduction to ensure public and fire safety	10
5&15	GT-163-RRU-234	MSR Skinner VMP/Rx-South-055-RRU	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	300
11	GT-163-RRU-235	County Parks - Delano	Complete	8/31/2009	Fuel reduction within WUI area of Idyllwild. Makes existing fuel break contiguous	20
2&15	GT-163-RRU-236	Santa Rosa Plateau VMP	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	200
2	GT-163-RRU-237	Rancho Carillo Dead Tree Removal	Complete	9/1/2010	Dead tree and slash resulting from insect damage removed	10
Various	GT-163-RRU-238	Com Tower Fuel Reduction Project	Active	01-Jul-13	RCFD/CALFIRE/SCIF cooperation to implement vegetation removal around PSEC and other communication infrastructure.	10
Various	GT-163-RRU-239	Post Project Assistance	Active	01-Jul-13	Various projects needing minor follow-up work	6
2	GT-163-RRU-240	Rancho Capistrano Hazardous Fuels Removal	Complete	9/1/2010	Vegetation removal	150
2	GT-163-RRU-241	El Cariso Village Hazardous Fuels Removal	Complete	9/1/2010	Dead tree and slash resulting from insect damage removed	10
11	GT-163-RRU-242	Red Hill South Maintenance	Active	01-Jul-13	Fuelbreak maintenance	27
1&9	GT-163-RRU-244	Lake Perris VMP	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction in partnership with State Parks.	300
15	GT-163-RRU-245	Johnson Ranch VMP	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	45
9	GT-163-RRU-246	March SKR VMP	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	0
11	GT-163-RRU-247	Santa Rosa Health Forest Coop	Proposed	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	0

Battalion	Project Number	Project Name	Status	Estimated Completion Date	Project Type	Net
11	GT-163-RRU-248	San Jacinto State Park (Idyllwild)	Active	01-Jul-13	Removal of vegetation posing a risk to public safety	10
11	GT-163-RRU-249	M. San Jacinto Cooperative Burn	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction in partnership with State Parks.	70
11	GT-163-RRU-250	Peltrocks Property	Planning	01-Jul-13	Hazardous fuel treatment on parcels bordering the community of Idyllwild	0
11	GT-163-RRU-251	Camp Joe Sherman	Complete	01-Jul-13	Dead tree and slash resulting from insect damage removed at girl scout camp and fuelbreak created	20
11	GT-163-RRU-253	MRC Demonstration	Complete	01-Jul-13	Demonstration project showing a healthy Firesafe forest	3
17&4	GT-152-RRU-003	Orchard/Lake Mathews VMP	Active	01-Jul-13	Prescribed burning and fuel reduction	99
11	GT-152-RRU-004	San Jacinto Community Center Hazardous Fuel Reduction	Complete	01-Jul-13	Removal of fuels in public activity center to increase public safety	5
2	N/A	North Main Divide	Planning	01-Jul-13	Extend Forest Service Fuelbreak through private ownerships	0
11	N/A	South Anza Truck Trails	Planning	01-Jul-13	Fuelbreak and truck trail maintenance in the Anza Valley	0

**Status Guide:** A = Active, P = Planning, C = Completed, O = Ongoing, M = Maintenance.



*CAL FIRE Units were asked to identify two or more priority objectives under each goal in the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan for California. The Units' priorities are identified in bold and a measurement criteria are provided for each of the identified objectives. Throughout the next year, the Units will implement the identified priorities and report on the measurement criteria by June 2012. The priority objectives are displayed under three headings:*

- A. SACRAMENTO PROGRAMS OR COMMITTEE ONLY
- B. SACRAMENTO PROGRAMS AND STAFF OR COMMITTEE, REGIONS AND UNITS
- C. UNITS ONLY
- D. ADDITIONAL UNIT SPECIFIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## **A. SACRAMENTO PROGRAMS OR COMMITTEE ONLY**

**Goal 1: Identify and evaluate wildland fire hazards and recognize life, property and natural resource assets at risk, including watershed, habitat, social and other values of functioning ecosystems. Facilitate the sharing of all analyses and data collection across all ownerships for consistency in type and kind.**

Objective:

- a) **Identify and provide appropriate automated tools to facilitate the collection, analysis and consistent presentation of datasets.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE shall establish policy that specifies spatial databases covering all forest and rangeland to not be older than 10 years. Include minimum requirements for spatial databases. Follow the coordinated work schedule with the USDA Forest Service to maintain cost effective collection and processing of data.*

**Goal 2: Articulate and promote the concept of land use planning as it relates to fire risk and individual landowner objectives and responsibilities.**

Objective:

- a) **Identify the minimum key elements necessary to achieve a fire safe community, and incorporate these elements into land use planning, CWPPs and regional, county and Unit fire plans.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE to create a working committee with CAL Chiefs, USDA Forest Service and other key organizations to develop, monitor and refine elements of fire safe community, including evacuation plans. The Committee shall review existing templates for FIREWISE Assessments, CWPPs, fire plans and land use plans; identify the common elements and approaches for better integration. Utilize fire protection, planning and engineering expertise to identify the key elements (from existing templates) necessary for fire safe communities. Once agreed upon, these key elements will then be used as a checklist to guide consistency in fire safe planning efforts across jurisdictions. At a minimum, annually report to the Board on results.*

**Goal 3: Support and participate in the collaborative development and implementation of wildland fire protection plans and other local, county and regional plans that address fire protection and landowner objectives.**

Objectives:

- a) **Establish a working group, consisting of Board members and Departmental staff, to develop minimum standard elements for inclusion in Unit fire plans.**
- b) **Emphasize coordination of Unit fire plans with community wildfire protection plans to encourage and support one consistent approach. Develop county or regional fire plans by bringing together community-based groups, such as fire safe councils and affected fire and land management agencies.**

Measurement Criteria: *These measurement criteria meets objectives a and b. CAL FIRE to revise the template for the Unit fire plans to incorporate the goals and objectives of the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan. During the revision, the template for a CWPP will be jointly reviewed in order to reduce duplication of fire planning efforts. The key elements identified through the process identified in Goal 2, Objective b will also be incorporated into the Unit fire plan/CWPP.*

- c) **Create and support venues in which individual community members can be actively involved in local fire safe councils, community emergency response teams, FIREWISE and other community-based efforts to develop readiness plans and educate landowners to mitigate the risks and effects of wildland fire.**

Measurement Criteria: *The California Fire Alliance to work with the California and local FSCs to develop venues (e.g., workshops) that assist landowners with readiness planning and education. CAL FIRE, California Fire Alliance Liaison to report to the Board annually on Alliance activities.*

**Goal 4:** Increase awareness, knowledge and actions implemented by individuals and communities to reduce human loss and property damage from wildland fires, such as defensible space and other fuels reduction activities, fire prevention and fire safe building standards.

Objectives:

- a) **Educate landowners, residents and business owners about the risks and their incumbent responsibilities of living in the wildlands, including applicable regulations, prevention measures and preplanning activities.**

Measurement Criteria: *In coordination with the CAL FIRE Communications Program, the USDA Forest Service and local fire agencies, University of California and county cooperative extension offices, CAL FIRE to collect information on methods and effectiveness of existing outreach. Complete the information collection within year one of adoption of the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan. Develop a common set of measures to assess CAL FIRE efforts, build those into Unit fire plans and report to the Board. Report the progress of implementation at the end of year two.*

**Goal 5:** Develop a method to integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner priorities and multiple jurisdictional efforts within local, state and federal responsibility areas.

Objectives:

- a) **Work to remove regulatory barriers that limit hazardous fuels reduction activities.**

Measurement Criteria: *In conjunction with the Resource Protection Committee, CAL FIRE will develop an approach to identifying and recommending ways to address regulatory and other barriers that limit hazardous fuels reduction activities. This approach should include consultation with the Board's Interagency Forestry Working Group and with other agencies, such as the USDA Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Energy Commission, the Department of Fish and Game, regional water quality control boards, local government and the public. Finish this compilation within the first year of adoption of the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan. Based on barriers identified and recommendations for change, report to the Board starting in the second year.*

**Goal 6:** Determine the level of fire suppression resources necessary to protect the values and assets at risk identified during planning processes.

Objectives:

- a) **Initiate and maintain cooperative fire protection agreements with local, state and federal partners that value the importance of an integrated, cooperative, regional fire protection system and deliver efficient and cost effective emergency response capabilities beneficial to all stakeholders.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE to identify the number and effectiveness of agreements and partnerships. In conjunction with the Board's Resource Protection Committee, CAL FIRE will develop suggested measures of effectiveness of cooperative agreements. This should be in collaboration with its partners, completed within 18 months of adoption of the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan and reported to the Board.*

- b) **Provide for succession planning and employee development at all levels within CAL FIRE to maintain emergency response leadership capabilities, administrative management skills and pre-fire planning expertise.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE to revise and update the information developed in the 2005 Succession Planning meetings. This work should be completed within two years of the adoption of the 2010 Strategic Fire Plan, with annual reporting to the Board based on issues raised, including identification of key training needs, funding available and expenditures on the training program, content of Academy curricula, number of students requesting and/or able to take classes at the Academy, local community college or other educational outlets.*

## **B. SACRAMENTO PROGRAMS AND STAFF OR COMMITTEE, REGIONS AND UNITS**

**Goal 1:** Identify and evaluate wildland fire hazards and recognize life, property and natural resource assets at risk, including watershed, habitat, social and other values of functioning ecosystems. Facilitate the sharing of all analyses and data collection across all ownerships for consistency in type and kind.

Objectives:

- a) **Engage and participate with local stakeholder groups (i.e., fire safe councils and others) to validate and prioritize the assets at risk.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE shall designate personnel as advisors/liaisons to the California Fire Safe Council (CFSC) and to each county or regional FSC. The advisors will be responsible for reporting activities to the Unit and Region. The advisor to the CFSC will report to the Board. Annual reporting of time-spent working will be displayed in hours at the Unit, Region and Headquarters level. Reporting will include activities with local FSCs, communities, watershed groups or others defining hazards and risk of wildfire and documenting these in a CWPP or Unit fire plan. Emphasize the products developed in Goal 3, Objective b. Advisors will emphasize using standard guidelines and templates for consistency throughout the state.*

**Goal 2:** Articulate and promote the concept of land use planning as it relates to fire risk and individual landowner objectives and responsibilities.

Objectives:

- a) **Assist the appropriate governmental bodies in the development of a comprehensive set of wildland and wildland urban interface (WUI) protection policies for inclusion in each county general plan or other appropriate local land use planning documents.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE to appoint a committee including Unit, Region, Headquarters and Contract County representatives. Develop a work plan that identifies key elements of improving WUI strategies, including planning. Reporting should be based on elements identified and priorities for addressing them.*

*Under the Board's Resource Protection Committee, review existing Board policies as they relate to wildland fire and the relevance (ease of use, applicability) to incorporation in local general plans. Identify areas of possible improvement and update policies.*

*Track and report hours at the Unit, Region and Headquarters level spent in reviewing plans and projects; number of local Board/Council, Planning Commission meetings and/or meetings with other cooperators.*

**Goal 4:** Increase awareness, knowledge and actions implemented by individuals and communities to reduce human loss and property damage from wildland fires, such as defensible space and other fuels reduction activities, fire prevention and fire safe building standards.

Objectives:

- a) **Increase the number and effectiveness of defensible space inspections and promote an increasing level of compliance with defensible space laws and regulations**

**through the use of CAL FIRE staffing as available, public and private organizations, and alternative inspection methods.**

Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE to form an advisory committee to review PRC §4291 regulations and make recommendations to the Board that will provide for consistency, streamlining and clarification of existing regulations. The Committee shall develop criteria to increase the number and effectiveness of defensible space inspections. The Committee will develop an implementation plan for the recommendations and report on progress to the Board*

**Goal 7:** Address post-fire responsibilities for natural resource recovery, including watershed protection reforestation, and ecosystem restoration.

Objectives:

- a) **Encourage rapid post-fire assessment, as appropriate, and project implementation to minimize flooding, protect water quality, limit sediment flows and reduce other risks on all land ownerships impacted by wildland fire.**

Measurement Criteria: *Provide training for CAL FIRE personnel on suppression repair and damage assessment procedures. Develop standard formats and documentation templates for these assessments. Identify and use the findings to reduce the impacts of fire suppression on the landscape and improve resiliency of assets at risk from wildfire.*

## **C. UNITS ONLY**

**Goal 5:** Develop a method to integrate fire and fuels management practices with landowner priorities and multiple jurisdictional efforts within local, state and federal responsibility areas.

Objectives:

- a) **Support the availability and utilization of CAL FIRE hand crews and other CAL FIRE resources, as well as public and private sector resources, for fuels management activities, including ongoing maintenance.**

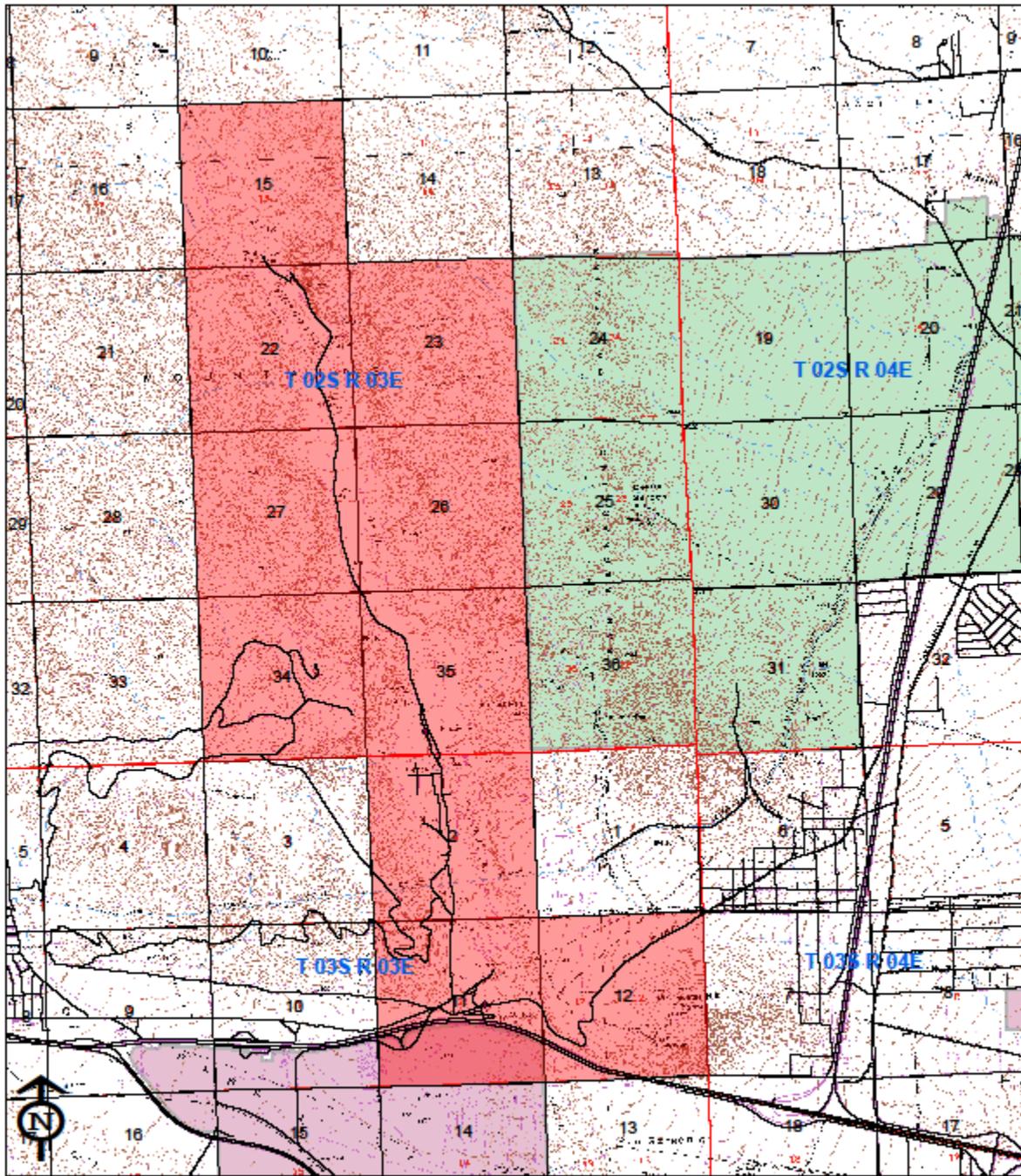
Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE will report to the Board on the number of crews available each year with a description of projects, including acres treated, completed by each Unit. Report the number of agreements and/or amount of funding and acres treated that involve grants or partnerships with federal agencies, resource conservation districts, local FSCs, fire districts, watershed groups or other non-profit or community groups that support the ability to carry out fuels reduction projects.*

**Goal 7:** Address post-fire responsibilities for natural resource recovery, including watershed protection reforestation, and ecosystem restoration.

Objectives:

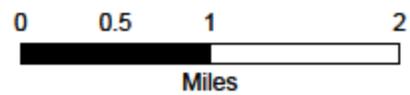
- a) **Assist landowners and local government in the evaluation of the need to retain and utilize features (e.g., roads, firelines, water sources) developed during a fire suppression effort, taking into consideration those identified in previous planning efforts.**

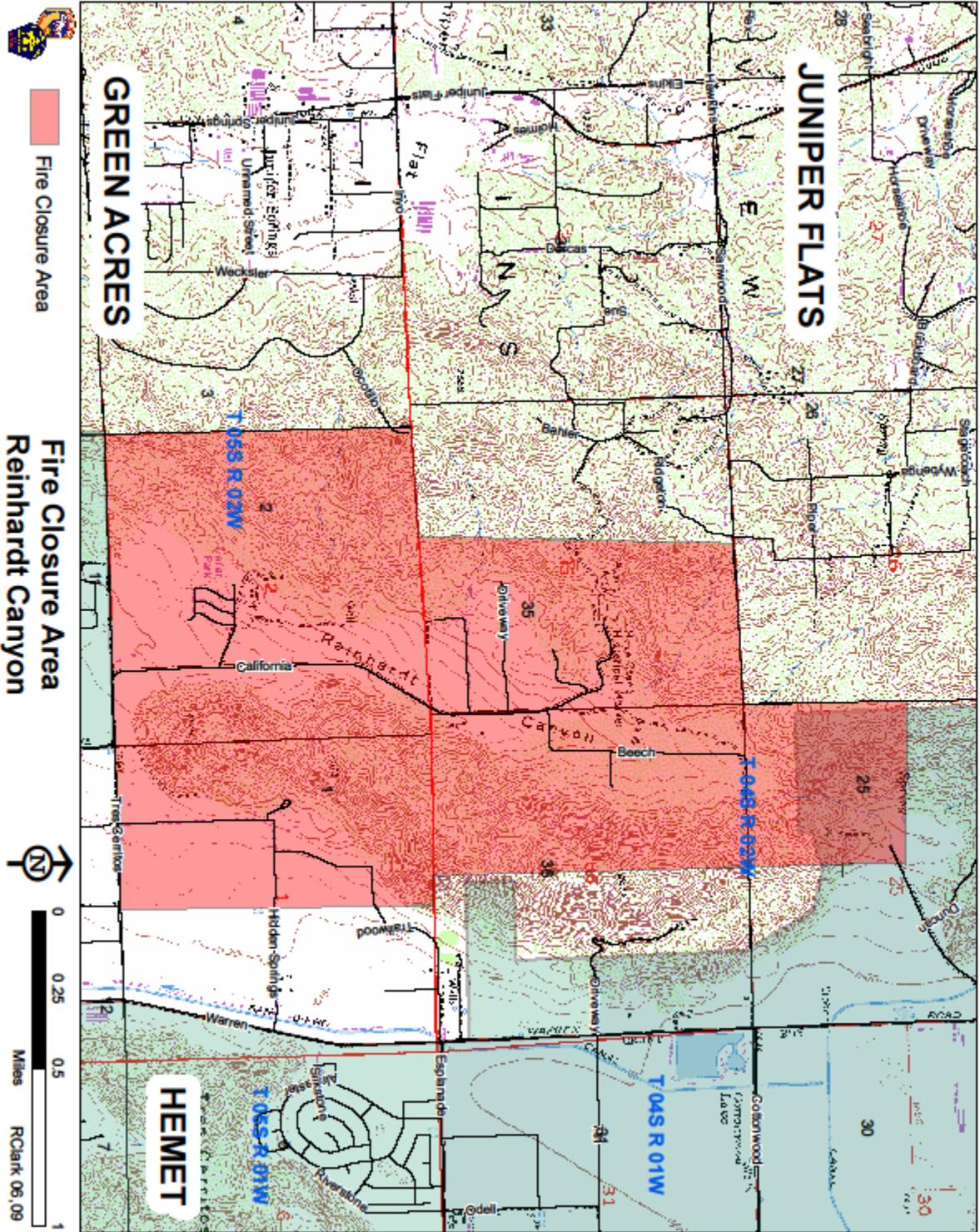
Measurement Criteria: *CAL FIRE (utilizing Incident Command Teams) to schedule a post-fire review of the planning documents that cover the area affected by the fire. Review the goals, objectives and projects (implemented and planned) to identify successes and failures. Review the features developed during the fire and incorporate them into the existing Unit fire plan documents. This objective will only be reported when a fire occurs in an area with an existing Unit fire plan document. Incident command teams may conduct this post fire assessment under the direction of the Unit Chief.*



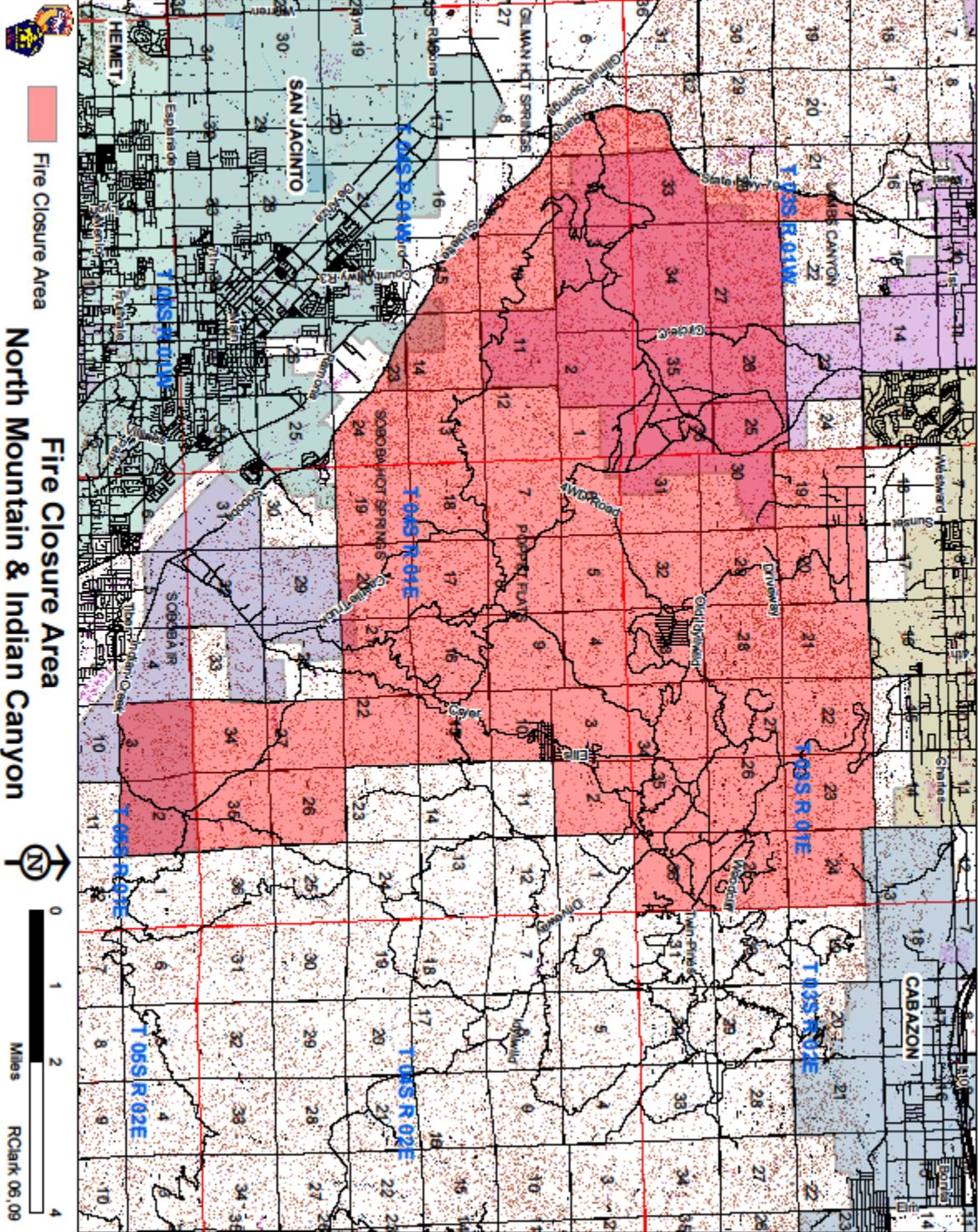
Fire\_Closure

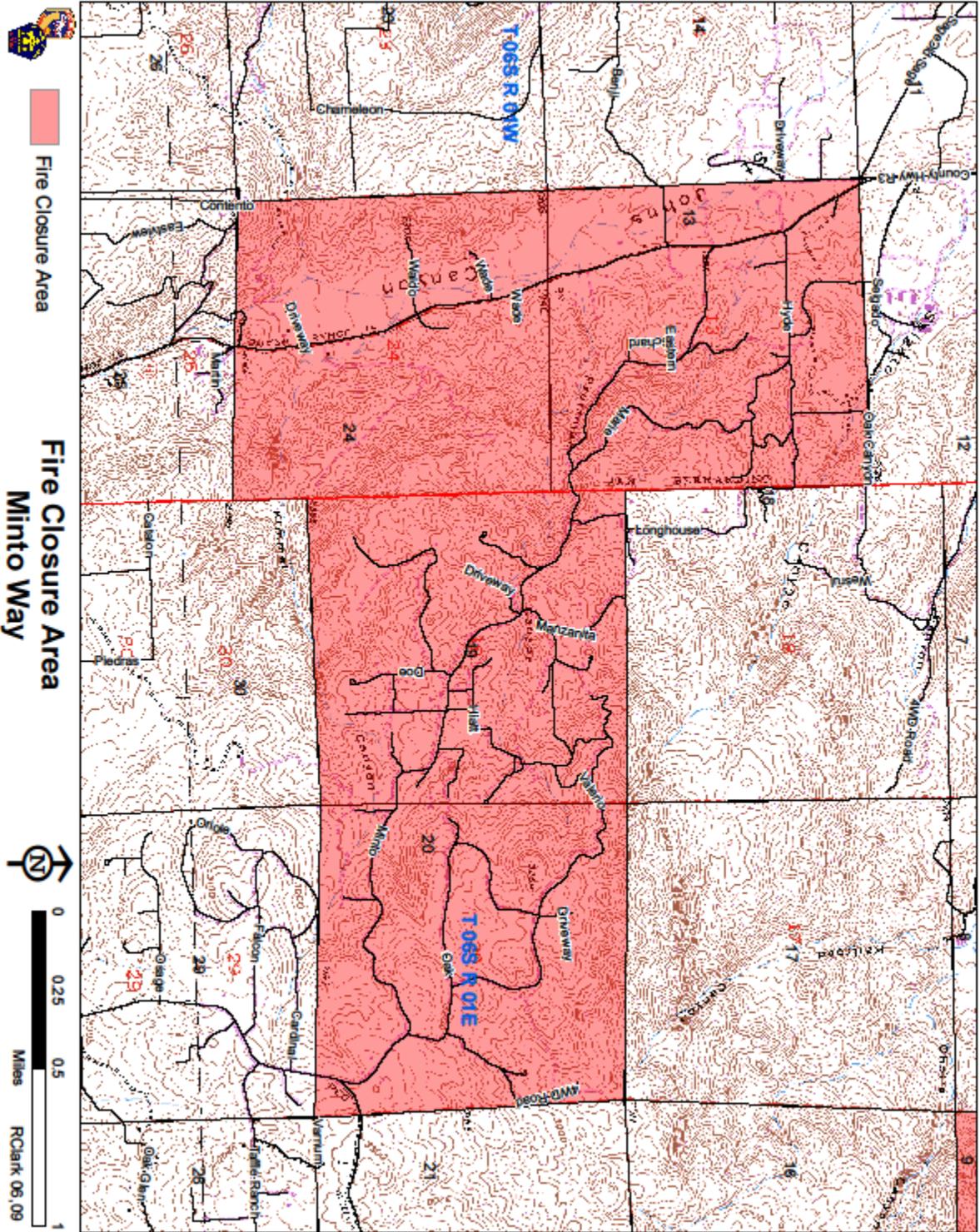
### Fire Closure Area Whitewater Canyon

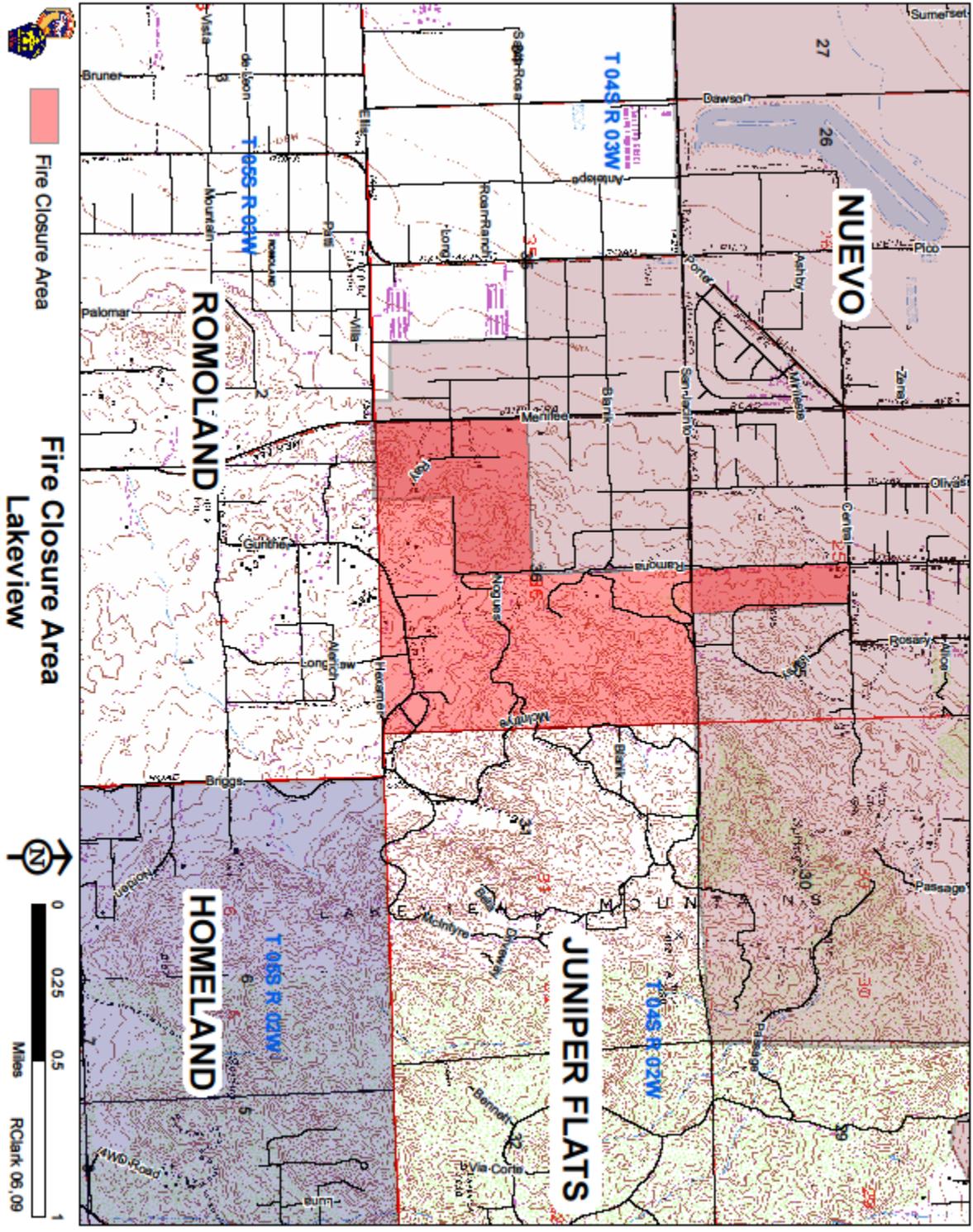












**ESPERANZA FIRE and BLM/CDF FUELS TREATMENTS**

In 2000, the BLM and CDF began working on a large-scale, interagency community fuel break to protect the communities of Poppet Flat, Rancho Encino, and the Silent Valley RV Club. The strategic placement of this fuels treatment project on both public and private lands protected the community from the Esperanza Fire and slowed the fire's progress. Federal and state agencies worked together across jurisdictional boundaries to complete an effective fire defense system around the communities. On the west side of the communities was a large area of chaparral between the homes and the fuel break. A prescribed burn was planned to reduce the fuel loading in this area. In 2005 the first unit was burned along with the fuel break north and west of town. The morning of October 26<sup>th</sup> the Esperanza Fire spread beyond Highway 243 and began to threaten the area. As the fire approached the community its progress was slowed by the fuel breaks and diverted by the prescribed fire. When the fire hit the prescribed burn it was diverted north around the community giving the residents the ability to remain in the community or "shelter in place" while the fire burned past. This saved people from needing to evacuate on Highway 243 through the fire in the area of Twin Pines and down hill to Banning. During the Esperanza Fire morning briefing the incident command team thanked those responsible for the fuels project and acknowledged its strategic importance in helping firefighters save the communities and allowing approximately 250 citizens to shelter in place. Approximately 140 homes and 500-600 RVs were spared from the fire. One mobile home was destroyed that was on the far west end of the community in an incomplete portion of the project and one unoccupied outbuilding was destroyed. The last figure is a map of the fire showing a large unburned island in the fire; this is the Poppet Flat area. The gratefulness of the local residents for their safety and their unburned homes makes this one of the most rewarding projects I have been involved with. With the growing population and development in Southern California interagency fuels projects such as this are crucial in protecting communities and resources.

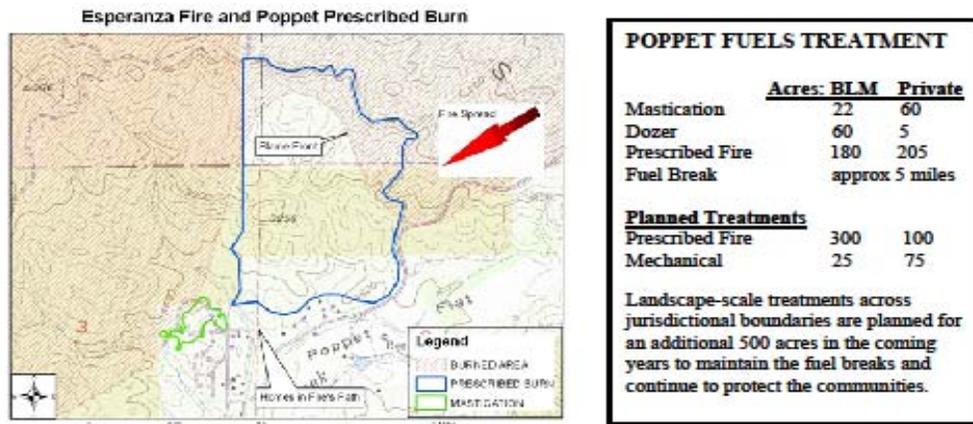


Figure 1 The map shows the direction of the fire's spread and the location of the most recent fuels treatments both mastication and prescribed burn



Figure 2 Mastication work at Poppet Flat



Figure 3 Fire stopped at treated area (foreground) behind homes



Figure 4 Treatment behind home

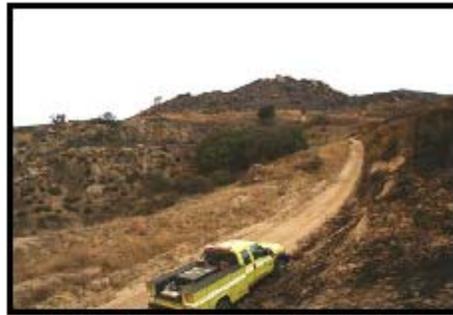


Figure 5 Edge of prescribed burn where Esperanza Fire stopped



Figure 6 and 7 Prescribed burn units that helped to divert the Esperanza Fire around the community

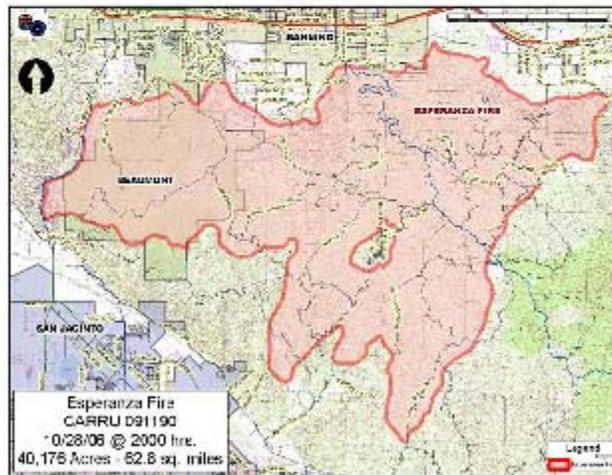


Figure 8 CDF's map of the incident showing the unburned "island" of Poppet Flat









**Figure B: Battalion Maps**

