

SIGNATURES

Unit Strategic Fire Plan developed for the Tuolumne / Calaveras 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.

Unit Chief

Date

Pre-Fire Engineer / Editor

Bruce Lodge Fire Captain

Date

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2011 Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit Strategic Fire Plan (aka the Plan) is intended to be a repository for all information regarding the Unit's efforts to mitigate the inherent threat to communities posed by wildland fire within the Unit's operational area. Our goal is to develop a document that collaborators and agency personnel alike can turn to for background information, a thorough assessment of the threats and challenges presented by wildland fire, and most importantly, the current status of any given project or program whose focus is the reduction of that threat or the increase in safety and awareness on the part of the community.

Coordination and collaboration with cooperating agencies and community groups is an essential element of the Unit's efforts. As such, the Unit Strategic Fire Plan mirrors local Community Wildfire Protection Plans (aka CWPP); and depicts the many valuable contributions by community members and cooperating agencies.

The Process:

An effort has been made to include information from all relevant programs within the Unit regarding their specific efforts to reduce the threat and increase awareness. While every effort has been made to accurately represent these efforts, there may be some program areas that remain underrepresented within the Plan. In compiling the Plan the newly available "assessment tools" were not taken advantage of. Instead, institutional knowledge and first-hand information from the field was relied upon. As such this iteration of the Plan may be characterized as a "first draft". There remains an ongoing effort within the Unit to fill any gaps in the Plan, and to implement the use of modern "tools". In fact the intent is that in moving beyond the initial due date, efforts will continue to accurately describe and continually update all facets of the Unit's wildland fire challenges, and add additional information as needed to fully and accurately depict the mitigation efforts on the part of the Unit and its cooperators.

The primary CAL FIRE contributors are the Battalion Chiefs. Also contributing are Foresters, Prevention Officers and Fire Captains. The Prevention Bureau Chief contributes incident statistics to the Battalion Chiefs for analysis and integration into their project planning. The Unit's Pre Fire Engineer (PFE) serves as the "editor in chief", compiling, revising, and formatting the final document. The application of assessment tools and the production of maps will also be the responsibility of the PFE; who will continue in those capacities throughout the year/s, functioning as the overall manager of the Plan.

Also contributing to the Plan are numerous people from outside CAL FIRE. The contributions from local Fire Safe Council staff have been, and will continue to be, of utmost importance. FSC members often serve as the link between the agency and the community. Without their continuing involvement the Plan will lose its functionality and legitimacy.

Representatives from neighboring Federal land and resource management agencies are also important contributors to the Plan. The inter-agency relationships here in TCU are historically strong. Efforts like the Strategic Fire Plan help to maintain and

encourage these working relationships, and in the end best serve the communities we all seek to protect.

Implementation:

The Strategic Fire Plan as currently conceived is intended to be a “living document”. Its content is based on the real world needs of communities and agencies. As such our Plan, and the associated CalMapper database, will be the “file cabinet” in which all our efforts will be stored. But “stored” is really a misrepresentation in that all mitigation projects and educational efforts will be routinely monitored and documented; they will not be filed away out of mind. Starting with the germ of a project idea and the initial Project Validation Checklist, continuing through the development of the project and its documentation in the Project Description form, continuing further through to completion and designation as “in maintenance”, each project will be represented within the Plan, and status updates will be inserted throughout the life of the project. In this manner it will serve as more than just a “living document”, but will in fact be a “working document” – the “file” to which those engaged in projects and programs return to repeatedly throughout the life of any given project.

It is the also the intent that the Unit PFE position be re-dedicated to the original intent of the position; that of “administrator” of the Unit Strategic Fire Plan. One important benefit of this will be the continuing support and encouragement offered field Officers toward maintaining their engagement in the Plan throughout the year, rather than just for a couple months during annual updates.

Moving Forward By Moving Backward

The recognition that the foothill grass and brush lands, the sprawling oak woodlands and the mountain coniferous forests served as the primary source of water for urban and agricultural development throughout the state was one of the earliest motivations for the creation of what is now known as CAL FIRE. It was recognized in the late 1800’s that without protection from fire and unsound timber harvest practices the state’s water supply could be compromised and the pace of economic growth and physical development would be stalled. But it was not until 1919, as a result of the “Weeks Law” of 1911, that the forestry department’s first four rangers, then known as “Weeks Law Patrolmen”, were hired for a four month period covering that summer. None of those first four “rangers” could have possibly imagined the growth of the department and the expansion of its mission.

The 2010 Strategic Fire Plan For California can be interpreted as a step back; a move to return the focus of the agency to its core mission – the protection of California’s watersheds. While the focus seems to be on protecting communities from fire, one may also argue that the Plan encourages the local Units to undertake efforts to protect the watershed from communities. Perhaps the interpretation depends on which side of the fuel break one stands. Every acre of treated ground adjacent to a community also serves to protect hundreds of acres of wildland watershed. Fuel reduction, public education and an aggressive initial attack comprise the essentials of our core mission. This Unit Fire Plan seeks to direct our focus squarely on that mission.

B. Lodge FC - PFE