

SECTION V: PRE FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS

A: DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS

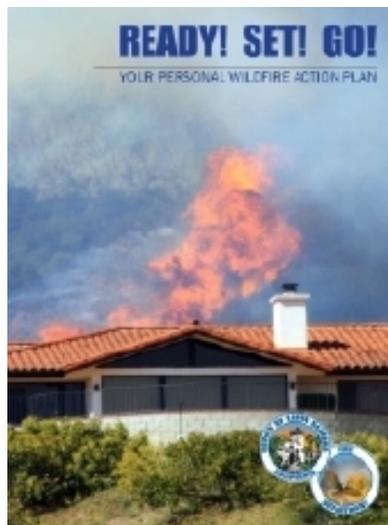
Department Programs

Santa Barbara County Fire has the current department wide programs in place:

- Automatic Vehicle Locator/Mobile Data Computer (AVL/MDC) Program
 - ✓ Installation of hardware on fire department vehicles to aid in managing fire resources in the field and provide emergency responders with up to date information
 - ✓ Provide a platform for maintaining up to date field information and inspection data
- Red Flap Warning Plan
 - ✓ Plan for agency cooperation, enhanced staffing levels, and public notification in the event of an issued “red flag warning” by the National Weather Service or as declared by the Fire Chief



- County Adopted and Approved CWPP (Community Wildfire Protection Plan) Template
 - ✓ Collaboration with County CEO's Office and County Planning and Development
 - ✓ Adopt a CWPP template through the County Board of Supervisors (currently in development)
 - ✓ Establish a core list of stakeholders
- Public Information and Education Programs:
 - ✓ Ready! Set! Go!



- ✓ Fire Safety Trailer Program
 - Provide fire safety training to elementary age children
- ✓ Community Meetings/Fire Safe Council



The Fire Safe Council

- ✓ Santa Barbara County Fire Department Informational Website
 - www.sbcfire.com
 - Provide safety information
 - Hazard, incident updates
 - Defensible space information
 - Tips on hardening structures from the threat of wildfire
- ✓ PSA (public service announcements)
- ✓ Social Media
 - Provide real time updates on incidents
 - Announce Department events and training programs



Administrative Services Division

Training and Safety

- Development of Santa Barbara County Fire Training Plan
- Annual Core Competencies for safety personnel
- Annual wildland training (multijurisdictional)
- Development of Training Manuals

Information Technology

- Information dissemination and network management
 - ✓ Department wide support
 - ✓ Public
 - Website hosting and updating

Fire Prevention Services Division

Prevention

- Maintain and apply Fire Department Development Standards to new development
- California Fire Code adoption and amendments through the Santa Barbara County Code of Ordinances
- Assign parcel addressing
- Work collaboratively with County Planning and Development

Investigation

- Goal to investigate 100% of all wildland ignitions

- Code enforcement
- Building and business inspections
- Issuing fire code permits

Vegetation Management

- Defensible Space Program
 - Enforcement of PRC 4291
- GIS
 - Maintain County Fire spatial database
 - Work collaboratively with other County Departments to share spatial data and maintain enterprise geodatabase
- Wildland Preplan mapping project
 - Creation of large format aerial maps focusing on LRA and SRA areas in the County accompanied by preplan documentation for identified at risk communities
 - Figure 9 represents the preplan project area and the associated zone blocks

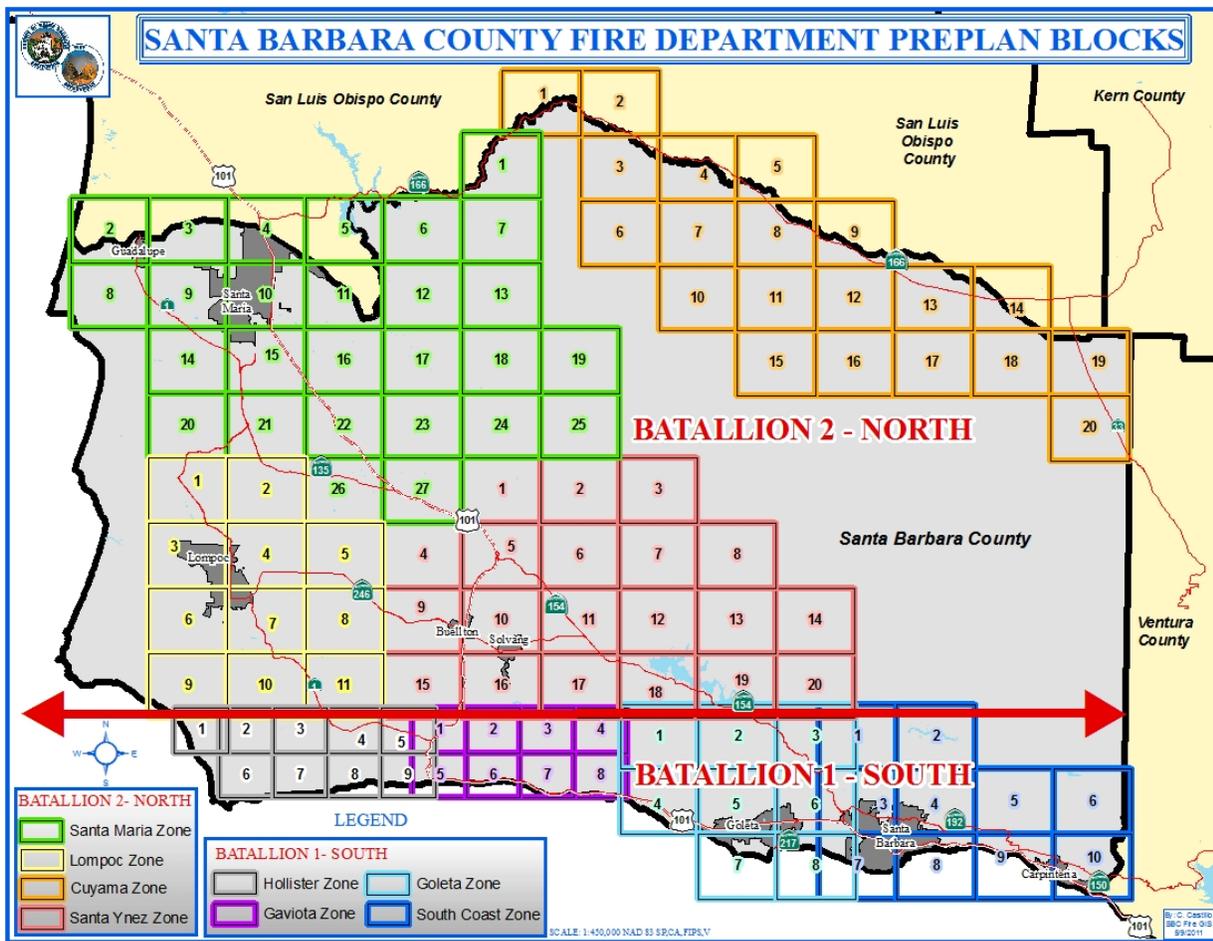


Figure 9

- Hazard Reduction Burn Permit program
 - Permit process so homeowners living in or adjacent to SRA lands can burn piles of hazardous fuels
- Fire Safe Council outreach

- Vegetation Management Captain sits on the Santa Barbara County Fire Safe Council Board
- Community education and outreach
- Vegetation Management Projects
 - At risk communities are a priority
 - Grant funding
- Collaboration with Range Improvement Association
 - Mutually beneficial projects
- Fire Plan updating
 - Assist communities develop CWPPs and/or fire management plans
 - Creation and update of County plans (Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Santa Barbara County Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan)

Operations Division

Santa Barbara County is divided into two geographical Battalions, as seen in figure 9. Separated by the Santa Ynez Mountain Range, Battalion 1 is to the south and Battalion 2 is to the north. Figure 10 represents the current direct protection areas for the County.

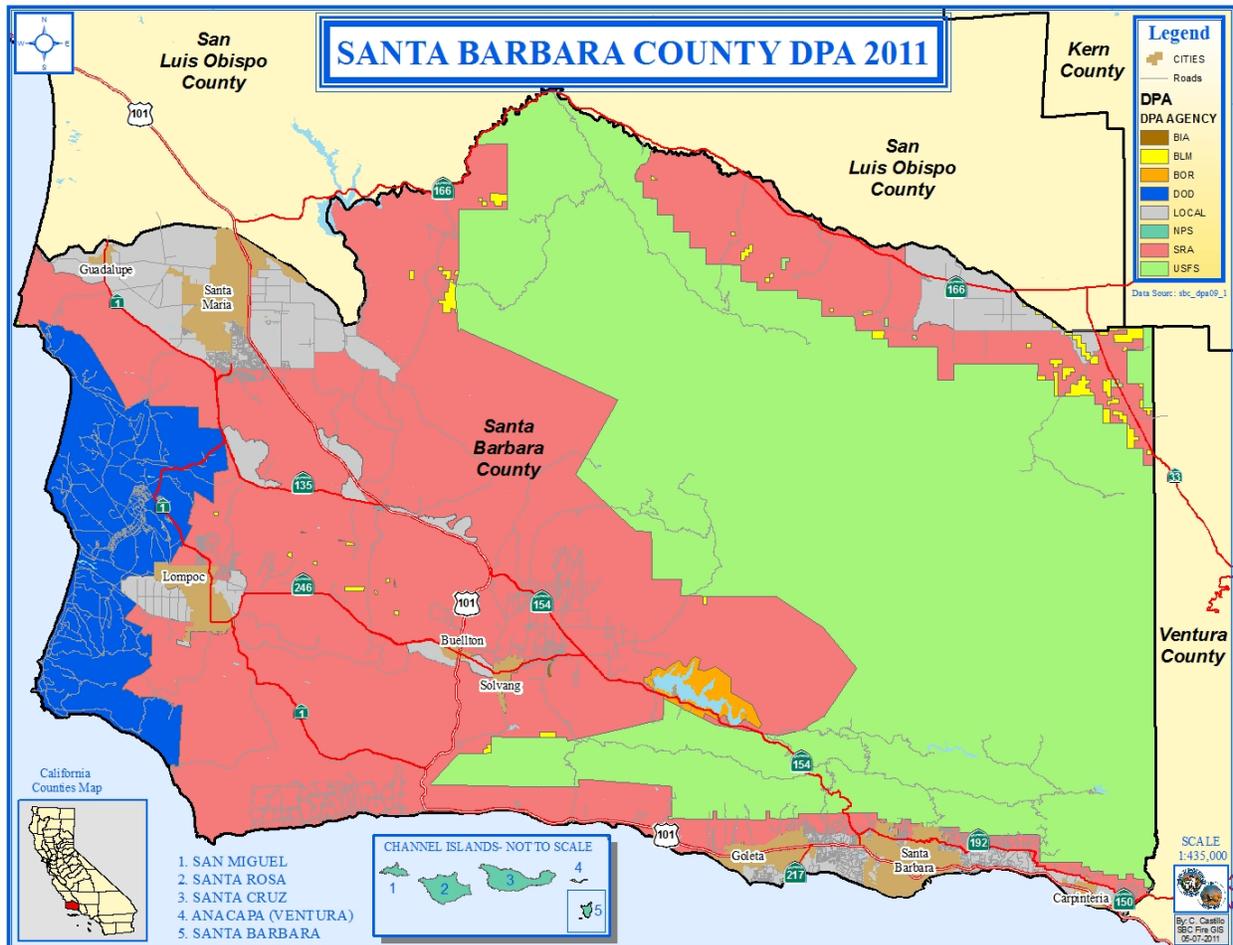


Figure 10

Battalion 1

Battalion 1 is characterized by cities located along the coast and communities sprawling into the southern slopes of the Santa Ynez Mountain Range as well as the rural community of Hollister Ranch to the west. Battalion 1 is served by seven County fire stations distributed throughout the unincorporated areas of the County and the City of Goleta.

The predominate vegetation type in the wildland areas is chaparral and costal sage scrub. With the recent fires in 2008 and 2009, approximately 20,000 acres of chaparral were consumed above the cities of Goleta and Santa Barbara. Even with the recent fires, the majority of the Santa Ynez front country has not been subject to fire in over forty plus years. The Hollister Ranch community located between Highway 101 to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west has no reported major fire history (fires over 200 acres). The fuel beds are continuous and contain a high percentage of dead and down fuel.

Weather in Battalion 1 is typical to other coastal communities of central and southern California. Sunny skies are common along the coast, although seasonal low clouds and fog occur with some frequency over the Pacific Ocean and in the immediate coastline. Mild temperatures occur throughout the year. Maximum readings in summer average about 80°F with winter minimum temperatures in the 40's. A diurnal wind pattern (land and sea breeze) characterizes most of the area, with onshore winds common in daytime and light offshore winds predominant at night. The many deep canyons running out of the coastal mountains towards the coast therefore tend to catch and concentrate these winds, enhancing the fire threat in warm, dry weather. As mentioned earlier the area is also subject to "sundowner" winds that have contributed to the severity of wildland fires in Battalion 1 including the Paint Fire that occurred in 1990 and resulted in one death and the loss of 673 homes, the Gap Fire in 2008 that burned 9,433 acres above the city of Goleta, the Tea Fire in 2009 that destroyed 210 homes, and the Jesusita Fire in 2009 that destroyed 80 homes.

Battalion 2

Unlike Battalion 1, Battalion 2 is spread out over a very large area and consists of smaller rural communities like Los Alamos, Sisquoc, and Cuyama. Battalion 2 is served by nine County fire stations; one in the city of Solvang and one in the city of Buellton, the other seven are distributed throughout the unincorporated areas of the County.

Vegetation in Battalion 2 varies from vineyards, agricultural fields, grass covered range land and oak woodlands in the valleys, and chaparral and brush that cover the slopes of Santa Ynez, Sierra Madre, and San Rafael Mountains. The wildland areas are dominated by chaparral, which poses the most widespread wildland fuel threat. The La Brea Fire in 2009 and the Zaca Fire in 2007 (California's second largest wildfire to date) combined burned in excess of 331,000 acres in the backcountry of the County, which was dominated by chaparral. Many of the County's rural communities are located in areas surrounded by vegetation that is in the same condition as the fuels that burned in these two large wildfires.

Weather in Battalion 2 is a typical semi-arid Mediterranean climate. There can be a large variation in weather conditions from the Santa Maria and Lompoc Valleys which are in close proximity to the coast and the Cuyama Valley which is in the far north east corner of the County. Maximum temperatures can reach 105°F in the interior valleys and minimum temperatures can drop to the low 30's. The mountainous terrain also lends itself to strong winds that follow diurnal patterns. When the valleys and slopes are preheated during hot summer days it results in strong upvalley and upslope winds that typically peak in the afternoon creating hazardous fire weather conditions.

Programs

Engine Companies

- Respond to emergencies
- Perform building inspections
- Perform defensible space inspections
- Perform defensible space consultations at the request of residents

Air Operations

- Provide aerial reconnaissance
- Fire suppression
- Rescue operations

Construction Section

- Fire Access Road Program
 - Work collaboratively with land owners to ensure key unimproved roads throughout the County are accessible to firefighting forces
- Work with Vegetation Management Section on vegetation management projects in LRA and SRA lands
- Fire suppression

Fuels Crew

- Work with Vegetation Management Section on vegetation management projects in LRA and SRA lands
- Work collaboratively with other County Agencies for hazardous fuels reduction on County owned properties (maintain clearance around key infrastructure such as communication sites)
- Work with Construction Section to maintain accessibility of unimproved roads throughout the County to firefighting resources