

SECTION V: PRE FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS

A: DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS

Prevention Battalion

The Fire Prevention Bureau is involved in the broad spectrum of fire prevention activities in and outside of the unit. The Fire Prevention Bureau in conjunction with Volunteers in Prevention (VIP's) and other unit staff, participate in more than 4,000 hours of public education activities, contacting more than 13,000 people annually. In 2010, Volunteers in Prevention and other unit personnel accomplish 1,200 defensible space inspections, with approximately 62 violations reported during the year. The Fire Prevention Bureau has taken an active role in the support of local Fire Safe Councils, partnering with them to standardize our defensible space and fire safety messages. The Fire Prevention Bureau was active in civil cost recovery at the unit level, recovering \$146,386.31. The Fire Prevention Bureau opened cases with approximately 51 fires, resulting in positive outcomes for civil cost recovery and law enforcement.

In 2010 the unit was significantly slower with wildland fire activity, for a total of 246 fires. A total of 3,331 defensible space inspections were completed in 2010 making up approximately 8% of the regions annual total of 43,301 inspections.

The Unit made a marked improvement in completion of preliminary fire investigations, ending the year with a 96% completion rate as opposed to 78% the previous year. Of the 107 officers completing reports in 2010, on average 2.88 reports were completed per officer. The quality of preliminary fire investigations increased as well during this period. The number of undetermined fire causes were reduced during 2010 to 24% from 28% the previous year. Undetermined still remains the Unit's primary cause of fires.

The Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit participated in approximately 2,691 hours of prevention education activities making up 10% of the region's annual 26,458 hours.

Training Bureau

The LNU Training Bureau administers the training programs for all personnel in the CAL FIRE Sonoma-Lake Napa Unit. The Unit Training Bureau coordinates both Unit training and Region training, administers JAC training, maintains training and DMV records, facilitates State Fire Marshal certifications and works cooperatively with numerous training agencies, colleges and neighboring departments.

Camp Programs

Both Delta and Konocti Conservation Camps are actively involved in several fuels reduction projects within the Unit.

Delta Camp is working on three fuels reduction projects in the South Division as part of the Cooperative Fire Assistance Grant and Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (Berryessa Estates, Circle Oaks, Dry Creek-Lakoya). In the East Division(Solano County) crews will be working on shaded fuel breaks in the area known as Twin Sisters. Delta Camp also works on fuels reduction projects in neighboring communities and the Santa Clara Unit (East Bay Regional Parks, with multiple locations of shaded fuel breaks).

Konocti Camp is also assisting with the Cooperative Fire Assistance Grant working on two projects (Berryessa Estates and Las Posadas) and a shaded fuel break in Lake County on Soda Bay Road. Konocti Camp has recently finished a shaded fuel break on Bottle Rock Road in Lake County.

Fuels, Weather, Topography and Fire History per Division

North Division

Lake County

Fuels

There are a wide range of fuels in the North Division. Fuels range from Tule wetland and grass/oak woodland to decadent chaparral, to mixed conifer forests. The higher elevations are generally timbered while lower elevations tend to be chaparral or grassy oak woodland. Due to aggressive fire suppression tactics and lack of wildland fuels reduction, both the vertical arrangement and horizontal continuity of fuels will promote rapid fire growth. Where vineyards have been established in place of chaparral brush fields they act as effective fuel breaks. Where vineyards have gone fallow, left untended, the fire will still spread through the vineyard. Critical concerns are when the chaparral dead-to-live ratio exceeds 50%, and live fuel moisture drops to near 60% in late summer and early Fall.

Weather

The weather is generally warm and dry during the day with good relative humidity recovery at night. Mid slope elevations may see poor humidity recovery due to inversions. Critical weather patterns are generally those that have higher temperatures and dryer conditions with poor nighttime humidity recovery such as North and East winds. When these conditions combine with the topography, expect extreme rates of spread, especially along exposed ridges and through constricted areas. Peak summer day temperatures generally range from 90-110 F, with relative humidity ranging between 10 – 25%. Temperatures and humidity moderate and winds tend to increase immediately adjacent to Clearlake. Gradient winds are generally out of the west or northwest at 5-10 mph,

Topography

Elevation with the North Division ranges from 1500 feet near lake level to peaks reaching 5000 to 7000 feet on the Mendocino National Forest. The topography consists of broad rounded trending ridges running North/South bifurcating around Clearlake. Slopes generally increase as you go from ridgeline to drainage bottom. Steep slopes, drainages and timber fuels can significantly hinder firefighting efforts. Vineyards, roads and other manmade features provide a limited network of barriers that assist firefighting efforts. Road access off of well developed county roads can be sketchy at times with rough, narrow, often steep and rocky roads.

Fire History

Lake County has a significant fire history. Most of the county has been covered by large fire fires in the last several decades. The largest known fire was the human caused Fork Fire that started in Middle Creek on the border of the Mendocino National Forest just North of Upperville. The fire burned more than 83,000 acres of brush and timber in 1996. Previous to the Fork Fire was the Mendenhall Fire in 1986 which also started on the Mendocino National Forest by lightning and burned nearly 67,000 acres. These large fires and many others burned under relatively normal northwest flow conditions. Fires in the geysers area have most recently burned under more extreme north and northeast wind conditions threatening power grid infrastructure. The eastern portion of the county is also greatly influenced by north and north east winds as the winds align with the topography on Walker ridge.

There is a Remote Automated Weather Station (Konocti RAWS) located at Konocti Conservation Camp. The station gives a good indication of current weather conditions. It can be accessed at <http://raws.wrh.noaa.gov/roman/>.

South Division

Napa County

Fuels

There are a wide range of fuels in the South Division. Fuels range from grass/oak woodland to 15 – 50 year old chaparral, to redwood forests, to stands of decadent brush and timber over 50 years old. Due to fire suppression and lack of aggressive wildland fuels management, both the vertical arrangement and horizontal continuity of fuels will promote rapid fire growth. These same conditions will also hinder conventional fire suppression tactics. Vertical arrangement is conducive to passive (single tree torching), and active crown fires. Where vineyards have been established, if a “no-till” management approach (mandated on certain slopes) has been implemented, the fire will still spread through the vineyard. Critical concerns are when the chaparral dead-to-live ratio exceeds 50%, and live fuel moisture approaches 60% in late Summer and early Fall.

Weather

The weather is generally warm and dry during the day with good relative humidity recovery at night helped by the coastal onshore flow. Fog often returns to the area each night from the south, and dissipates by 1100 hours the following morning. If a critical weather pattern exists such as a Foehn North Wind, or a cold front passage, the daily diurnal weather variation will be subdued. If these critical weather patterns align with the topography, expect extreme rates of spread, especially along exposed ridges and through constricted areas. Peak summer day temperatures are generally 80 – 90o F, with relative humidity ranging between 20 – 35%. Gradient winds are generally out of the S/SW 5-10 mph, strengthening in the afternoon with a 10-15 mph wind in the late afternoon diminishing by dark. Upper elevations experience East winds in the early afternoon (1400 hours) between 5 – 10 mph. Also, be aware of normal Northwest winds (downslope/downvalley) after dark as the flow reverses. There is a Remote Activated Weather Station (RAWS) for this area on the top of Atlas Peak Road approximately 1 mile west of Turtle Rock near Lake Berryessa. This site provides accurate conditions for the entire South Division.

Topography

Elevation with the South Division ranges from 0 – 80% slope with a two dominate North/South orientated ridges. Vineyards and other manmade features provide a network of barriers that will need to be connected to create an effective fireline. There are two main valleys within the South Division that can provide the opportunity for wind to be funneled even under local wind conditions; this situation will be compounded during critical weather conditions.

Fire History

Past fire history on the Western side of the Napa Valley (Dry Creek-Lakoya) is limited with major fires 40 – 70 years ago burning well into Sonoma County within 1-3 days. Eastern slopes have not burned since the 1920s and fuels on the Western aspects are generally lighter drier.

Past fire History on the Eastern side of the Napa Valley is limited with major fires 25-50 years ago burning along the Silverado Trail into Atlas Peak (Silverado Country Club) and from Monticello Road to Wild Horse Valley Road within 1-2 days.

In 1964 a major fire started on Mt. St Helena and burned to Santa Rosa. In the 1960's and again in 2008, fires occurred on and were generally held to, the western aspect between the communities of Angwin and Deer Park.

East Division

Colusa and Yolo Counties

Fuels

There are a wide range of fuels in the East Division. Fuels range from agricultural farmland (wheat, safflower, cut stubble), annual grasses, oak woodland, 15 – 50 year old chaparral, large stands of decadent brush and timber in the higher elevations of the battalion. Due to aggressive fire suppression tactics and lack of aggressive wildland fuels management, both the vertical arrangement and horizontal continuity of fuels, have and will promote rapid fire growth. These same conditions will also hinder conventional fire suppression tactics. Critical concerns are when the chaparral dead-to-live ratio exceeds 50%, and live fuel moisture approaches 60% in late Summer and early Fall. 10 hour fuel moistures average from 4-7, dropping to 3 quite often.

Weather

The weather is generally warm and dry during the day with a slight relative humidity recovery at night. If a critical weather pattern exists such as a Foehn North Wind, or a cold front passage, the daily diurnal weather variation will be subdued. If these critical weather patterns align with the topography, expect extreme rates of spread, especially along exposed ridges and through constricted areas. Peak summer day temperatures are generally 95°-105°F, cooling to 50°-60°F at night, with relative humidity ranging between 20% – 35% or less. Gradient winds are generally out of the N/NW 5-10 mph, strengthening in the afternoon with a 10-15 mph wind in the late afternoon diminishing by dark. Strong evening (2100-0200) winds do occur occasionally in the Capay Valley. Also, be aware of normal winds (down slope/down valley) after dark as the flow reverses.

There is a Remote Automated Weather Station (Brooks RAWs) located at Brooks Fire Station. The station gives a good indication of current weather conditions. It can be accessed at <http://raws.wrh.noaa.gov/roman/>.

Topography

Elevation within the East Division ranges from 250' to 3000' with slopes ranging from 0 – 80%. There are two dominate North/South orientated ridges; Blue Ridge, running from the Yolo/Solano county line north to Rumsey Canyon and Walker Ridge, running from Hwy 20 to central Colusa county. These main ridges keep the coastal influence weather from being a factor. There are also two smaller ridges that can play a significant role to fire spread; Capay Hills and Cortina Ridge. Farmlands, ranches, rural and major roads along with other manmade features provide a network of barriers that will need to be connected to create an effective fire line. Capay Valley and Bear Valley are wide valleys that provide the opportunity for wind to be funneled even under local wind conditions; this situation will be compounded during critical weather conditions.

Fire History

There have been many large and destructive fires in the past in the East Division. Many of the fires have occurred along the Highway 16 corridor through Rumsey Canyon. In recent years these fires have stopped due to local arson arrests. Because of poor access, steep slopes and strong North winds, these fires have burned up to 30,000 acres. Other large fires have occurred along Walker Ridge. Past fires have also occurred along the Highway 20 and Highway 128 corridors.

Solano County

Fuels

There are a wide range of fuels in the Solano County area of LNU ranging from agricultural farmland, annual grasses, oak woodlands intermixed with chemise and coastal chaparral's in the western areas of the Vaca mountains to marshland tules in the East along the Sacramento river delta. Large areas of Solano county fall within the MTZ and offer the potential for structure protection issues if a fire were to start in these areas. Due to aggressive fire suppression efforts and lack of local wildland fuels management, both vertical and horizontal continuity of fuels will and have promoted rapid fire growth. Numerous Riparian zones are located throughout the county as well.

Weather

The weather is generally warm and dry with a great portion of the valley being marine influenced keeping areas to the south west seasonally cooler. With average day time temps ranging from 85 – 105 degrees in the summer, night time lows average to between 50-60 degrees with the marine influence comes a lot of fog which can and does influence temperature dramatically. Daily winds known locally as the Delta breeze range from 5-15 mph from the west act as a cooling effect through out the south west increasing fuel moisture and recoveries. The area is also subject to high foehn winds known as the North wind which range in speed from 25- 75 MPH with these winds expect high rates of spread and control problems.

Topography

Elevations within Solano County range from 21' ASL – 2818' ASL (Mt. Vaca) slopes range from 0% - 80%+. There is one prominent North/South ridge located within the Vaca mountains known as Blue Ridge running from Yolo/Solano counties. There are two topographic features of note within the county, Mt. Vaca and the Montezuma hills. There are numerous ridges located within these areas which influence the landscape dramatically and can and will contribute to fire spread. Narrow canyons and valleys with heavy fuel loading with numerous narrow man made roads offer several control issues, but do offer points to consider as control lines.

Fire History

Solano County does have a history of large wildland fires two of note are the 1965 Kaiser Fire when a fire started in the drought dried seasonal grasses and spread rapidly from Soscol Ridge off Hwy 29 to American Canyon. Reaching a final acreage of 25, 888 the other was the Mix Canyon Fire which reached an approximate 35,000 acres. The fire period of note was in 1965 which was referred to as black Thursday in which the county was under siege from the east to the west with several fires burning at the same time the largest becoming the above noted Kaiser Fire.

West Division

Sonoma County

Fuels

There are a wide range of fuels in the West Division. Approximately the southern 1/3 of the county is grass or oak/woodland, and areas adjacent to the Napa/Sonoma and Lake/Sonoma county lines are knobcone and chaparral. The coastal strip from Bodega north, inland to Graton and Forestville is conifer forests. Fuels range from coastal grasses along the coast to grass/oak woodland to 15 – 50 year old chaparral, to redwood/douglas fir forests, to stands of decadent brush and timber over 50 years old. Sonoma County does have stands of sudden oak death. Due to fire suppression and lack of aggressive wildland fuels management, both the vertical arrangement and horizontal continuity of fuels will promote rapid fire growth. These same conditions will also hinder conventional fire suppression tactics. Vertical arrangement is conducive to passive (single tree torching), and active crown fires. Where vineyards have been established, if a “no-till” management approach has been implemented, the fire will still spread through the vineyard. Critical concerns are when the chaparral dead-to-live ratio exceeds 50%, and live fuel moisture approaches 60% in late Summer and early Fall.

Weather

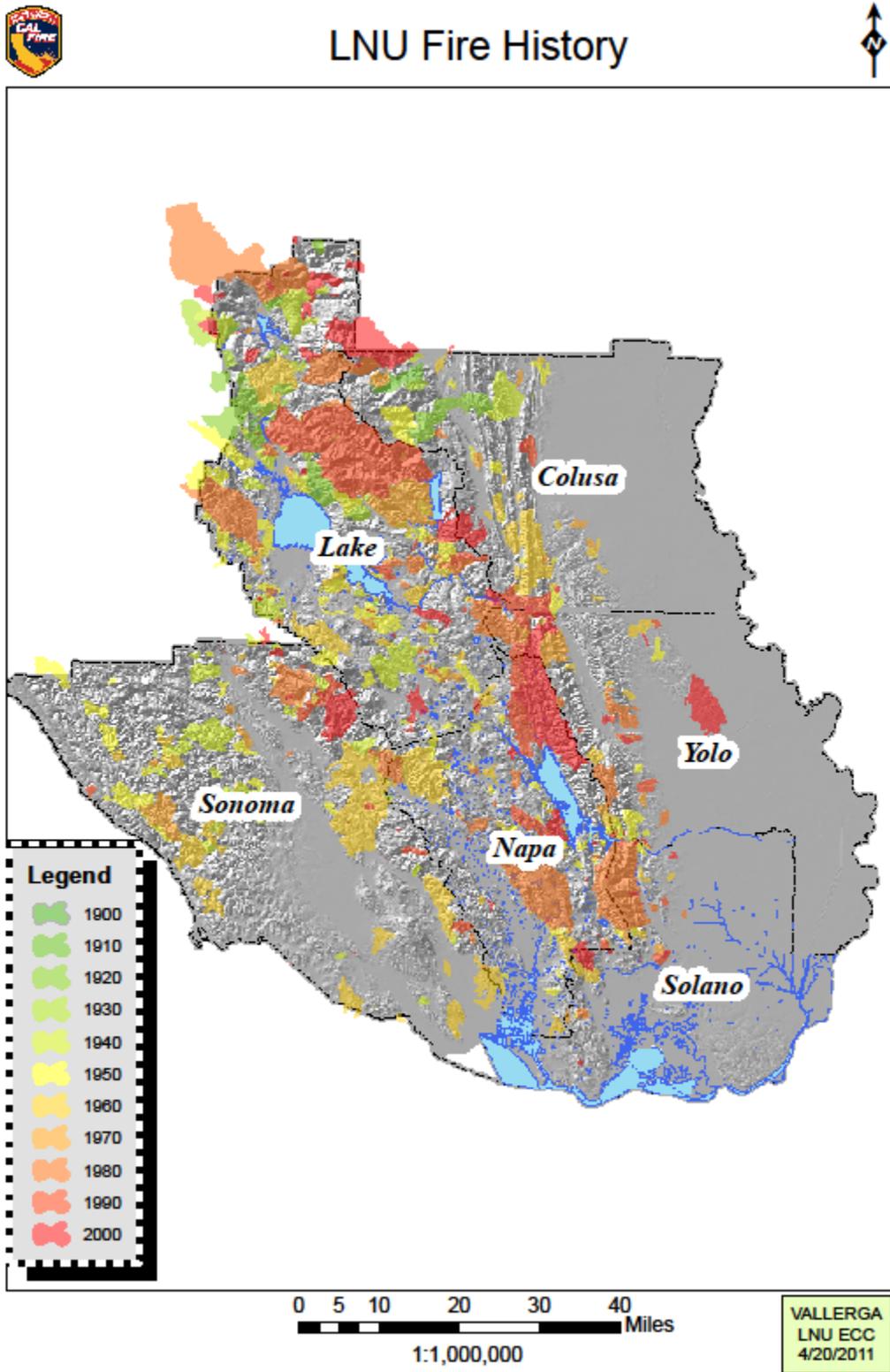
The weather is generally warm and dry during the day with good relative humidity recovery at night helped by the coastal onshore flow. Fog often returns to the area each night from the south, and dissipates by 1100 hours the following morning. The fog layer depth is between 1,000 and 1,500 feet, so elevations above this do not experience fog. If a critical weather pattern exists such as a North Wind, or a cold front passage, the daily diurnal weather variation will be subdued. If these critical weather patterns align with the topography, expect extreme rates of spread, especially along exposed ridges and through constricted areas. Peak summer day temperatures are generally 80 – 100o F, with relative humidity ranging between 20 – 35%. Gradient winds are generally out of the S/SW 5-10 mph, strengthening in the afternoon with a 10-15 mph wind in the late afternoon diminishing by dark. Upper elevations experience East winds in the early afternoon (1400 hours) between 5 – 10 mph. Also, be aware of normal Northwest winds (downslope/downvalley) after dark as the flow reverses. There is a Remote Activated Weather Station (RAWS) located in the NE corner of the Division in the “Geysers” area and in the Santa Rosa plain. These sites provide accurate conditions for the interior of the West Division. There is also a private lookout (Pole Mtn) located midway along the coast between Mendocino and Marin counties. Their weather observations help fill in the coastal strip area for fire weather for the West Division.

Topography

Elevation within the West Division ranges from sea level – 4,500 feet. Slopes range from 0-80% throughout the Division. Vineyards and other manmade features provide a network of barriers that will need to be connected to create an effective fireline. In the western and northwestern portions of the county there are not a lot of barriers. There is one main valley within the West Division that can provide the opportunity for wind to be funneled even under local wind conditions; this situation will be compounded during critical weather conditions.

Fire History

Past fire history on the Western side of the Santa Rosa Plain is limited with major fires 30 – 70 years ago in connection to the logging industry and more personnel being in the woods. Past fire History on the Eastern side of the Santa Rosa Plain consists of major fires approximately every 10-12 years mostly occurring in the Geysers area consisting of 10,000-12,000 acres. There have been major fires in the Sonoma area also, although to a lesser degree. In 1964 a major fire started on Mt. St Helena and burned in to the Santa Rosa area. Most of the significant fires have burned under critical fire weather conditions (North winds), but the possibility exists for a fuels and topography influenced fire to occur in the late summer and fall periods. The West Division does experience a few lightning caused fires every 3 - 5 years.



Battalion 1410 Santa Rosa (Sonoma County)

Battalion 1410 spans from the Pacific Ocean to the top of Mt. Saint Helena running with the width of Sonoma County, and an elevation difference of over 4,300 feet. The battalion is characterized by a LRA valley floor, the Santa Rosa plain, with SRA on both sides. There are many paid local government fire departments and the largest city in the Unit, Santa Rosa, is located within the battalion. There are three CAL FIRE fire engines, one at Santa Rosa station and two at Occidental.

Every incident becomes multi-agency and often with structures being threatened. The perimeter of the 1964 Hanley fire when placed over the footprint of Santa Rosa City and the adjacent area encompasses over 1,000 structures.

Past Projects

In June of 2003, the West Sonoma Firesafe Council obtained a \$28,000 BLM Community Based Wildfire Prevention Program Grant. This Grant helped to solidify the formation of the Council and to address fuel reduction in the rural area of western Sonoma County surrounding the community of Occidental. The Council used the grant to provide a “free” chipper with operator to residents who cleared vegetation around their residence, a demonstration shaded fuelbreak along Coleman Valley Road, and a community presentation by a fire ecologist. Chipping was done along Joy Road. (The Council area is defined by watersheds and Highway 116, and thus a portion of the Council is in Battalion 1411.) Battalion 1410 had worked with the Foothill Homeowners’ Association to help them understand the risk of fire and the importance of defensible space. He also advised them on areas for fuels reduction and evacuation advice.

The Fountaingrove Homeowners’ Associations I and II held meetings with Battalion 1410 to address their concerns with wildfire. CDF responds to fires in the Fountaingrove area under a mutual threat zone (MTZ) agreement. The area is located adjacent to SRA, and has a high potential for significant dollar loss. The City of Santa Rosa fire department published a fuel reduction plan for the wildland immediately adjacent to the city limits including Annadel State Park. The consultant focused on classifying the fuels and then recommending specific treatment methods. The treatments were then prioritized. It is to be seen if the City can follow through on any fuel reduction as proposed in the plan. There is the potential for the City to work with CDF to accomplish some of the fuel reduction.

Current Projects

Battalion 1410 personnel will work with the local government fire agencies on defensible space projects in conjunction with LE-100 inspection in the SRA. Currently working with Santa Rosa City FD and Rincon Valley FPD on structure protection preplans for the Riebli Rd, Fountain Grove area.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

Future projects will focus on areas identified as high risk/high hazard, support the West Sonoma Fire Safe Council and the City of Santa Rosa. Next Priority for LE-100 program is in the Joy Rd and Gates Rd area.

Battalion 1411 Russian River (Sonoma County)

Battalion 1411, the Russian River Battalion, encompasses the northern Sonoma County coast from Mendocino County to just south of the Russian River, and inland to the Guerneville community. The entire Battalion, approximately 245,000 acres is all CAL FIRE Direct Protection Area, with all being State Responsibility Area except for several small areas of Bureau of Land Management ownership. The dominant fuel model is Mixed Conifer (Light), but fuels range from Coastal prairies to old growth Redwood, and chaparral to small pine plantations.

Battalion 1411 is comprised of three State funded fire stations. These stations house four State fire engines, and a Schedule "A" funded two-person, engine company serving The Sea Ranch area. Battalion 1411 headquarters is at the Hilton fire station located east of Rio Nido along River Road. Hilton fire station also houses two state funded fire engines and a utility vehicle. Cazadero fire station is south of the Cazadero community along Cazadero Highway, staffed with one state funded fire engine. The Sea Ranch community has two fire stations. The "North" fire station is along Highway 1 between Whale Bone Reach and Bosun's Reach, and is not regularly staffed. The "Main" station is State owned, located along Annapolis Road near Verdant View. The Main station is the headquarters for the locally funded engine company, and also is the quarters for one State funded fire engine.

CAL FIRE closed the Black Mountain Conversation Camp, which was located along Fort Ross Road near Brain Ridge Road, in 1992. This camp provided the area with fire crews, on a daily basis, staffed with California Department of Correction and Rehabilitation (CDCR) inmates whom are supervised by CAL FIRE employees. These crews, when not engaged in fire fighting efforts, worked on fuel reduction efforts, government owned properties and buildings, and projects such as clearing roadway right-of-ways. Since the closure of Black Mountain, the nearest camps serving Battalion 1411 are in Mendocino County east of Fort Bragg (Parlin Fork), Solano County near Travis Air Force Base (Delta), and Lake County near Lakeport (Konocti), all several hour drive times. These crews are not a viable option for fuels reduction and other projects in Battalion 1411 due to the extended travel times. Crews also have an increased response time to emergencies unless they are working in other parts of Sonoma County, as is usual during most days of the year.

There have been no large and damaging wildland fires since the Creighton Ridge fire in August of 1978. Most fires are contained and controlled within the first few hours of detection. Because of the amount and type of fuels that wildland fires in Battalion 1411 consume, resources are often required to remain on scene of wildland fires through the night and during the followings days to ensure the fire does not escape established control lines. Prior to the Creighton Ridge fire, significant fires occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, including fires along Highway 116 in the Russian River area. Other notable fire which required an extended commitment of resources were:

- 1993 Gerstle Fire, Salt Point State Park, 460 acres
- 1996 Yardham Fire, The Sea Ranch, 300 acres

Weather along the Coast during the summer months is generally characterized by fog and moderate temperatures. Sunny days are more common during the Spring and Fall season. Fog does usually extend above 1,000 – 1,500 feet, and does not intrude inland past the first ridge. This allows the interior portions of the Battalion to remain warm and dry throughout the day. Some of the canyons are narrow and filled with large trees and can remain cool and moist through the Summer and Fall seasons.

Critical fire weather patterns characterized by hot, dry, and windy conditions are not very common along the Coast, on average, three to four days a year. These conditions will result in rapid fire growth, including crown fires, and spotting. All property owners, residents, and fire fighters need to be prepared for this "rare" event that can result in a large and damaging wildfire. The most damage will occur within the first several hours of the fire as the fire outpaces the deployment of fire suppression resources. Spotting could establish fires in multiple drainages and ignite structures before the fire front reaches them.

The interior portions of the Battalion have conditions that support the development of a large and damaging wildfire such as steep slopes, and accumulation of fuels. This area is sparsely populated with residents understanding the risks of a wildfire. This has resulted in few ignitions and kept the area from experiencing a large and damaging wildfire.

Battalion 1411 has areas of Sudden Oak Death (SOD). Aerial surveys have been conducted by the United State Forest Service, and it appears the rate of infestation has slowed. SOD has killed trees, opened closed canopy forests, and increased the amount of surface fuels. It is unknown exactly how SOD will affected fire behavior, but weakened trees have fallen and blocked roads.

The scenario exists for a wildfire to be burning undetected for a period of time, with difficult access, as a critical fire weather pattern is developing. Another possibility is the passing of a lightning storm resulting in fires that cannot all simultaneously be contained.

Most of the Battalion can be considered remote, as areas away from Highways 1 and 116, and county roads, can be difficult to access because of fire roads that have not been maintained, bridges that cannot support fire apparatus, steep topography, and lack of road signs and posted addresses. Fire suppression resources, other than those that are locally based, are not all familiar with the road network, local landmarks, and fire environment because there are not frequent large and damaging wildfires. This road network will hinder emergency response as well as evacuation of the Public. In some areas, shelter in place, or assembling in temporary refuge areas may be a preferred method instead of evacuations.

The Battalion boundaries are defined by the boundaries of several local government fire agencies.

- The Sea Ranch Volunteer Fire Company
- Annapolis Volunteer Fire Company
- Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company.
- Timber Cove Fire Protection District
- Cazadero Community Service District
- Monte Rio Fire Protection District
- Russian River Fire Protection District

These agencies and CAL FIRE maintain a cooperative working relationship and assist each other on a daily basis. A majority of incidents, regardless of type, in the Battalion result in multi-agency responses including non fire service response. These agencies include:

- California Department of Parks and Recreation
- California Highway Patrol
- Sonoma County Department of Fire and Emergency Services
- Sonoma County Sheriffs Department
- Sonoma County Regional Parks

CAL FIRE is also able to accomplish projects in consultation and coordination with community members and homeowners type associations such as The Timber Cove Homeowners Association (TCHOA), The Sea Ranch Association (TSRA), and FIRESAFE councils at the County and community based level.

There are many State and Regional Parks, and open space preserves in the Battalion. These present issues because there is a lack of fuels management and development of emergency response infrastructure (roads, fire breaks, etc.).

Pole Mountain Lookout is a privately funded lookout post between Muniz Ranch Road and the Cazadero community. The lookout is operated by the Pole Mountain Fire Lookout Incorporation, staffed daily during the summer, and supervised by a CAL FIRE battalion chief. Pole Mountain is able to provide critical early detection of wildland fires in areas lacking cell phone coverage, and are not heavily populated.

Past Projects

Since 1983, the Unit has had a series of VMP projects in The Sea Ranch Area. CAL FIRE staff worked with the TSRA in development of their Fire Management Plan in 1990. Since that plan was adopted, the wildland-urban interface fire problem has evolved with the construction of more homes, an increase in

understory fuels, the invasion of grasslands by shrub species, and a decline in the health of non-native pine trees. TSRA hired a consultant and using their own Association funds have begun to implement fuel reduction projects. Emphasis is placed on the lands adjacent and grasslands west of Highway 1.

In the Timber Cove area, a fuel reduction project funded by BLM through the Community Based Wildfire Prevention Grants Program created a shaded fuelbreak along Ruoff Road between Highway 1 and Timber Cove Road. Ruoff Road transects an area of timbered wildland that has been developed. The road provides access to many homes, and was not passable to two-way traffic in many locations because of the narrow paving and encroaching vegetation. The fuelbreak will provide for evacuation, access for firefighting resources, and a possible "line" to halt a fire. The grant was sponsored through Fire Safe Sonoma, with staff support provided by CAL FIRE and the Sonoma County Department of Fire Emergency Services.

The Fort Ross Volunteer Fire Company has been active in the reduction of fuel loading through coordinated chipping and formation of shaded fuelbreaks, through the same funding mechanism and administration as the Timber Cove area. A California Conservation Corps (CCC) crew was used in place of a private contractor to complete the work. The CCC crew worked with the residents to clear and chip several shaded fuelbreaks.

CAL FIRE personnel continue to advise, and work with The Sea Ranch Association for fuels reduction and defensible space inspections.

Present Projects

CAL FIRE has hosted Community based meetings in The Sea Ranch, Timber Cove, Cazadero, and Armstrong Redwoods area the past summers.

Battalion 1411 personnel post fire preventions signs in high profile locations, conduct defensible space inspections in target areas, maintain a presence at large community events, and participate in many other forms of public education.

Future Projects and Ranking

Battalion 1411 personnel will continue to host community meetings and rotate locations to have exposure to the most amounts of people. The purposes of these meetings are to increase the awareness level of preparing for wildland fire, defensible space, and actions to take during a wildland fire. Other approaches to accomplishing the same goal are being formulated. These include submitting letters and articles to homeowners groups, media, and other publications.

Development of pre-fire response plans and maps for developed submissions and wildland areas with high density structures such as Brushy Ridge Loop in Annapolis, and the Timber Cove area.

Battalion 1411 personnel will also support grants undertaken by Fire Safe Sonoma, and other community groups.

During 2010, Battalion 1411 personnel began working with the California Department of Parks and Recreation to conduct prescribed control burns in the State Parks. The burns were successful. Plans are being formulated to carry out additional control burns in 2011, and expand the burning program. The intent of these burns are to manage fuels in the State Parks, including fuel reduction to reduce fire behavior, and decrease the spread of invasive species. These control burns also offer a training opportunity for CAL FIRE and cooperating agencies, helping us work better together during true emergencies.

Battalion 1412 Glen Ellen/Petaluma (Sonoma County)

Battalion 1412 encompasses southern Sonoma County; the Sonoma Valley and the Petaluma area, separated by Sonoma Mountain. Within the battalion are several full-time local government fire departments as well as volunteer based fire departments. There are two CAL FIRE fire stations, one just west of Petaluma staffed with one fire engine, and the other along Highway 12 south of Kenwood that houses two fire engines and a bulldozer.

Past Projects

Past projects have been funded through BLM's Community Based Wildfire Prevention Grants Program using a variety of methods to get the actual work completed. Near Glen Ellen, a grant was sponsored through Fire Safe Sonoma, to establish a safety corridor and a secondary ingress and egress route in a high hazard area adjacent to Annadel State Park. Another project, also sponsored by Fire Safe Sonoma used Sonoma County work crews to clear roadways that had been overgrown by vegetation. And along five miles Trinity Road in the Mayacamas Mountains east of Glen Ellen, a shaded fuelbreak was created using CAL FIRE Fire Crews, residents, and county work crews. The Trinity Road fuelbreak was funded by the Forest Stewardship, a previous program similar to BLM's Community Based Wildfire Prevention Grant Program. Additionally for the past years 2008-2010, focused LE 100 inspections have been done in the area east of the town of Glen Ellen, in the Cavedale/Trinity road area. Approximately 300 inspections a year have been accomplished in this area.

Present Projects

Present projects consist of small community events. CAL FIRE apparatus and personnel also participate in other community events such as parades in the town of Kenwood, Valley of the Moon and Sonoma.

Each year, CAL FIRE commits fire prevention and suppression resources to large events at Infineon Raceway located near Sears Point along Highway 37. The Raceway holds several races during the summer months that attract over 100,000 spectators.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

The plan is to do a focused LE-100 program in the area to the Northeast of the city of Sonoma. Up to 200 LE-100 will be mailed out to the residents allowing them to do upgrades to their defensible space and then return the self-regulated mailer back. At that time, CAL FIRE personnel will go out and to spot inspections on those returned mailers, and inspect all that were not initially returned.

Battalion 1413 Healdsburg/Cloverdale (Sonoma County)

Northeastern Sonoma County, including the unique Geysers geothermal area, and the United State Army Corps' Lake Sonoma Project, are within Battalion 1413. Most of the battalion is very rural, with only two incorporated cities, Cloverdale and Healdsburg. The burn permit process generates over one hundred public contacts each year, giving Battalion 1413 personnel the opportunity to both educate and inform agricultural industry related personnel and residents about wildfires. The battalion stations are Healdsburg with two engines and a bulldozer, and Cloverdale staffed with two engines.

Past Projects

The battalion has been very busy with pre-fire management programs in the past ranging from vegetation management program (VMP) control burns in the Geysers Geothermal area in Northeast Sonoma County to homeowners working with CAL FIRE and the local fire department to reduce fuels in the Fitch Mountain Area in Healdsburg, the Vineyard Subdivision in Geyserville and the Palomino Lakes subdivision in Cloverdale.

In 2000, the City of Healdsburg Fire Department contacted CAL FIRE for advice on its' growing wildland/urban interface fire hazard, particularly on the City's north and east flanks. This area compromises the steepest and highest elevations in the city, on Fitch Mountain, and area adjacent to it, which is SRA. Working with FireSafe Sonoma, Healdsburg Fire Department, and the Sonoma County Department of Emergency Services, a plan was developed for a multi-phase fire environment modification. Funding was secured through a Western Wildland Urban Interface Grant administered by the USDA Forest Service. During the summer of 2001 and 2002, this project was implemented with LE-100 defensible space inspections, a community chipper program, and the re-establishment of an alternative fire access road. California Conservation Corps (CCC) crews were also used. This area will be targeted again in 2011.

Also in 2002, 2005, 2007 and 2008 approximately 200 acres a year was burned on the CalPine VMP during with winter months.

In the Palomino Lakes subdivision, CAL FIRE and the Cloverdale Fire Protection District coordinated with the Palomino Homeowners' Association to reduce fuel loading. The Palomino Lakes subdivision has experienced damaging fires in the past. Private contractors were used to clear vegetation along roads, and chip over seventy-five cubic yards of vegetation. Along with the work, a community meeting was held.

At the Lake Sonoma Project, a VMP burn was completed in November of 2002 after more than fifteen years of planning. CAL FIRE maintains an agreement with the Army Corps for wildland fire protection. Each year under this agreement, a meeting is held to discuss the contract. Part of CAL FIRE's responsibility is to train the Army Corps' staff in wildland firefighting, discuss fire prevention issues, and pre-plan emergency response. Much of the lake's campgrounds are remote and access is only via a boat and/or fire roads. CAL FIRE fire crews are used to construct precautionary handlines around the campsites prior to fire season, and bulldozers and graders are used to maintain the fire roads on a rotating basis. A fire prevention display is kept at the visitors' center as well as a fire prevention sign and fire danger rating sign along the roadway leading to the lake's main access. Each year CAL FIRE coordinates and participates in burning off the 80 acre dam face with many local departments participating, making it a valuable training tool for all.

The Battalion Chief works closely with local government cooperators, annually holding a multi-agency drill that replicates a wildland-urban interface wildfire response. This event while providing training for CAL FIRE and local government personnel increases wildfire awareness and prevention in the community in which the drill is held. The image of a fire engine backed in a driveway, with fire fighters in full personnel protective equipment and fire hoses deployed generates discussion amongst homeowners and CAL

FIRE. Additional benefits include area orientation and pre-planning for fire fighters, the opportunity for homeowners to approach fire fighters, and for personnel from different fire departments the opportunity to interact.

Battalion 1413 personnel also complete over 200 LE-100 defensible space inspections each year. The Battalion Chief targets an area for each station to complete inspections, using direct mailers asking for volunteer compliance or self-inspection. CAL FIRE personnel then complete follow-up work to ensure compliance. This LE-100 approach in conjunction with the aforementioned multi-agency drill bodes well for promoting the concept of defensible space in the designated area.

Present Projects

Battalion 1413 is working with CalPine to continue the VMP burning projects on the lands they control. Brush species will be targeted with the burning most likely to occur in the fall, early winter and located close to the infrastructure (structures and powerlines) in the Geothermal area.

Battalion 1413 personnel actively participate in community events, such as the Healdsburg Future Farms of America (FFA) parade held on Memorial Weekend of each year and the Cloverdale Citrus parade held in February.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

Upcoming focus will be on the Fitch Mtn. area in Healdsburg and the Pine Mountain area in Cloverdale. The current Battalion Chief has met with homeowner groups in both areas numerous times and have prepared them for what to expect for the LE-100 program and future inspections and how to prepare their homes if a fire is in their area. Multi-agency drills will be held in the Fitch Mtn. area as well as the Pine Mtn. area in the coming years.

Battalion 1414 St. Helena (Napa County)

Battalion 1414 covers northern Napa County from the small community of Rutherford to the top of Mt. St. Helena and east to Angwin. Highway 29 is the major traffic corridor through the battalion. Las Posadas State Forest is within the confines of the battalion, and there is a fire station on the forest property with one fire engine. Other CAL FIRE fire resources in the battalion are two CAL FIRE fire engines, a bulldozer, and a CAL FIRE Schedule "A" funded 2 person engine company at St. Helena.

Many contacts with the public are generated through the burn permit process. Most of the Napa Valley floor, and some of the hillsides, are planted with grapevines. This industry has a heavy reliance on burning to dispose of agricultural trimmings.

Battalions 1414, 1415 and 1416, assist Napa County Fire Department volunteer fire companies. Assigned to Battalion 1414 are Deer Park, Angwin, and Rutherford. St. Helena and Calistoga cities also have their own organized fire departments and respond with CAL FIRE daily to incidents. All three battalions, are included in the Napa FIREWISE program, a cooperative effort between CAL FIRE, Napa City, Napa County, Resource Conservation District, and local FireSafe Councils.

Past Projects

A majority of past projects have been in the wildland-urban interface areas on the west aspect of the Napa County. There are two communities, Deer Park and Angwin, and many other clusters of homes in the wildland environment.

The Pacific Union College VMP (Rx North-049-LNU) was located in the wildland urban interface area just to the north and east of the town of Angwin. The project's objective was to reduce the flashy fuel accumulation near structures and other assets at risk while protecting timber and wildlife resources. The primary method to accomplish this objective was through manual and mechanical treatment using CAL FIRE Fire Crews from Konocti Conservation Camp. Fuels were removed manually and either chipped, piled and burned, or broadcast burned. Over one hundred acres were treated, including the Howell Mountain Road corridor.

St. Helena Hospital VMP (Rx North-051-LNU) was adjacent to the grounds of St. Helena Hospital, a steep hillside complex in the community of Deer Park. The objective of this project was to reduce the heavy brush fuel load that could contribute to a fast moving, high intensity wildfire that would endanger a major health care complex and the surrounding residential communities. Work was performed by CAL FIRE Fire Crews from Konocti Conservation Camp to prune trees, cut brush, and remove dead woody ground material. Removed fuels are chipped and spread onsite, or burned in small piles during the winter months. Eighty acres were treated.

In the early 1990's a VMP project was completed in the Crestmont area of Deer Park. The Deer Fire of 2008 burnt in the footprint of this project and assisted with fire suppression efforts.

The small neighborhood of Madrone Knolls which is located just off of and above Silverado Trail, has worked with CAL FIRE to establish a shaded fuelbreak using personnel from the Civilian Conservation Corps. The intent is to use periodic grazing with goats to maintain the shaded fuelbreak. Silverado Trail parallels Highway 29 on the east side of Napa Valley, and as such attracts motorists attempting to avoid traffic congestion on Highway 29. These motorists represent possible wildfire ignitions that would burn uphill into the Madrone Knolls area.

Present Projects

The most prominent present project is the development of the "Angwin/Deer Park Pre-Attack Fire Plan." This includes the development of proposed Contingency Areas for the containment of wildfires. Also included in this plan are strategy and tactics, staging areas, command and tactical frequencies, and other information critical to containing and suppressing a wildland fire in the Angwin and Deer Park Communities.

Angwin and Deer Park are participating in the Napa County FIREWISE chipping program.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

Future project priorities include the continuation or extension of the use of goats for fuel reduction, Napa FIREWISE chipping program, and the use of CAL FIRE Fire Crews to maintain and extend the interface clearance.

Battalion 1414 is placing emphasis on the reduction of fuels in Los Posadas State Forest due to its' current condition and proximity to structures.

Battalion 1415 Lake Berryessa (Napa County)

The eastern edge of Napa County including Lake Berryessa makes up the LNU South Division portion of Battalion 1415. Lake Berryessa is a recreational destination and generates many medical related calls for service and the potential for large wildfires. Surrounding the lake, and along the roadways leading to the lake, are rural subdivisions, such as Circle Oaks, Berryessa Highlands and the Berryessa Estates, which increase the assets at risk.

There are two CAL FIRE stations in Battalion 1415, Spanish Flat with two fire engines and a bulldozer near Lake Berryessa and a single engine station on Gordon Valley Road near the Napa/Solano county line.

Battalion 1415 administers the volunteer fire companies of Pope Valley, Capell Valley, and Gordon Valley. CAL FIRE Spanish Flat Station is the only paid fire department in this area of Napa County.

Past Projects

Past projects have been around two of the developed subdivisions. In the 338-lot Circle Oaks subdivision, a multi-year fuel modification project is being funded, in part, by the BLM through the Community-Based Wildfire Prevention Grants Program. Circle Oaks represents the largest concentration of people and houses in Napa County. In 2002 they completed a Fire Safe and Fuel Management Plan.

The Circle Oaks subdivision is located along Highway 121 between the City of Napa and Lake Berryessa. The fuel modification aims at making it possible to contain vegetation fires that start within the subdivision to the subdivision, and to protect the subdivision from any encroaching wildfire. Shaded fuel-breaks were created along Napa County roadway easements. Over 2,500 tons of fuels have been removed from the perimeter greenbelt defensible space zone, and almost 300 tons of additional vegetation from vacant lots. An estimated 800 cubic yards of vegetation was removed from around structures following a LE-100 defensible space inspection program, and right-of-way clearance was accomplished along seven miles of road.

Berryessa Estates is a remote subdivision in the northeastern portion of Napa County consisting of 160 lots. Due to many factors including remote location causing long response times, one-way access, high-density flammable fuels with intermixed structures, this subdivision has been designated as an area of concern regarding wildfire. CAL FIRE personnel along with Pope Valley volunteers, and the Napa County Road Department worked with the Berryessa Estates Homeowners Association (BEHOA) to have members of the Association clear fuels around their homes to then be chipped. A total of fifty piles were chipped. The BEHOA has expressed interest in created a fire safe council.

Present Projects

Berryessa Estates, Circle Oaks, and now Berryessa Highlands are the high density high wild fire risk communities that continue to need the most hazard reduction attention in the battalion. All three areas are heavily supported by the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFF) and the LNU Pre-Fire Engineering division through pre-planning, the free chipping service, and grant awards.

The community of Berryessa Estates Fire Safe Council has spent the last five years working very hard to improve the wildland fire survivability of their community. With strong support from NCFF, BLM, and CAL FIRE, they are nearing completion of a 2 mile by 100 foot wide fuel break around the entire community that is the largest fuel break of its kind in Napa County. The fuel break was accomplished by the combined use of a mechanical brush masticator, CAL FIRE inmate fire crews, and supported by the NCFF chipping program. Project funding is a combination of direct BLM funds, along with NCFF and the California Fire Safe Council sponsored federal grant money. The community of Berryessa Estates through NCFF was also able to secure a federal grant as well. With the help of Circle Oaks, they also began using an automated calling tree service (Call-Em-All) to help with fire safety communication, Fire Safe Council announcements, and emergency notification.

Circle Oaks has continued to be the most progressive community with the longest history of intense wildland fire hazard mitigation efforts in Napa County. Through the leadership of their homes association and fire safe committee, along with NCCFF and CAL FIRE, they have become the first and only nationally recognized Firewise USA Community in the County. They have on-going success with federal grant funding awards, along with expanding and maintaining fuel reduction projects, and have since completed and official CWPP. Their latest project is a continuous shaded fuel break surrounding the entire subdivision. Circle Oaks continues to do their own defensible space inspections with the help of CAL FIRE/ Napa Co Fire as needed, and they do a great job of wildland fire safety and education with the residents. The automated calling tree service continues to be a good tool in communicating their fire safety related messages.

Berryessa Highlands located at the South end of the Lake Berryessa, has become the latest community in the battalion to concentrate on improving wildland fire safety. In a cooperative effort with the NCCFF, CAL FIRE, US Bureau of Reclamation, Napa County Public Works, and a core group of residents, the Berryessa Highlands Fire Safe Council was formed in 2011. This group prioritized the fire safe projects in the area, is working on creating a CWPP, and will pursue future grant funding. The first fuel projects completed included an infrastructure (community water treatment plant) fuel break, community entrance road side fuel break, and strategic interior one hundred foot fuel breaks below homes on steep slopes. CAL FIRE inmate hand crews were used on these projects with the support of the NCCFF chipper and grant funding. The 100 foot fuel break started 100 feet below the homes with the residents being responsible for their required defensible space. Due to the steep slope and chimneys it was determined that an additional one hundred feet was needed. Permission was received from the large parcel owner and notification was made to the nearby subdivision parcel owners that inmate would be doing the work with a second crew supervisor present. The priority for these interior fuel projects is to clear the brush first on the south and west slopes then provide shaded fuel breaks under the oaks on the north and east slopes.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

Priority for projects will continue to be placed on those sponsored or supported by the Napa Communities Firewise Foundation (NCCFF), and in communities that show an interest in taking the lead to improve their fire safety. With federal grant funding being less available through the NCCFF it must become a priority for each of the communities in the battalion to assist with fundraising in order to continue the support of programs like the free residential chipping.

Controlled burns and fuel break projects are being planned between CAL FIRE, The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), and The Department of Fish and Game around Lake Berryessa. Recently the BOR has transitioned the recreational areas around the lake to a more traditional recreational and less permanent resident model. The Pensus Group has won the concessioner's bid to manage the recreational facilities. There is on-going planning and negotiations with the BOR and Pensus to address the changing wildland fire and emergency operations requirements for the future of the lake as well.

Battalion 1416 Napa/Yountville (Napa County)

Battalion 1416 is a “combination” battalion in that it consists of both CAL FIRE staffed Schedule “A” county owned structural fire engines and a truck, and CAL FIRE wildland orientated fire engines. Even though they are funded through different sources, the day-to-day operations are seamless. Three facilities are in the battalion. Yountville station, near the Yountville Veterans Home, houses a Schedule “A” structural fire engine and ladder truck. Napa station is housed with a Schedule “A” structural fire engine and a CAL FIRE fire engine, and Greenwood Ranch, near the Napa County airport, staffed with a Schedule “A” structural fire engine and a CAL FIRE fire engine.

Dry Creek-Lokoya, Carneros and Soda Canyon volunteer fire companies are assigned to Battalion 1416. Career fire departments within the Battalion are Napa City, American Canyon Fire Protection District, and Napa State Hospital.

The Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council is located in the battalion. It incorporates the same space as the Dry Creek-Lokoya volunteer fire company, or the mountainous terrain west of Yountville near the Napa-Sonoma county line. The volunteer fire company provides office space and supports the Council. The Council has received two grants, one for startup supplies such as office supplies and equipment, letterhead, mapping services, and to conduct community forums. The second was for a chipper program, which is described under past projects.

Past Projects

In the past, following LE-100 defensible space inspections, a community chipper program was completed using funds from a BLM grant. The inspections along with public education, strived at getting voluntary compliance with defensible space laws. Fifty-two piles were produced by local residents and chipped by a team consisting of CAL FIRE, Napa County Fire Department, Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council, Napa County Road Department, and Civilian Conservation Corps personnel.

Present Projects

All present projects are being administered through the Napa FIREWISE program and the Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

As with the present projects, future projects and their associated ranking are being administered through the Napa FIREWISE program and the Mt. Veeder Fire Safe Council.

Battalion 1417 Middletown (Lake County)

Battalion 17 covers most of the southern portion of Lake County. A large portion of the battalion is also the South Lake Fire Protection District which is a schedule "A" contract with Cal Fire. The District also has the South Lake County Fire Safe Council. Highway 29 is the major traffic corridor through the Battalion with heavy commuter traffic to Sonoma and Napa counties.

The CAL FIRE facility in this battalion is Middletown Station, equipped with two engines and a dozer. The cooperative fire protection contract with the South Lake Fire Protection District to staff three Schedule "A" stations and one Volunteer station. Two paramedic units one near Cobb and the other in the Hidden Valley Lake subdivision are staff utilizing CAL FIRE paramedics. The district operates two additional fire stations using a combination of career and volunteers to staff.

This South Lake County Fire Safe Council is active. It covers an area of approximately 258 square miles. They have received funds through BLM several times over the past few years for various projects. The Council coordinates a chipping program, community meetings, public service announcements, fire prevention and safety related signs throughout the area.

Hidden Valley Lake is an approximately 3,000-parcel subdivision, along Highway 29 and is a gated community that has incorporated Public Resources Code 4290 and 4291 defensible space laws into their homeowners' code of conduct and regulations. They also maintain a fuel break around the subdivision, as well as completing fuel reduction for the "common" areas of undeveloped land.

Past Projects

Following is a list of completed past projects performed by the South Lake Fire Safe Council:

- Evacuation Plan
- Community meetings
- Public Service Announcements on radio, cable, and in newspaper focusing on Fire Safety

Present Projects

- Continue with the Chipping Program
- New Cal Fire Prevention sign placed on the major traffic routes
- Numerous grants being submitted
- Control burns at Boggs Mountain State Forest
- Radio Upgrades (Narrow banding)
- New Fire Station to be built at Cobb Station (62)
- LE 100 program being implemented
- Large Animal Evacuation Program being established
- Vegetation Management continued with UC Davis and Fish and Game
- Working with the Care and Shelter Group of Lake County
- Meeting with landowners to established fire access routes and Helibase locations in the event of wildfires and other emergencies
- Community meetings/Education
- Continue with Fuel Breaks
 - Shenandoah Fuel Break
 - Bottlerock Fuel Break

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

- Continue with all current Projects and see them to completion
- Updating Disaster Plan in the Battalion
- Continued fuel reduction in Middletown Battalion

Battalion 1418 Kelseyville/Clearlake Oaks (Lake County)

Battalion 1418 is located in Northern Lake County and borders the Mendocino National Forest. Because of the immediate proximity to the National Forest, Battalion 1418 works frequently with them, and their resources are incorporated into CAL FIRE initial attack dispatches. Battalion 1418 fire stations are Kelsey-Cobb, located along Highway 175, and Clear Lake Oaks, which is on Highway 20. Kelsey-Cobb is staffed with two fire engines, and Clear Lake Oaks is staffed with two engines and a bulldozer. The Konocti Lookout is also within the battalion, and is staffed during periods of critical fire weather.

Past Projects

Battalion 1418 projects focus mainly on prescribed burning and fuel breaks. Recent past projects include Cow Mountain and Judge Davis Canyon.

The Cow Mountain (Rx North-047-LNU) project burned brush to lessen the fuel loading, protect assets at risk, improve wildlife habitat, and increase water yield. The project was located in mountainous terrain near the Lake/Mendocino County Line. Fifty acres were burned in November of 2002.

The Judge Davis Canyon (Rx North-052-LNU) project was located in Lake County ten miles east of Clearlake in the Rocky Creek-Cache Creek Wilderness Study Area, which is managed by the BLM. Vegetation is primarily chemise and mixed chaparral and has historically been the site of periodic wildfires. Project objectives were to reduce fuel loading, improve wildlife habitat, and increase water yield.

Recent Projects

A fuel break incorporating the re-establishment of fire truck trails was accomplished during a training exercise for Dozer Boss students. The break is west of Thurston Lake, and runs north/south between Highway 29 and Pt. Lakeview Road, near the community of Lower Lake. Additional work will be completed this year to improve access into this part of the battalion.

CEQA documentation for the Soda Bay Road Shaded Fuel Break was recently completed. This project is being done jointly with the Lake County Fire Safe Council and other stakeholders. Once completed the fuel break will improve the access/egress for emergency vehicles and provide for safer evacuations from several neighborhood communities located along an 8-mile stretch of Soda Bay Road near the community of Kelseyville. This project was identified in the 2009 CWPP for Lake County.

Future Projects and Priority Rankings

Battalion Chief 1418 is working with the County of Lake to establish a fire plan for the new Mt. Konocti Public Lands, located on top of Mt. Konocti. The county acquired approximately 1,600 acres from a private landowner and will be opening the land for public use during the summer of 2011. These lands are adjacent to land owned by the BLM, and not too far from the Clear Lake State Park.

A possible project is in the planning stages in the Cow Mountain Area for prescribed burning called the Pyramid Ridge VMP. The BLM is currently updating the NEPA documentation prior to proceeding.

Battalion 1419 Brooks/Wilbur Springs/Leeseville (Colusa & Yolo Counties)

Battalion 1419 runs along the eastern edge of LNU, running the length of Colusa, Yolo Counties, and extends into Solano County. There are three single engine fire stations located near Leesville, Wilbur Springs, and Brooks. The battalion is very rural, with many large landowners. The battalion consists of over 454,026 acres of SRA, LRA and FRA lands.

Highway 16, which runs from Highway 20 to Interstate 505, has had an above average number of fire ignitions in the area referred to as Rumsey Canyon. The above average number of fire ignitions was due to an arson problem that has recently been mitigated due to arrests.

Past Projects

CAL FIRE has been able to take advantage of the rural setting and large landowners to complete many prescribed burns over the past 20 years.

Present Projects

With direction and leadership from previous battalion chiefs, CAL FIRE has been very proactive in working with landowners, local government and BLM to complete many prescribed burns for a variety of purposes.

The Cortina VMP was developed in conjunction with local land owners. The goal is to, over a three-year period starting in 2011, burn brush in the fall and winter along with the spring burning of non-native grassland species.

Other projects have included the Bobcat Ranch burn (near the town of Winters) in 2010, various small burns with Williams Fire Dept., Capay Valley Fire Dept. and Yocha DeHe Fire Dept. Assist with annual Yolo County Fire Departments training burn in Dunnigun. Cal Fire's Northern Region firing class is held near Arbuckle each year. Besides offering training for Cal Fire personnel it creates a firebreak between the SRA mountains and the LRA valley floor. Over 500 prescribed acres were burned in the Rumsey Battalion in 2010.

Future Projects

Future projects will continue to include working with landowners, local government and the BLM to conduct prescribed burning for desired resource management objectives. Starting in the Spring of 2011, and continuing for the next few years, Cal Fire along with BLM will conduct several small prescribed burns in the Cache Creek Payne Ranch area. The goal is to eradicate several non native and noxious weeds that have taken over native grasses and plants.

LE 100 Inspections

During the spring and early summer of 2010, LE 100 defensible space inspections were conducted in the Rumsey Battalion. Over 266 inspections were made in Colusa and Yolo counties. Areas targeted were the Century Ranch subdivision near the town of Stonyford, Golden Bear Estates subdivision near Winters, as well as in the communities of Rumsey, Guinda and Capay. The program yielded many positive contacts with home owners and community groups.