

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

# Riverside Unit

## 2024 Strategic Fire Plan



### Mission Statement

The CAL FIRE / Riverside County Fire Department is a public agency dedicated to protecting life, property and the environment through professionalism, integrity, and efficiency

### Vision Statement

The CAL FIRE / Riverside County Fire Department is committed to exemplary customer service and will be a leader in fire protection and emergency services through continuous improvement, innovation, and the most efficient and responsible use of resources.

Unit Chief Bill Weiser

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## SIGNATURE PAGE

### 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.



\_\_\_\_\_  
May 1, 2024

**Unit Chief**

(Bill Weiser)

**Date**



\_\_\_\_\_  
May 1, 2024

**Pre-Fire Engineer**

(Matt Escandel)

**Date**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The CAL FIRE Riverside Unit is comprised within Riverside county, along numerous contract city and county fire departments where we carry out CAL FIRE's mission to serve and safeguard the people and protect the property and resources of California. This is accomplished through the protection of State Responsibility Areas (SRA), cities under contract, and by protection of the public and the watersheds in its geographical area.

The 2024 Riverside Unit Pre-Fire Management Plan reflects the continuing State of Emergency that exists in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) in Riverside County. Unit personnel at all levels in conjunction with Riverside County Emergency Management Department are working diligently to provide solutions to the potential of large fire and their impact to the communities, these areas managed have been faced with significant drought and large fire growth. The communities of Idyllwild, Garner Valley, and Pine Cove known for old growth forests have faced recent invasive species of Bark Beetle and Golden Spotted Oak borer. These two events have severely impacted old timber and new forest growth. Chaparral that once dominated the landscapes of Western and Central Riverside County, have been type converted to grass by the large fire events. The Tribal Communities located within Riverside County have been adversely affected by both recent and large fire events and the tree mortality. The Golden Spotted Oak Borer is a top concern to old growth oak trees that have tribal spiritual significance. Adjacent Federal lands to the State Responsibility Area have been modified to become Wilderness lands for preservation. Recent years of drought have impacted the growth cycle of vegetation and influenced the mortality of trees. Landscapes that have been subjected to repeated cycles of wildfire have had their landscape changed from a fire adapted ecosystem to one that is known for fast moving grass fires.

In previous Fire Plans for the Riverside Unit and Riverside County Fire Department the emphasis has been in the San Jacinto Mountain communities, Pre-Fire projects have been planned and implemented on State Responsibility Area lands in the mountain communities. However, the focus has shifted to areas of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) within the unit, these areas have seen explosive growth in housing developments that reside within the SRA. The Riverside Unit and Riverside County Fire Department have worked collaboratively with private / tribal / public / state / federal and county stakeholders to develop projects that meet the demands of the public. Expansion of Pre-Fire work into the areas of Anza, Sage, Aguanga and the Lake Elsinore front country has begun with a focus on evacuation routes and community defense projects. Several cooperative projects have taken place with many more being planned. A continuing effort of treating fuels on Multi-Species Preserves and other public lands within SRA has increased providing critical habitat for animals displaced by housing developments along with endangered plant and animal species. The collaborative effort between CALFIRE and the Preserves has seen the Stephen Kangaroo Rat be removed from the endangered species list.

### **Plan Concept and Process**

The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection along with 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 fires in the Riverside Unit by protecting assets at risk through focused pre-fire management prescriptions and increasing initial attack success. The Fire Plan has five strategic objectives:

- Create wildfire protection zones that reduce the risks to citizens and firefighters.
- Provide framework for Fire-Life Safety in Communities.
- Include all wildland, not just the State Responsibility Areas. Analysis continues include all wildland fire service providers - Federal, State, Tribal, 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 include the (SRA) within U.S. Forest Service DPA.
- 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 effectiveness.
- Describe the wildland fire protection system in fiscal terms. This can include all public/private expenditures and potential economic losses.
- Translate the analysis into public policy.

## Fire Plan Framework

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

- Wildfire Protection Zones: these zones are buffers around the community to reduce citizen and firefighter risks from costly and damaging fires.
- Initial Attack 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.
- 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, assets of value, and air quality.
- 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.
- Fiscal framework: this is a tool for assessing and monitoring the cost effectiveness of the wildland fire protection systems.
- Empowering communities through public outreach, public information events and social media. The need for the public to do their part in fuels reduction helps create Fire Wise Communities, communities that perform defensible space work, create Community Wildfire Protection Plans (CWPP), develop evacuation plan, and work closely with Fire Agencies within the community.

## Pre-Fire Management Plan Applications

- Identify those areas of concentrated assets and high risk for state, federal, tribal, 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. Then design and find funding to 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.

## **SECTION I: UNIT OVERVIEW**

### **UNIT DESCRIPTION**

The Riverside Unit is in the Southern Region, for Cal Fire or formerly known as California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Riverside Unit lies in the entirety of the county. Bordered by Cal Fire San Bernardino Unit, San Bernardino County to the north, the state of Arizona to the East, Cal Fire San Diego Unit, Imperial and San Diego Counties to the south, and Orange County to the west.

Riverside County is a county located in the southern portion of the state of California. The population is over 2.4 million making it the fourth-most populated county in California and the 10th most populated in the United States. The name was derived from the city of Riverside, which is the county seat. Riverside County is included in the Riverside, San Bernardino, Ontario Metropolitan Statistical Area, also known as the Inland Empire. The county is also included in the Los Angeles, Long Beach Combined Statistical Area. Roughly rectangular, Riverside County covers 7,208 square miles in Southern California, spanning from the greater Los Angeles area to the Arizona border. Geographically, the western region of the county is chaparral with a Mediterranean climate, while the central and eastern regions of the county are predominantly desert or mountainous.

There are 19 official wilderness areas in Riverside County that are part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Some are integral parts of the above protected areas, most (11 of the 19) are managed solely by the Bureau of Land Management, and some share management between the BLM and the relevant other agencies. Some extend into neighboring counties:

- Agua Tibia Wilderness
- Beauty Mountain Wilderness
- Big Maria Mountains Wilderness
- Cahuilla Mountain Wilderness
- Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness

- Joshua Tree Wilderness
- Little Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness
- Mecca Hills Wilderness
- Orocopia Mountains Wilderness
- Palen/McCoy Wilderness
- Palo Verde Mountains Wilderness
- Pinto Mountains Wilderness
- Rice Valley Wilderness
- Riverside Mountains Wilderness
- San Gorgonio Wilderness
- San Jacinto Wilderness
- San Mateo Canyon Wilderness
- Santa Rosa Wilderness
- South Fork San Jacinto Wilderness

There is 3 official State Parks which reside in Riverside County:

- California Citrus State Historic Park
- Lake Perris State Recreation Area
- Mount San Jacinto State Park

County Parks that within the Riverside Unit consist of:

- Hurkey Creek Park
- Idyllwild Park
- Indio Hills Palms
- Jensen Alvarado Ranch
- Lake Cahuilla Recreation Area
- Lake Skinner Recreation Area
- McCall Memorial Equestrian Park
- Santa Rosa Plateau

## **The Fire Situation**

Riverside Unit's Fire situation is historically active, having experienced some of the most costly and damaging wildfires in history due to its extreme summer weather and active "Santa Ana conditions" in the fall.

Fire activity in the Riverside Unit has remained close to historical averages. The past drought has had a direct impact on the number of significant fires that have occurred in the Riverside Unit. The Esperanza fire in 2007 and the subsequent Silver Fire in 2013 located in the foothills above Banning have changed the vegetation fuel type from a predominantly chaparral fuel type to grass, leaving it susceptible to roadside fires along the Highway 243 corridor that leads to the communities of Pine Cove and Idyllwild. The Cranston Fire on the San Jacinto range although not a large fire at 13,000 acres, it did threaten the Community of Idyllwild and reinforce the effectiveness of Defensible Fuel Profile Zones (DFPZ). The Mountain Area Safety Task Force (MAST) continues to be a leader in public and private cooperation in the mountain communities. The Holy Fire of 2018 on the Trabuco range above the community of Lakeland Village was another major fire, and the first of that magnitude to impact the communities since 1988.



Combined the Holy and Cranston Fires burned more than 36,000 acres, resulting in large populous evacuations, temporary business closures, major road damage, structure loss, with impacts to the watershed within the County of Riverside. The Apple fire in 2020 led to significant destruction of homes and contributed long term impacts to the watershed causing erosion and flooding into the communities of Mias Canyon and Cherry Valley. The Fairview fire in 2022 started on SRA lands and spread onto Federal, and Private lands destroying multiple structures, impacting natural and manmade watersheds, agricultural orchards, and resulting in civilian fatalities inside the burned area of Avery Canyon. Riverside County's fire season ranges historically from April till December, active on shore winds push fire predominantly from the west to the east, while in the fall when fuels are at the driest, Santa Ana winds surface, severely impacting fire behavior. This famous weather phenomenon drives fire from North to South at critical rates of spread creating the Units historical largest destructive fires. All these dangerous conditions have led to numerous Fire Fighter Fatalities. The Decker Fire (1959) in the Lake Elsinore Front Country killing 6 Fire Fighters. The Banning Fire in 1971, killing 1 Fire Fighter. The Orange Fire in 1992, injuring 2 Fire Fighters, The Esperanza Fire in 2007 killing 5 Fire Fighters, and the El Dorado Fire in 2020 killing 1 Fire Fighter, these fires are a brief example of the dynamic landscape Fire Fighters are faced with daily in the Riverside Unit. Rapidly changing weather conditions, extreme temperatures, steep slopes, dense population areas and congested road systems leave our First Responders making time compressed emergency decisions regularly. These factors emphasize the role Pre-Fire management plays in preparing the landscape to be fire resilient and prepared from natural and man-made fire occurrences.

In 2008 the Riverside County Strategic Contingency Plan which covers the southern and western borders of the Riverside Unit was created after the 2007 Southern California Fire Siege, this siege affected Riverside's neighboring counties of San Diego and Orange. Because of the 2013 fires in the Riverside Unit, a review of the Strategic Contingency Plan was reviewed and updated. The MAST (Mountain Area Safety Taskforce) and the Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council's (MCFSC) Community Wildfire Protection Program (CWPP) are currently being reviewed and updated. The scope of the review is targeting evacuation procedures and routes, defensible space inspections and fuels treatments. The after-action review of the Falls Fire has initiated the need for a fuels buffer along the wildland urban interface from the community of Corona to the north, to the community of Temecula to the south. This fuel reduction buffer crosses many jurisdictional boundaries which will provide a challenge. The Riverside Unit has initiated the planning process and is actively meeting with Agency Cooperators.

This plan is currently being expanded to cover additional areas of the county and is being incorporated into the Mobile Data Computing Solution for responding resources to have access to this information readily.

Riverside Unit has an elevated potential for large fires in 2024. During the past two years we have had above normal rainfall eliminating our yearly drought conditions. Although we have not had continuous normal winters within the past 10 years, we still are showing increases to the Energy Release Component (ERC) at our weather station facilities. The predicted "El Nino" for the fall and spring may alleviate some risk. The annual grass crop for 2024 have provided ground fuels that are more present in recent years to promote ignition possibilities. These numbers will increase to extreme levels during the normal hot summer months, which historically have seen 24HR burn periods. A typical Santa Ana season in the fall may be blowing over a very receptive, dry, and flammable fuel bed.



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

### **San Jacinto Mountains**

- Reforestation efforts will help restore forest species, stand structures and composition back to uneven-aged mixed conifer.
- Reforestation efforts will aid preventing erosion and protect water quality.
- Shaded fuel breaks are a method of protecting communities from catastrophic fire by removing (Brush) ladder fuels while retaining larger mature trees.
- Generally, Height growth is a function of tree genetics and site quality, while diameter growth is a function of stand stocking or number of trees per area.
- Fire behavior is a function of fuel, weather, and topography. The amount and type of fuel can be treated so that catastrophic fire is reduced.
- An overall goal of 40-80 Trees per Acre (TPA) is recommended, CAL FIRE staff are currently working to educate the public on the concept of Basal Area/Acre as the preferred method for determining stocking standards.
- Our goal is to manage the watershed to result in a healthier fire safe 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 brush, 3 timber and 3 slash fuel types. Custom fuel models have also been developed from these basic models to consider 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 an 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 81st. 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.

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 in the last few years. From 2003 to present we have been faced with many challenges including, drought, bug kill, frost kill, and disease which has weakened and or killed huge stands of timber and brush over tens of thousands of acres in our wildland areas. It has become the number one fuel problem for our County.

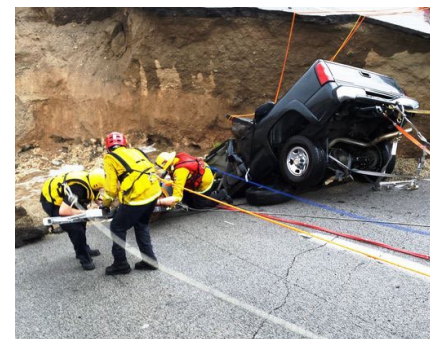
## UNIT PREPAREDNESS AND FIREFIGHTING CAPABILITIES

During the Peak Staffing period, Riverside Unit has 94 Stations staffed with 1150 CAL FIRE uniformed personnel, 240 Riverside County & support personnel and 150 volunteer/reserve firefighters available to staff the following resources:

| UNIT OPERATIONAL FACILITIES |  |    |
|-----------------------------|--|----|
| •                           | Schedule B Fire Stations               | 13 |
| •                           | Schedule A Fire Stations               | 94 |
| •                           | Air Attack / Airtanker / Helitack Base | 1  |
| •                           | Conservation Camps                     | 3  |
| •                           | Fire Center / Los Pinos CCC            | 1  |
| •                           | Fuels Reduction Crew                   | 1  |



| UNIT OPERATIONAL EQUIPMENT |   |    |
|----------------------------|---|----|
| •                          | CAL FIRE Type III Engines – Frontline         | 17 |
| •                          | CAL FIRE Type III Engines – Reserve           | 5  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE Type III Engines – Camp              | 3  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE Type II Bulldozer                    | 3  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE OV-10 Bronco Air Attack Platform     | 1  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE S-2T Air Tanker                      | 2  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE S70i Fire Hawk                       | 1  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE CDC / CCC Hand Crews                 | 1  |
| •                          | CAL FIRE Fuels Reduction Hand Crew            | 1  |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Type I Engine           | 91 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Type I Reserve          | 15 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Type II Engine          | 1  |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Type III Engine         | 17 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Type VI Patrol          | 12 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Truck Company           | 9  |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Water Tenders           | 11 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Urban Search and Rescue | 8  |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Rescue Squad            | 13 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Medic Ambulance         | 11 |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Rescue Boat             | 1  |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Breathing Support       | 2  |
| •                          | Riverside County Fire Haz Mat Unit            | 1  |
| •                          | Riverside County Type II Bulldozer            | 1  |



CAL FIRE resources include: 11 Battalion Chiefs, 17 Type 3 Engines, the Unit is adding is an additional two reserve engines, Hand Crews availability varies based on staffing and time of year, 1 Air Attack, 1 Type 1 Helicopter, 2 Type 3 Air Tankers, 3 Dozers, and ten 10,000-gallon Cisterns.

Riverside County Fire Department resources include: 28 Battalion Chiefs, 82 Type 1 Engines, 17 Type 3 Engines, 10 Type 6 Engines, 1 Dozer, 11 Water Tenders, 8 Truck Companies, 2 Medic Patrols, 10 Medic Ambulances, 1 Haz-Mat Unit and 2 Breathing Supports.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates citizens about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

The Riverside County Emergency Management Department (RCEMD) is the lead CERT training agency for the Riverside County Operational Area. In 2016, RCEMD conducted 21 CERT Classes, and trained more than 675 citizen volunteers to be better prepared for an emergency. In 2017, RCEMD are scheduled to conduct more than 30 CERT Classes.

To help meet the mission to the residents that reside within the SRA, Resource Management has seen and explosion in funding. This funding has contributed to the ability to contract fuels reduction work as well as purchase equipment for the Unit to utilize. Resource Management equipment consists of; 4 utility pick-ups, 1 hook-lift truck, 1 hook-lift trailer, 5 chipper bins, 2 log hauler bins, 2 dump bins, 2 job box bins, 1 flatbed bin, 2 light duty brush bins 1 skid steer tractor, bucket and grapple with trailer and 2 Moor-bark chippers. 1 fully funded type 3 engine staffed with a Company Officer and Fire Fighter II's. We also fund two Heavy Fire Equipment Operators with a Dozer and Transport. When not responded to Statewide fire missions, these additional pieces of equipment engage in fuels reduction work all over the Riverside Unit.

### **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 dated May 10, 2011.
- 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 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
- City of Yucaipa date December 10, 2019

- City of Canyon Lake- December 14, 2021
- San Diego County date July 7, 2020

**Mutual Aid Agreements:**

- California Rehabilitation Center (Norco) dated November 20, 1984
- Chuckwalla 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, 2010,
- Niland Fire District dated September 3, 1991
- Soboba Indian Reservation August 23, 2016

**SECTION II: COLLABORATION**

**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:

**Agency Development Team:**

| Organization                             | Title              |
|--|--------------------|
| San Bernardino National Forest           | Chief Sal Reyes    |
| Cleveland National Forest                | Chief Talbot Hayes |
| Bureau of Land Management                | Chief Paul Gibbs   |
| US Fish and Wildlife                     | Carlsbad Office    |
| CAL FIRE                                 | Chief Bill Weiser  |
| California Department of Fish & Wildlife | Chuck Bonham       |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| California Department of Parks & Recreation | Armando Quintero   |
| California Department of Transportation     | Kelly Cook   |
| California Highway Patrol                   | Riverside Field Office, Riverside CA.                      |
| Riverside County Sheriffs                   | Sheriff-Coroner, Chad Bianco                               |
| Riverside County Fire Department            | Riverside County Fire Chief, Bill Weiser                   |
| Riverside County TLMA                       | Director, Mark Lancaster                                   |
| Riverside County Parks & Recreation         | Kyla Brown   |
| City of Banning                             | City Manager, Doug Schulze                                 |
| City of Beaumont                            | City Manager, Interim- Elizabeth Gibbs                     |
| City of Calimesa                            | Fire Chief, Tim O'Connell                                  |
| City of Canyon Lake                         | City Manager, Chris Mann                                   |
| City of Corona                              | City Manager Jacob Ellis or Corona Fire Chief, Brian Young |
| City of Desert Hot Springs                  | City Manager, Luke Rainey                                  |
| City of Eastvale                            | City Manager, Henry Garcia                                 |
| City of Hemet                               | City Manager, Christopher Lopez                            |
| City of Jurupa Valley                       | City Manager, Rod Butler                                   |
| City of Lake Elsinore                       | City Manager, Jason Simpson                                |
| City of La Quinta                           | City Manager, Jon McMillen                                 |
| City of Menifee                             | City Manager, Armando Villa                                |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| City of Moreno Valley                        | City Manager, Mike Lee                                  |
| City of Murrieta                             | City Manager, Kim Summers or Fire Chief Bernard Molloy  |
| City of Norco                                | City Manager, Andy Okoro                                |
| City of Palm Springs                         | City Manager, Justin Clifton or Fire Chief, J.K. Nalder |
| City of Perris                               | City Manager, Clara Miramontes                          |
| City of Riverside                            | City Manager, Al Zelinka/Fire Chief, Michael Moore      |
| City of San Jacinto                          | City Manager, Rob Johnson                               |
| Rubidoux CSD                                 | Manager, Armando Muniz                                  |
| City of Wildomar                             | City Manager, Dan York                                  |
| Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council       | Kat Wilson, Executive Director                          |
| Southwest Riverside County Fire Safe Council | Susan Frommer, President                                |
| Habitat Conservation Groups                  | Regional Conservation Authority                         |
| Utility Companies                            | SCG, SGE, MWD, EMWD, EVMWD                              |
| City of Temecula                             | City Manager, Aaron Adams                               |
| City of Palm Desert                          | City Manager, Todd Hileman                              |

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

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), in cooperation with all the agencies and individuals in the Riverside County 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 community. In March 2002, the Riverside County Board of Supervisors declared a local emergency. In March 2003, Governor Davis



concurrent with the County and issued his own State of Emergency Proclamation. These emergency declarations are still active to date.

The MAST was formed to mitigate the threat to life, property, watershed, and the ecosystem. It is currently Riverside Unit's single greatest threat to SRA, (even though 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.

MAST consists of members from many agencies, groups and elected officials. The MAST group participants include: CAL FIRE, 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 Emergency Management Department, State OES, Riverside County Flood Control, Southern California Edison, Senator Feinstein, Congressman Paul Ruiz, Senator Jeff Stone 28th Senatorial District, Assemblymen Randy Voepel 71st 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, Riverside County Sheriff's Office, and the 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.



## **VALUES 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 2.4 million residents and the support of its largest business, agriculture. Public consumption, recreation, and hydroelectricity 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 following is a summary of the assets at risk, by Battalion for Riverside Unit. The information primarily is in consideration to the potential for large and damaging wildland fires, and the potential for a significant number of structures damaged.



## **Battalion 1 – Perris**

The Perris Battalion is divided into the following communities: Nuevo, Perris, Good Meadow, Mead Valley, Lake Mathews, Juniper Flats and Woodcrest. Each of the communities has a high risk of significant structural damage due to the fuel loadings and the history of large fires that have created a substantial structure loss. The communities in the Battalion are all typical WUI threatened areas, a mix of large residential tracks that border the wildland and single dwellings intermixed in the wildland.

Like most other Battalions, Battalion 1 has electrical transmission lines that pass through as well as part of the interstate 215 highway system. The Battalion also borders the March Air Force Reserve Base. The Estelle Mountain Reserve, Lake Mathews Reserve and Lake Perris Reserve all have significant biological habitats and tribal cultural areas that require suppression modification tactics.

## **Battalion 2 – Lake Elsinore**

The primary values at risk in Battalion 2 are homes interspersed in the WUI. Communities at risk that lie within the Lake Elsinore Battalion are Elsinore, Wildomar, Canyon Lake, and Lakeland Village. 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 Trabuco District, a severe winter will pose flooding and life safety risks. 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 5 firefighters, and the Ortega fire in 1988 which burned 16,000 acres from Orange County into Lakeland Village and the Falls Fire of 2013. 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 – San Gorgonio Pass**

The San Gorgonio Pass is known to be one of the deadliest areas to wildland firefighters in the Western U.S. due to the vegetative fuels, steep slopes, and vegetative transitions between fuel types. Values at risk in the Beaumont Battalion include residential, commercial-industrial, and recreational, with some minor agricultural values including orchards and dry land farming. In addition, the San Gorgonio Pass is a significant location for critical infrastructure. Multiple gas and fuel pipelines, high tension power lines, a transcontinental railroad and freeway are found in the Pass. Major watershed surrounds the Pass communities as well. Residential areas include the valley bottoms as well as the foothill wildland-urban interface areas above Calimesa, Cherry Valley, Banning, Cabazon, Whitewater, and Yucaipa. Significant wildland-urban intermix areas of residences also are in the Twin Pines and Poppet Flats area. These areas have been devastated by fire frequently. Commercial-industrial uses are mostly south of the I-10 freeway in Banning and Beaumont, but some future development may occur in the Cherry Valley-Calimesa area. Agricultural areas are centrally located in the San Gorgonio Pass between Beaumont and Banning and in the Cherry Valley and Banning Bench areas. Recreational areas include the National Forest areas surrounding the Pass as well as private recreation facilities in Poppet Flats, south of Banning and Beaumont and Cherry Valley. Major watersheds include the San Gorgonio River as it flows through the Banning Canyon area, the Potrero Creek as it flows south from the

Pass to the San Jacinto Valley, the Millard and Potrero Creeks on the Morongo Indian Reservation and Whitewater Canyon which drains to the east and is the major watershed for the Coachella Valley. Fire protection improvements to protect the above include the Truck Trails, cisterns, and fuel break systems that were constructed during the mid-20th Century. This includes the Pisgah Peak, International, Mile High, Cherry Canyon, and North Mountain systems. Maintenance and improvement of these systems is critical to the protection of the Pass area.

#### **Battalion 4 – Corona**

The major values at risk from a Santa Ana River bottom fire are the structures that line the bluffs overlooking the river, the potential loss of wildlife habitat, and the large homeless population that make their homes inside of the drainage itself. There is a problem gaining 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 can contain a fire there to 100 acres or less, but when there is a Santa Ana wind event, a fire has the potential to run into Orange County rapidly, threatening thousands of homes in the Yorba Linda/Carbon Canyon areas. The Chino Hills State Park covers just over 13,000 acres of the Chino Hills and holds 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 values at risk in the foothills that run along the Cleveland National Forest (Trabuco Ranger District) from the Orange County line to the Battalion 2 and 4 dividing lines, which consist of numerous housing developments that are adjacent to the wild land areas and the thousands of houses built in some of the canyons and hillsides. Critical infrastructure within Battalion 4 are the major interstates, gas lines, railroad systems, and high voltage power lines, and major water sheds consisting of the Santa River drainage.

#### **Battalion 5 – Hemet / San Jacinto**

The major values at risk within Battalion 5 are the residential areas of the San Jacinto Valley, and the community of Sage which has classical WUI operational problems with many homes and ranches. The biggest risk currently facing Battalion 5 is the west-facing slopes below the communities of Idyllwild and Pine Cove. Major water sheds, agricultural farms, and major highway corridors sit inside Battalion 5 as other values at risk. A repeat of the 1974 Soboba Fire is now possible due to fuel conditions. A very high-risk area in Battalion 5 is the communities that are the areas east of Diamond Valley Lake, specifically Avery Canyon, Gible 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 multimillion-dollar loss fire.

#### **Battalion 9 – Moreno Valley**

Three major components at risk within Moreno Valley Division are communication, recreation areas and homes. The first is the communications repeater towers and recreational hiking trails located on Box Spring Mountain. Box Spring Mountain is home to communication infrastructure for CAL FIRE, Riverside County Fire, and local law enforcement repeaters. The loss of these towers during a wildland fire has the potential to impact public safety communication capacities throughout northwest Riverside. It is the Battalion's top priority to maintain Box Spring Mountain Road access to the repeaters as well as maintain a defensible space around the communication towers themselves. The Box Spring Mountain Park has miles of hiking trails intersecting the mountain that poses a life safety threat to the public using the trails.

The second value is the Lake Perris State Park Recreation Area. A fire within the Lake Perris State Park Recreation area has the potential to create sediment and soil run-off impacting one of the drinking water reservoirs within Southern California. Additionally, fires within the state park would threaten the public safety of hundreds of citizens utilizing the recreation facilities within the park.

The third is the large structure defense component within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) in all sections of Moreno Valley; Reche Canyon, San Timoteo Canyon, Hidden Springs, Sunnymead Ranch, Pigeon Pass, and Moreno Valley Ranch near the Moreno Valley College campus and golf course. Additionally, the eastern section of Moreno Valley has a more rural intermix of wildland fuels due to the larger equestrian ranch style homes and parcels near Redlands Blvd, Moreno Beach, Cottonwood, Locust, Theodore, Reche Canyon, San Timoteo Canyon, and Gilman Springs Road areas.

Battalion 9 also has major highway corridors that run through the center of the battalion, along Highway 60. Major commercial infrastructure, including numerous concrete tilt ups for major companies occupy the trucking industry which provide many occupations for the population of the County of Riverside.

### **Battalion 11 – Mountain Communities**

The values at risk in the Pine Cove/ Idyllwild area include residences, communication infrastructure sites, 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. Fuel loading in the area is mixed conifer, with fields of chaparral and manzanita.

The values at risk in the Anza area are primarily the large number of homes scattered throughout the brush fields in the valley. All the large public assets, such as the Trinity Boys Home property, propane storage facility, large areas of tribal cultural land, schools, and the community itself are well protected with large areas of defensible space. With the predominately east wind influence present, any fire started within the brush fields to the south and east ends of the valley will have the potential for a large damaging fire due to the response times of both initial attack engines and extended attack engines. This with the scattered homes in these areas will cause a chance of 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 Mountains to the Forest Service land. This area also has scattered homes throughout the brush areas. Except for the Bailey fire a 1993, there has been no real large fire history with the valley area in the past 15- 20 years.

The major values at risk located in the Pinyon area consist of scattered, residential single-family dwellings, the Thomas Mountain, and Santa Rosa Communication sites, located in and around fuel model 4. The BLM Santa Rosa National Monument is also located in this Battalion. This entire area is also a tribal cultural area.

Values at Risk include scattered residences and ranches, community areas and several campgrounds, summer camps and recreation areas. The Mountain Fire scar has influenced water quality in Lake Hemet. The Mountain Fire did contribute to both long- and short-term economic

hardship of the area. Tourism has seemed to stabilize to pre-fire levels, but the long-term effect on cattle ranching due to loss of grazing land has yet to be determined. Fuel reduction projects and thinning has reduced the fire threat for some of the area, but persistent and continued drought has left an abundance of dead and down fuels in areas that have not been cleared or thinned.

Aguanga is a rural community and within the last decade a large increase in private dwellings has been noticed. Several senior trailer parks, an elementary school, casino, and a private extreme sports camp are located within its boundaries. 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 the city of Perris, west of the Winchester area and just East of Lake Elsinore (halfway down Railroad Canyon Road). The area with the highest potential for large and damaging fires is in Menifee, Station 68's PRA. The primary housing construction in Cottonwood Canyon is single and doublewide mobile homes. The hazards include, but are not limited to, limited access and egress, limited water supply, and housing construction. The area south of Bundy Canyon Road may also pose a problem, however it is a north facing aspect. During north wind conditions, coupled with a wildland ignition, the potential exists for fire to rapidly spread south to Murrieta. Values at risk inside Battalion 13 include Interstate 215 north of Scott Rd, and south Ethanac road. Major commercial and residential infrastructure resides within the jurisdictional boundaries of the battalion. Critical Habitat of Salt Creek resides within the battalion and poses a value to major lakes and waterways feeding the City of Canyon Lake

### **Battalion 14 – Jurupa**

The major values at risk within Battalion 14 are the residential areas on the north and west side of Box Springs Mountain and along the border with the Riverside City Fire Department. There are also homes that are threatened along the base of the Jurupa Mountain Range running from the Glen Avon area east to the Rubidoux area. Even though the fuel load is light after several fires going through this area there is still potential in both areas for destructive fires. Evacuations are difficult in and along Box Springs Mountain due to Pigeon Pass Road being closed off going over the hill into Moreno Valley. There are limited roads going up to the toe of the slopes on the north and west side including the Highgrove area. A fire-starting during Santa Ana wind conditions has a high potential for loss of life and property due to the total number of homes and people living in these areas, especially in the interface with the Santa Ana River drainage.

### **Battalion 15 - 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 pushed fire downhill into Temecula in the past. Additionally, a community of homeless has set up a decent size encampment at the mouth of the Margarita drainage. The eastern portion of the battalion has seen an explosion in construction the last 10

years with hundreds of homes and ranches being built in the WUI environment. 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 accessibility.

Major values at risk within the Bear Creek community inside Station 75's Initial Attack area (SRA) include hundreds of residential structures in the La Cresta and Tenaja area with a minimum square footage of 4,000 feet up to a maximum of 12,000 square feet on five-acre parcels. This area is a significant watershed and environmental sensitive area. Included in station 75's PRA is one of the county's oldest partners in the VMP process, the 6,500-acre Santa Rosa Nature Conservancy, which contains over 10 miles of roads only accessible by Type III engines. Recreational areas include Tenaja Falls and a portion of the Wildomar off Highway Vehicle area on the Cleveland National Forest, both of which are 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. These large communities with hundreds of significantly sized residences within the wild land urban interface have only two routes of ingress or egress in the event of an emergency. The general population frequently uses recreational areas and opportunities in this area to access the National Forest. 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.

Major values at risk within the Wolf Creek community inside Station 92's first in area include hundreds of custom and ranch style residential structures with some equestrian activity. Accessibility, water supplies and water sources are good to these residential structures. The Pala/Temecula Grade area, where there is a very heavy brush load, and an active real estate market has 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 rule, access to the residential structures can be made by Type I engines, however access to the wildland is limited to Type III engines. In addition to the new development in the area, this portion of Battalion 15 is where the bulk of the cultural heritage site reside. The Riverside Unit and Riverside County Fire Department work closely with the Pechanga Tribe of Mission Indians to ensure we are respecting the rich history of their people in the Battalion.

Major values 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). This area has orchards intermixed with very high dollar housing. This area also has a significant watershed and environmentally sensitive areas.

## COMMUNITIES

|   | <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 Centro                      | 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 Grove           | 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 | Lake land 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<br>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<br>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 |



## **SECTION III: PRE-FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

### **A: FIRE PREVENTION**

Riverside Unit is conducting Fire Safe Inspections on structured parcels utilizing the LE100 program throughout the unincorporated areas of the county. These inspections are being completed by Defensible Space Inspectors and fire engine personnel. The LE100 form contains 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 California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection/Riverside County Fire, the United States Forest Service, and The Idyllwild Fire Protection District.

Riverside Unit 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 LE100 program those properties that are in violation and not corrected by the property owners are abated by Riverside County Fire Contractors and later billed or their property receives 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. Later implementation in these areas would require additional 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 internal processes. In 2010 a fire occurred in the "La Sierra" area quickly moving upslope threatening homes, abatement under Ordinance 695 in this area assisted in saving structures.

#### **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 near 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. Eight orchards were inspected in 2020, zero

(0) orchards were posted for abatement, with none (0) sent to a county 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. Because of this cooperative approach no violations were found, nor were there any ignitions or fires attributed to the railroad in 2019.

### **Open Burning**

Riverside Unit continues to have problems with the public 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. CFC Section 307.1 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. Three (3) citations were issued in 2020 under CFC 307.1 for burning without a permit. Continued enforcement and coordination with the Public Information Section will be necessary to reduce the number of persons burning debris and reduce the number 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 are uniformly everywhere. As the 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 section 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 Region level. Continued education and coordination with the Public Information Section will be necessary to reduce equipment caused fires. Signage along roadways may assist this issue.

### **Children Playing with Fire**

Riverside County Fire Department received a 1.5\$ million-dollar grant to revitalize its Youth Fire setting Prevention Intervention Program. The Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau is currently working to re-write outdated policy and procedure, rebuild core stakeholder agencies and provide interventionist training to first responder and support personnel with a goal of providing public awareness and resources to the program and trained interventionists to identify, intake, educate and follow up with Riverside County youths who display risky fire behavior. The timeline of the grant is January 2022 through March 2024.

### **Fire Closure Areas**

Many areas throughout Riverside county are deemed fire closure areas. Whitewater Canyon, the southern foothills of Banning along the Old Banning Idyllwild Road are only a few of the fire closure area and is the most active for persons violating. It is enforced by Cal Fire, Fire Prevention Staff. Signs are displayed each year when the closure takes effect, and they are many times destroyed and even more times ignored. Zero

(0) citations were issued by Fire Prevention Staff for violating the fire closure under Riverside County Ordinance 787.7 in 2020. In 2011 more signs were placed in a more permanent and visible fashion to assist in deterring the public from violating the fire closure. The current areas closed are, North Mountain Indian Canyon, Tin mine, Ramona Bowl/ Bautista Camp, Reinhardt Canyon, and Lakeview. Fire closure maps in appendix D.

## **ENGINEERING & STRUCTURE IGNITABILITY**

The Riverside Unit has adopted the 2019 Edition of the California Fire Code, which specifies various requirements for the development of new construction within the County. The Fire Protection Planning Section 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 787.8, and the 2019 California Building Code, Chapter 7A, Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure. With the passage of SB 1241 (Government Code Sec.65302.5), Resource Management will become more involved with comment on land use decisions. With the safety element of this Bill beginning in January of 2014, assistance, and comment with County and Local Government on reducing fire risk in SRA development, classified under PRC 4102 and lands identified in very high fire hazard severity zones our technical advice on fire hazard planning will play an important role in reducing wildfire threat to communities.

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 and beginning in 2021 the Riverside Unit is adopting the Firewise Program Codes and Standards. The LE100 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, EDUCATION, and DEPARTMENT BUREAUS**

### **Public Affairs & Community Education Bureau**

The Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau is dedicated to showcasing the daily activities of our department and ensuring the public receives accurate and timely information. We prioritize keeping the community informed and educated through various channels, including community events, fairs, town-hall meetings, MAC Meetings, school events, and social media.



### **Daily Activities Highlight**

Our bureau takes pride in highlighting the daily activities of our department. By providing regular updates and insights into our operations, we aim to foster transparency and build a stronger connection with the community. Through these efforts, we strive to create awareness and appreciation for the vital work carried out by our dedicated team.

## **Timely and Factual Information**

It is our commitment to deliver information that is not only timely but also factual. Through clear and concise communication, we ensure that the public receives accurate details about ongoing projects, initiatives, and any developments within our department. This approach helps build trust and credibility within the community.

## **Diverse Avenues for Community Engagement**

To cater to the diverse needs of the community, we have established various avenues for engagement and education. These include, but are not limited to:

- **Community Events:** We actively participate in and organize community events to directly engage with residents and provide them with valuable information.
- **Fairs:** Our presence at local fairs allows us to reach a broader audience and share insights about our department's role and functions.
- **Town-Hall Meetings:** Open forums like town-hall meetings provide an opportunity for direct communication with the community, addressing concerns, and fostering a sense of community involvement.
- **MAC Meetings:** Participation in Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) Meetings allows us to collaborate with local governance and discuss community-specific matters.
- **School Events:** Engaging with schools is crucial for educating the younger generation about fire safety, emergency preparedness, and the role of our department.
- **Social Media:** We leverage social media platforms to disseminate information, share updates, and interact with the community in a dynamic and accessible manner.

## **Education Programs**

In addition to keeping the public informed, we are dedicated to enhancing community safety through targeted education programs. Our fire safety education initiatives cater to different age groups, ensuring that individuals receive relevant and age-appropriate information. The breakdown of these programs is as follows:

- **TK - 2nd Grade: "Fire Safety On, Accidents Gone!"**
  - Tailored for our youngest community members, this program focuses on instilling fundamental fire safety concepts in an engaging and accessible manner.
- **Middle School/Junior High: "Don't Challenge Fire"**
  - Geared towards pre-teens and adolescents, this program emphasizes the importance of respecting and understanding the potential dangers associated with fire, while teaching our youth the consequences and risks of trying to copy a trending challenge on social media.
- **High School: "Cooking and Home Safety"**
  - Targeting high school students, this program delves into the specifics of cooking and general home safety, equipping young adults with knowledge crucial for their daily lives as they prepare for young adulthood.

- Adult: "Ready, Set, Go!"
  - Designed for adults, this program provides essential information on preparedness; before, during and after an emergency; guiding individuals on proactive measures to take in the event of emergencies.

**Conclusion:**

The Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau is dedicated to fostering a safer community through transparent communication and targeted education programs. By engaging with diverse audiences through various channels, we aim to create a well-informed and prepared community.

**Training**

The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Training Bureau is responsible in training 1,200 CAL FIRE personnel and 400 Riverside County reserve firefighters. To accommodate all the hours, it takes to train this large work force, the training is divided into three main components.



- Formal Training - performed at Clark Training Center, Roy Wilson Training Center or the Cal Fire Academy in Lone California. 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.
- EMS Courses- Clark Training Center also offers a wide range of EMS courses, including First Aide/ CPR, EMT recertifications and Paramedic Update Courses (PUC)
- In Service Training (IST) – hands on training with engine and truck companies at one of the training centers. Entire crews perform drills; participate in classroom instruction or both.
- Self-Paced Training - by using the Riverside County computer network, firefighters complete self- paced education programs through the Target Solutions. Target Solutions allows the training bureau to reach a wide audience on specific subjects.



The Training Bureau continues to educate firefighters from the first year Firefighter I to the most seasoned veteran. The bureau uses instructors that have varying degrees of experience and expertise. The Training Bureau personnel are viewed as leaders throughout the state because of the level of training they have implemented for the Returnee Firefighter Training Program and the Basic Firefighting Academy. The dedicated classrooms for fire training are used for beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of instruction.



Wildland fire training is extensive throughout the county. 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.

## Emergency Command Center

The Riverside Unit Emergency Command Center (ECC) is a Command Center (a dispatch office supervised by CAL FIRE and in partnership with the Riverside County Fire Department and is located at the Truman Holland administrative Headquarters in the City of Perris. It is one of the largest regional fire service organizations in California and is dedicated to Integrated, Cooperative, Regional Fire Protection and Emergency Services.

The Perris Emergency Command Center is part of CAL FIRE's three-level command and control structure (Department, State, and Region) utilized for the day-to-day operations of the department and for dealing with emergency incidents. Under the Riverside County Fire Department/CALFIRE organizational structure, Perris ECC reports to the Support and Services Division. The 24-hour operation consist of (1) CALFIRE Battalion Chief, (3) CALFIRE Fire Captains, (1) County Supervisor, (3) Seniors and (12-14) Dispatchers who are Radio Qualified and Call Takers. Working side by side they are responsible to execute and fulfill the state and local mission of CALFIRE/Riverside County Fire Department.



The Riverside Unit ECC provides dispatch, communications, and support service for emergency operations within the CAL FIRE Riverside Unit. The ECC provides, by contractual agreement, command-communication center services to numerous fire departments, districts, and ambulance providers. Additionally, the ECC staff provides Emergency Medical Dispatch "pre-arrival" care instructions to the caller when necessary. To coordinate and dispatch the closest resources to all incidents, the ECC continuously monitors the location and status of more than 200 fire and medical resources and over 1000 personnel. The Riverside Unit Emergency Command Center is one of 21 CALFIRE Command Centers throughout the state. The distinction between a normal dispatch center and a command center is the ability for ECC Leadership to command an incident and augment responses based on reports. This includes starting an additional alarm to reported structure fires, adding additional State resources on vegetation fires such as crews and aircraft, sending specialty resources on unique incidents such as truck companies to rescues.

All Fire Communication Dispatchers are certified through the International Academy of Emergency Dispatch as Emergency Medical Dispatchers and Emergency Fire Dispatchers. Utilizing this system allows for a structured, patient-focused process for gathering key information, prioritizing medical situations, and delivering effective instructions to callers. This discipline allows calls to be prioritized to better serve the community. FCD's then support the incidents by monitoring frequencies to provide field resources with additional needs.

The Perris ECC supports the CALFIRE mission when fires or incidents overwhelm the local unit. Providing extra staffing from the field or dispatchers to open Expanded allows the command

center to process the numerous needs for these large incidents. Requests for additional equipment and overhead is processed through IROC. These requests are each handled by CALFIRE and Riverside County Fire personnel who fill, assign, and track them from the start of incidents to far after the fire has been put out.

The ECC is in continuous development of additional VHF radio repeater sites allowing greater VHF radio coverage for emergency response personnel and acquired additional 800 MHz radio channels to meet increasing operational communication needs.

The ECC supports “prescribed burning” operations for brush clearing and vegetation fire fuel reduction projects. They coordinate the processing of the Live Fire Use Approval/Notification Form (FC-400) between the Incident Commander, Unit Duty Chief, Region Duty Chief, and the Region Operations Center. The ECC employs several evolving technologies to enhance the flow of information with emergency response personnel including Automatic Vehicle Locators (AVL), Mobile Data Computers (MDC’s), and connectivity between the CAL FIRE Computer Aided Dispatch computer system (CAD) and allied agency CAD systems using the Regional CAD Interoperability Project (RCIP). This interface includes the Dynamic (progressive) routing of multi-agency resources by the ECC which also allows us to track and coordinate emergency apparatus to dispatch the closest resource to an emergency, regardless of agency affiliation or jurisdiction. The ECC, in coordination with field staff uses a variety of GIS tools including Intterra and Technosylva, both of which are situational awareness and collaboration tools. Intterra or Technosylva combined with AVL/ MDC, help with information gathering to and from field personnel. All these processes help to streamline and create efficiencies in dispatching the closest resource. The remaining technology system is the High-Performance Wireless Research and Educational Network (HPWREN) project which uses strategically placed high speed camera network throughout San Diego County which allows the C staff to visually confirm the existence and intensity of a fire from the detection of a “new fire” to the progression and monitoring of an existing fire.

### **ECC Dispatch Agreements:**

- Pechanga Fire Department
- Calimesa Fire Department
- Morongo Fire Department
- Idyllwild Fire Protection District
- Soboba Fire Department
- Riverside County Environmental Health
- Cahuilla Fire Department

### **Air Operations**

Located in Hemet, California at the Hemet-Ryan Airport, Hemet-Ryan Air Attack Base is a CAL FIRE joint, Fixed-Wing Air Attack Base and Helitack Base. Hemet-Ryan Air Attack Base is the Initial Attack Base for most of all Riverside County, Orange County and parts of San Diego, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles Counties.



Hemet Ryan Air Attack Base (HRAAB) is named after the late Claude T. Ryan, who is most famous for having designed the spirit of St. Louis airplane, and who began the Ryan School of Aeronautics in Hemet during World War II. Through a contract with the Federal Government 14,000 cadets were trained to fly. With the end of World War II and the need for pilots diminishing, training ceased. The facility eventually became a public airport owned and operated by Riverside County.



In 1957 the United States Forest Service commenced airtanker loading operations, and in 1959 the California Department of Forestry (now CAL FIRE) began their operation at Hemet Ryan field. Both agencies maintained separate parking, loading, and mixing areas. However, the initial stages of a joint base operation had begun. In 1969 the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the California Department of Forestry (CDF) truly merged into a joint agency Air Attack Base sharing the base operation, responsibilities, and facilities. The joint base concept successfully continued operation until 1998 when the USFS moved their airtanker base operation to the larger and recently vacated Norton Air Force Base in San Bernardino.

In 1977 CAL FIRE began a two-week pilot helitack program utilizing a contracted helicopter. Headed up by Captain Emil Derdowski and two Firefighters, the program was extended to a total of four weeks. The success of this pilot program gave birth to Hemet Ryan Helitack Base, using a full-time contract helicopter staffed with three Captains and nine Firefighters operating out of HRAAB.

In 1981, CAL FIRE acquired Bell UH-1F Huey helicopters through the Federal Excess Property Program (FEPP) and leased them from the U.S. Air Force through the USFS for one dollar a year. This program now allowed CAL FIRE to operate and manage its own fleet of fixed wing and rotor wing aircraft. In 1992 CAL FIRE acquired several of the larger Bell UH-1H helicopters through FEPP, with Hemet Ryan Helitack (stationed at RAAB) receiving one of the first buildups. These helicopters were further upgraded with larger engines, main rotor, and tail boom assemblies, making them the "Super Huey" model. CAL FIRE now has eleven of these helicopters in service, with nine based throughout the state.

In 2018, CAL FIRE purchased 12 S70i Blackhawks for delivery. On May 3rd, 2021, Hemet-Ryan took delivery of the CAL FIRE HAWK, replacing the long used Sper Huey.



## Aircraft

One OV-10 Bronco – Air Attack Platform  
[OV-10A Air tactical Aircraft \(PDF\)](#)

Two S2-T Air Tankers  
[S-2T Airtanker \(PDF\)](#)

One S70i CAL FIRE HAWK  
[Sikorsky S-70i \(PDF\)](#)

One Exclusive Use Type I Restricted Helicopter, typically on contract July-October.

### **Fixed-Wing**

Respond to wildland fires in the State Responsibility Areas (SRA) within 20 minutes. Utilizing an aggressive initial attack and professional delivery of fire retardant, keep 95% of fires at 10 acres or less. Assist Federal and Local Partners with the same customer service as SRA.

### **Staffing**

Air Attack – (1) Fire Pilot (Amentum), (1) CAL FIRE Air Tactical Group Supervisor

Air Tankers – (1) Fire Pilot (Amentum)

### **Helitack**

Respond to wildland fires and assist with fire suppression, utilizing precise water drops from the helicopter and line production, hot-spotting and firing techniques from the Helitack Crew. NVG capable for nighttime fire suppression. Also, the CAL FIRE HAWK has a fixed external Rescue Hoist with 260' of cable and staffed with a Crew Chief and Rescuers.

### **Staffing**

#### **CAL FIRE HAWK**

Flight Crew – (1) Fire Pilot (CAL FIRE), (1) Front Seat Fire Captain, (1) Ops. Supervisor

Helitack Crew - (1) Fire Captain, (6) Firefighters

### **CDCR, CCC Camps Program**

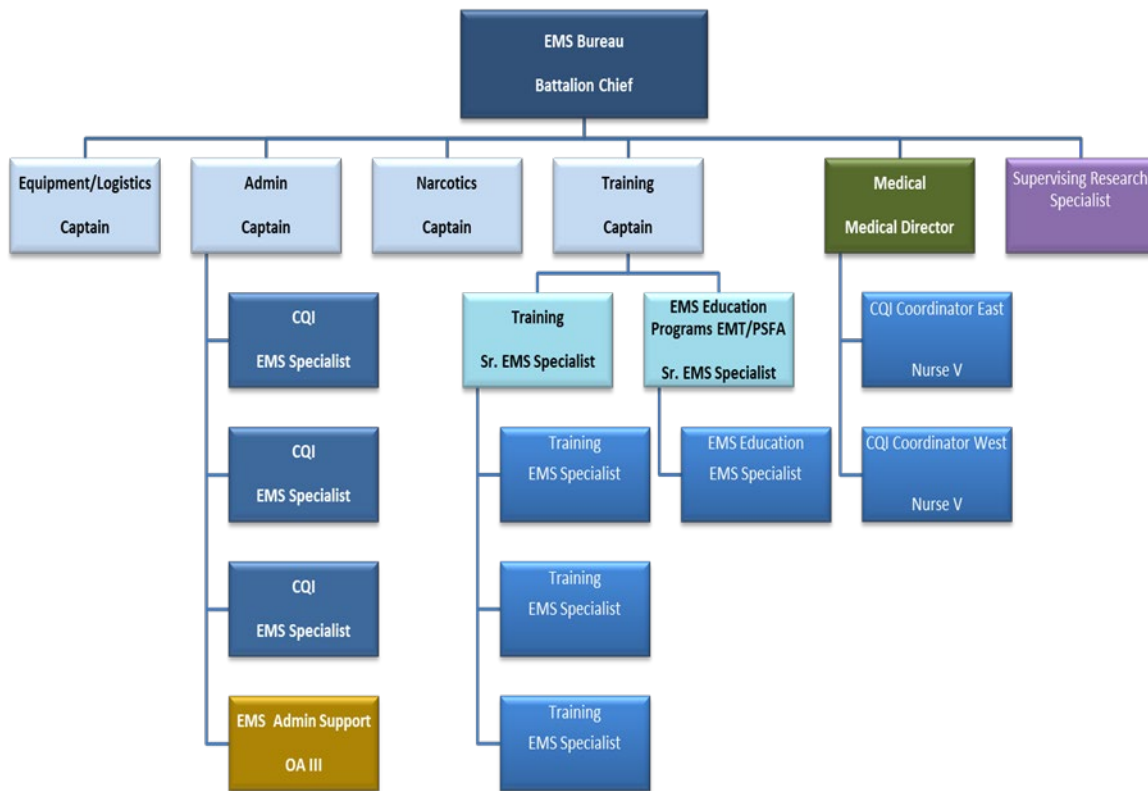
The Conservation Camp Program, in partnership with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation can support 17 hand crews but is currently staffed with 7. These crews assist with fire operations, pre-fire/resource management activities and projects, and other public agencies and approved non-profit organizations for public service. A total of three conservation camps are in the Riverside Unit. One is near the City of Norco, Norco Conservation Camp, the second is located near the Banning Beaumont pass, Oak Glen Conservation Camp, and the third lies within the San Jacinto mountain range outside of Hemet, Ca, Bautista Conservation Camp.

When the hand crews are not assigned to emergency incidents, they serve as the key workforce for implementing pre-fire/resource management activities and projects. Typically, the camps provide at least 200 crew days per camp per year toward pre-fire/resource management activities and projects. Nearly all fuel reduction projects listed in Appendix A and B are implemented using conservation camp crew. In terms of funding support for camp crews, the SRA Fire Protection Funds (FPF) provides reimbursement funds to offset operational cost and support fuel treatment

projects. Fire safe councils may utilize camp crews for community fuels treatment projects, especially for those projects identified in their Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

## Emergency Medical Services

The Riverside County Fire Department's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Bureau is a critical component of the Support Services Division, dedicated to providing high quality pre-hospital care. The bureau's mission is to deliver the highest level of basic and advanced life support, ensuring that services meet and exceed the standard of care in line with current laws and protocols. Key responsibilities include medical quality control, continuous education for EMS personnel, equipment supply and maintenance, and community education. The EMS Bureau operates with a focus on four main functional areas: Administration, Supplies/Equipment, training, and Continuous Quality Improvement. This structure facilitates the bureau's goal of promoting optimal patient care and effective response in emergency situations, in collaboration with state and local EMS agencies.



## Health and Safety

In any organization, safety is paramount. The role of a Unit Safety Officer is pivotal in maintaining a secure environment for all personnel. Here's a glimpse into the responsibilities and duties of a Safety Officer:

**Immediate Response to Incidents:** When emergencies strike, the Safety Officer is the first line of defense. They respond swiftly to initial attack incidents within the unit and ensure safety protocols are followed even before the Incident Management Team (IMT) arrives. They also provide vital unit-specific safety information to the IMT upon their arrival.

**Injury and Accident Management:** Reviewing incident reports, analyzing trends, and implementing preventive measures are all part of the Safety Officer's duties. They ensure that preliminary event reports are completed when necessary and collaborate with Serious Accident Review Teams (SART) if activated in the unit.

**Safety Issue Coordination:** Acting as a conduit between field personnel and management, the Safety Officer ensures that safety concerns are effectively communicated and addressed. They provide input on urgent matters that require immediate action and facilitate the reporting process for employee safety suggestions and unsafe practices.

**Illness Injury Prevention Program (IIPP):** The Safety Officer oversees the implementation of the IIPP, ensuring its completeness and currency during facility inspections. They coordinate training sessions and reminders for employee safety orientations and ensure IIPP plans are implemented at offsite work locations.

**Safety Gear Compliance:** From inspections for damage to coordinating with logistics officers and vendors, the Safety Officer ensures that safety gear complies with policy standards.

**Facility Safety Inspections:** Adhering to department policy, the Safety Officer ensures that regular facility inspections are conducted to identify and address potential hazards.

**Physical Fitness Coordination:** Collaborating with the Unit Physical Fitness Coordinator, the Safety Officer promotes a culture of health and wellness among personnel.

**Trend Reporting:** By receiving notifications and generating reports on safety trends, the Safety Officer identifies areas for improvement and implements necessary measures.

**Vehicle Accident Analysis:** Reviewing accidents meeting specific criteria, the Safety Officer analyzes trends and takes proactive steps to mitigate risks.

**Cal/OSHA Liaison and Investigations:** Ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements, the Safety Officer coordinates notifications, gathers documentation, and serves as a point of contact during Cal/OSHA investigations.

**Committee Responsibilities:** Chairing safety meetings, representing safety interests in unit committees, and maintaining records of meeting minutes are vital aspects of the Safety Officer's role.

**Tailgate Safety Topics and Communications:** From preparing safety topics to distributing important messages, the Safety Officer fosters a culture of safety awareness and communication within the unit. **Ryan White Oversight:** When assigned as a Ryan White liaison, the Safety Officer

ensures adherence to exposure determination, reporting, and treatment procedures as per department policy.

In conclusion, the Unit Safety Officer plays a crucial role in safeguarding the well-being of personnel and maintaining a secure working environment. Through proactive measures, effective communication, and diligent oversight, they uphold the highest standards of safety within the organization.

## **B. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT**

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

The Riverside Unit integrated its Vegetation Management 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) 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 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.

In 2019 Cal Fire added 5 Fuels Crews with one based out of the Riverside Unit. These crews will be instrumental in achieving the goals of hazardous fuel reduction outlined in the 2019 California Strategic Fire Plan. Each crew consists of a Fire Captain, Fire Apparatus Engineer, Forestry Assistant II, and 9 Forestry Technicians.

### **Current and Past Projects**

#### **Lake Mathews/ Estelle Mountain VMP: (Current)**

The Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain (LMEM) Core Reserve is 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 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 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 fuel breaks, weed abatement and focused fire prevention activities aimed at keeping fire out of the area 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.

The Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break (Current)

The Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break will begin in Bedford Canyon to the north and terminate at the community of Bear Creek to the south. These 22 miles, 300 feet wide, shaded fuel break will be located at the toe of the San Ana Mountain range slope, to provide a Defensible Fuel Profile Zone within the Wildland Urban Interface for the multiple communities within the project. Grant funding has been obtained and the Environmental Review is currently in process. Work began on the project late 2021, completing 17 acres before grant money expired. For 2022 a grant through Riverside County Fire Department has been submitted to complete another 100 acres of fuels reduction.

### **Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP: (CURRENT)**

This project consists of three treatment sites as follows: one prescribed fire in the Water Canyon area, and maintenance of three existing un-maintained fuel breaks 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 are 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 conduct a prescribed fire. This project was completed in 2009; the Unit is involved with maintenance work in the project. The VMP will be renewed in 2017 with work beginning when viable.

## **Red Hill VMP (CURRENT)**

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 USDA 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 Ernie 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 fuel break" 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.

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 act 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 USDA Forest Service/San Bernardino National Forest fuel break 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 re-entering 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 camp as well as regular grade crews are working on this massive fuel reduction project.

In 2012, contractors funded by grants, have finished maintenance work on Red Hill South and were planning to continue to Red Hill North. In 2014 funding was secured through Fire Prevention Fee sources and Red Hill North was completed. These fuel breaks will need continued maintenance at regular intervals to be effective and a tactical resource.

### **El Cariso- Decker Canyon Fuel Break- Rancho Capistrano (CURRENT)**

This project will involve the improvement of a fuel break in the El Cariso/Decker canyon area located along Highway 74 west of Lake Elsinore. The location of these communities puts them at extreme risk from wildfires burning under on shore 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 Village HFR (Hazardous Fuel Reduction): Establish a 100 to 150-foot-wide fuel break completely around the community of El Cariso Village. A fuel break was originally constructed in 1990 on State Responsibility Lands north of Highway 74. This fuel break is being reconstructed with a new segment added south of Highway 74 to completely encircle the village. Cut material is being piled and burned or chipped on site. In June 2004, the El Cariso Fuel break was completed. To date this project needs maintenance and has evolved into not only the fuel break maintenance but also, focused PRC 4291 inspections and a community wide homeowner brush removal and chipping program, utilizing CAL FIRE hand crews for chipping.

Decker Canyon Fuel break: Vegetation is planned to be thinned, pruned, and/or cleared within 50 feet of each side of the primary roads within Decker Canyon 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.

In 2014 funding was secured through the Fire Prevention Fee and a 42- acre shaded fuel break was completed around the community of El Cariso. This project will need continued maintenance to maintain effectiveness and tactical advantage.

### **Red Mountain Fuel Break (Current)**

The Red Mountain Fuel break will begin to the north in Cactus valley, travel south along Red Mountain Road and tie into Reed Valley. The fuel break continues south along Reed Valley Road

approximately 10 miles to Lake Riverside Estates. The fuel break then encircles the community of the Lake Riverside Estates. The segment of the Red Mountain Fuel break from Cactus Valley south to the Lake Riverside Estates will protect the unincorporated community of Sage, Wilson Valley and Reed Valley. These combined communities have approximately 102 structures. The total length of this segment of the fuel break is 10 miles. This fuel break will parallel the San Jacinto District wilderness. The fuel cover in this area is best described as a Chaparral cover, fuel model 4. The Lake Riverside Estates fuel break is a component of the large plan in the Sage/Anza area identified as the Red Mountain Fuel Break. The unincorporated community of Lake Riverside Estates, located west of the community of Anza and south of Mt Thomas in Riverside County, has approximately 458 structures. Lake Riverside is situated predominately on a southern aspect of the Lake Riverside basin, at 6200' elevation. Lake Riverside's northern boundary abuts the USDA Forest Service, San Jacinto Federal Wilderness and its western boundary abuts the Cahuilla Reservation. State Hwy. 371 dissects Lake Riverside Estates from east to west. The vegetative cover of the proposed Lake Riverside Estates Fuel break is comprised of mature chaparral with the prominent species of Red Shank.

### **Lake Perris VMP (CURRENT)**

Lake Perris State Recreation Area is 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 habitat that is grassland. 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 Lake Perris State Recreation Area (LPSRA) for 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. In 2012 one unit is planned for 142 acres. The State Park continues to approach CAL FIRE for additional burning opportunities within the park.

### **Lake Skinner MSR VMP (Current)**

The Southwest Riverside County Multi-Species Reserve (SWRCMSR) 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 throughout the reserve. In May/June 2010, 180 acres were burned contributing to a successful reintroduction of Stephen's 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. In May 2011, working with SWRCMSR and the San Diego Zoo, CAL FIRE burned pie shaped wedges to facilitate habitat experiments for the Stephen Kangaroo Rat. These experiments have been published and show overwhelming evidence that burning creates the most suitable habitat for the endangered Stephens Kangaroo rat. Later that month, working under the VMP program CAL FIRE burned an additional 43 acres.

### **Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve VMP (CURRENT)**

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 wildfire behavior characteristics. They also develop vegetative age classes that will be less likely to create or sustain major wildfires.

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 Wildlife, under the direction of a management committee. Ownership is comprised of The California Department of Fish and Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, the Riverside County Regional Park and Open Space District. The new agreement with the Department of Fish and Wildlife took effect in May 2011. The burning on this project has greatly increased the re-establishment of local native grasses and a very healthy habitat area.



## **Spring Crest DFPZ**

The Spring Crest DFPZ project is designed to help protect the community of Spring Crest, near Pinyon. The project involves construction of fuel breaks along the roads surrounding the community, and roads within 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 and contractors through Grant opportunities.

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

There has been a steady decline in Timber Harvest Plan (THP) exemptions and emergency notices in the timberland areas of Riverside County due to the Governor's Emergency Proclamation which 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 a thousand trees have been removed off SRA lands in the last year by Licensed Timber Operators and tree service contractors and that same number will be expected the following year.

Along power line rights of way CAL FIRE Foresters are working closely with Southern California Edison (SCE)-hired arborists 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 for both the pine bark beetle and Gold spotted oak borer, CAL FIRE conservation camp crews are also removing thousands of trees in compliance with the forest practice rules.

## **Future Projects and Priority Rankings**

### **Grants**

Significant funding has allowed hazardous fuel reduction activities and dead tree removal throughout the State of California. Riverside County has received grants for increasing forest health, creating jobs, promoting biomass utilization, and reducing fire risk. State Responsibility Fire Prevention Program Grant (SRAFPP) funds and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) dollars have been awarded to various non-profit and local government groups and have been used for several projects throughout Riverside County. As of 2021 GGRF funds are being utilized for the Elsinore Front Country Fuel break, Spring Crest DFPZ, Riverside County Dead, Dying and Diseased Tree program, Riverside County Fire Department Fire Safety Programs, Southwest Riverside Fire Safe Council CWPP re-write, fuels reduction and fire safety programs. In 2021 additional Grant funding will be pursued to fund additional projects. The framework for a grant to begin the Santa Ana River Bottom Fuels Reduction Project has begun. This project aims to reduce the fuels along the river bottom to decrease the number of unplanned ignitions along the corridor. The maps for the project have been created and submitted for review.

### **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.

## **SECTION IV: PRE- FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS**

### **DIVISION / BATTALION / PROGRAM PLANS**

#### **Battalion 1 – Perris**

Battalion 1 is located between two large reservoirs, Lake Mathews to the northwest and Lake Perris to the east. The estimated population in the area is roughly 140,000 residents. Battalion 1 is LRA and SRA with a few small pockets of FRA, mostly BLM. The City of Perris is central to the area. The City of Perris has a large WUI component to the South and West. The fuels in and around the city are best described as light with annual grasses being the carrier of most fires. To the South of Lake Mathews lies the Gavilan Hills. The Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Reserve is a large County owned ecological reserve that is critical habitat for the Stephen Kangaroo Rat. CALFIRE work jointly with the Reserve to complete prescribed fire activities to promote habitat improvement.

The Gavilan Hills area has had a history of large fires, there are pockets of chaparral on northern slopes but, most of this area is grasslands that will continue to support large fires with extreme fire rates of spread. South of Lake Perris is the Nuevo community; this is agriculture area that transitions into a WUI component in the Juniper Flats a classic example of a Wildland Urban Interface portion of the County that is comprised of large grasslands in mountainous terrain. Also, Lakeview Hills has had multiple large fires in its history; the fuel loading is annual grasses and light brush with heavier fuels on northern slopes. Lake Perris State Park has a rich history for the indigenous population within the area and is home to many sensitive cultural sites. Lake Perris sees roughly a thousand visitors daily. 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 comprise most 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 UC Riverside to maintain a fuel reduction 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 LE100 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, DFW and DWR to ensure fuel reduction along the Ramona Expressway is undertaken and maintained.

### **Good Meadow Area**

- The continued diligent LE100 program for the Good Meadow area.
- 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. Send home literature in Spanish language to educate the parents of the LE5 process, to reduce the number of illegal burns in Fire Station 9's first due.
- Work with BLM to increase enforcement of the BLM shooting area of 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 LE100 program in the Juniper Flats and SRA areas of Fire Station 54 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.
- Continue to enforce Public Resource Code

### **Battalion 2 – Lake Elsinore**

The Battalion 2 area East of Interstate 15 is comprised mainly of fuel model 1(Grass) fuels that has a significant fire history. The area along interstate 15 has seen several housing developments built over the last 10 years, significantly reducing the amount of SRA, however, it created a direct threat to the public and infrastructure if a fire were to occur in the area. The population within the communities of Battalion 2 total roughly 172,000 residents. The West portion of the Battalion consists of a mix of SRA, LRA, USFS land with CAL FIRE DPA and USFS land with Federal DPA. This area is known collectively as the Ortega front country and is bordered on the south by La Cresta and to the north by the Battalion 2/4 border. This area possesses 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 Lake Elsinore Front Country has a its own weather pattern based off heating in the desert, on summer days wind will blow down canyon at 30-40 mph until the early evening then return to up slope winds. This weather phenomenon is called the Elsinore Effect. To address the abundance of Wildland Urban Interface spanning from La Cresta to the Ortega Highway, then along the 15 freeway to the Battalion 4 boundary, The Riverside Unit and Riverside County Fire Department have developed the Lake Elsinore Front County Fuel Break. This is a fuels reduction project that separates the housing developments from The Cleveland National Forest along the SRA boundary. The project development and associated California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) document was finished in late 2021. With work continuing through Grant funds from the Riverside County Fire Department and local Riverside Unit resources.

## **Pre-Fire Tactics- Battalion 2 -Southwest Division**

Close coordination with the Southwest Fire Safe 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 LE100 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.

## **Fuels Projects**

- Projects as listed in the 2019 through 2024 Unit Fire Plan 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 2019 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
- Lake Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break
- 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 Capistrano Hazardous fuels removal/chipping. CWPP for the Southwest Fire Safe Council area to include the mountain communities of Battalion 2 and Battalion 15- Needs to be updated.

### **Battalion 3 – San Gorgonio Pass**

The Beaumont Battalion lies in the San Gorgonio Pass which is a separation point between the Pacific coastal slopes and the Coachella Valley desert slopes. The elevation ranges from 1100' MSL in the mouth of the Whitewater River to over 5000' in the Oak Glen area. The terrain ranges from gentle rolling hills to steep rocky escarpments. Grazing of livestock has had an impact on the gentler slopes and some of these areas are dominated by annual grasses. The San Gorgonio Pass is infamous for large, intense, and damaging fires that can occur during any part of the year. This area is the deadliest to wildland fire fighters in the United States. Due to the diversity of soils, climate, and topography there are these distinctive fuel types: heavy mixed chaparral on the north and northwestern slopes at higher elevations, oak woodland in the rolling hills, coastal sage scrub at the lower elevations, and brittlebush/creosote scrub on the higher desert slopes. Some areas of the Beaumont Battalion have been burned over repeatedly in the last two decades and there is some type conversion to weedy annual grasses in these areas. The fuels in the area recover to nearly pre-fire conditions after 20 years if left undisturbed by repeated fires. This area was ravaged by wildland fire in 2020 having both the Apple Fire 33,424 acres and Eldorado Fire 22,744 acres occur within months of one another. Other historic fires in the area known as the Esperanza fire of 2006 where five of our federal brothers tragically lost their lives under the know foehn wind known as the Santa Ana wind. In 2013 the silver fire, which was the carbon footprint of the Esperanza fire, but burnt in the opposite direction from west to east. This caused the area once covered by mature native chaparral to be replaced with light annual grasses while the mixed chaparral adapts and regenerates from the effects of wildfire. During the winter months of storms, rain and snow have caused a great deal of erosion and flooding to the communities within the mentioned fires burn scars.

#### **Pre-Fire Tactics – Battalion 3 San Gorgonio Pass**

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

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 by developing a plan with Cooperating agencies.

#### **Poppet Flats and Twin Pines Areas**

Continue diligent LE100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to area. Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE100 program (Residential Structure Clearance) compliance. Continue community chipping program to reduce hazardous fuels in the WUI areas.

#### **San Timoteo Canyon Area**

Continue diligent LE100 Program, Place Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to the canyon. Enforce address posting. Inspect Railroad 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. \*Pending approval of burn plan.

## **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, continued inspection, and annual Maintenance.

## **Morongo Indian Reservation**

With Morongo Fire Department, develop and implement reservation wide Fire Safety and Prevention Plan. Morongo Fire Department is committed to developing a Wildland urban interface (WUI) plan/Fire Safe (defensible space) on the reservation.

## **Battalion 4 – Corona, Norco**

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. In addition, the leadership of the area is working closely with MCHCP to educate them on the use of prescribed fire and the importance of the VMP Program. The Tin Mine Recreation Area was also closed.

The SOLAR Operations / Communications Plan has been put into place to cover the four County jurisdictions which include San Bernardino, Orange, Los Angeles, and Riverside counties. It consists of and conducts the annual interagency exercise to institute the plan.

Concentration our LE100 program and inspectors in the areas of Battalion 4 along the I-15 corridor to reduce our fire potential and remove fuels for defensible space.

Continued Truck Trail maintenance continues to be a priority, specifically Skyline, Indian and the Bedford. These truck trails are vital ingress and egress routes for fire suppression resources and continual maintenance is coordinated thru cooperative agreements with state, federal and county agencies and dependent upon funding sources.

The after-action review of the Falls Fire has initiated the need for a fuels buffer along the wild land urban interface from the community of Corona to the north, to the community of Temecula to the south. The area of Temescal Valley specifically, Trilogy and Sycamore Creek communities fall within this planned project area and are a priority in this Division.

A focused review and of the evacuation, pre-attack and initial attack portions of the Riverside County Strategic Contingency Plan of 2008 which apply to this Division are a priority.

## **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 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 and continued drought. The San Jacinto Battalion resides in one of the largest water sheds in the Riverside Unit. The responders within the Battalion are faced with a growing population density, an increase in human caused ignitions, coordinating response with a Tribal Fire Department as well as Federal Cooperators.

### **Pre- Fire Tactics- 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.

#### **Gibble Canyon Area**

The LE100 Program has gone into effect in the Gibble Canyon Area.

#### **Sage, Aguanga, Val Vista Area**

Create Evacuation Safety Corridors on R-3 (Sage Road) from Saint John's Grade to Hwy 79 South at Radec Junction and on Red Mountain Road by roadside fuel modification(s). Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE100 program compliance. Set up community chipping projects.

#### **Glen Oaks, De Portola Area**

Work with Fire Safe Councils on LE100 program 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 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 9- Moreno Valley**

The Moreno Valley Battalion is in a semi-arid region of western Riverside County in a valley that sits at approximately the 1500-foot level bordered to the northwest by Box Spring Mountain and Lake Perris Recreation Area on the south. The north and eastern borders is a steep rocky area known as the Badlands. Reche and San Timoteo Canyons sit just to the north of the city that creating two highly traveled two lane roads and the railroad system for access to the Cherry Valley area and San Bernardino Counties. The predominate fuels in the areas surrounding Moreno Valley Battalion include annual grasses (Fuel Models 1 and 3) and light brush species of sage and buckwheat (Fuel Models 5).

All the canyons, hills and mountains bordering Moreno Valley area have a significant history of large fires. These fires historically have some threat to the residences within Urban Interface (WUI) or rural intermix creating the need to for augment resources for structure defenses in neighboring canyons and hills which including such fires as “Kitching”, “Alessandro”, “Reche”, “Gilman”, “Box Springs”, “Oliver”, “Locust”, “Pass”, “Theodore”, “Stallion” and “Pilgrim” and many other fires. Many of these fires have threatened homes in all sections of the city limits near Hidden Springs, Sunnymead Ranch, Moreno, Moreno Valley Ranch and Rancho Bellagio sections of the community. The WUI component is not just exclusive to the outer limits of the city. Within the city limits of Moreno Valley there are two major WUI zones with the first being the homes surrounding approximately 160 acres of the Poorman’s Reservoir and the second area is approximately 260 acres near Moreno peak at the northwest corner of Moreno Beach and Cottonwood Avenue.

### **Reche Canyon**

Continue to maintain a diligent LE100 Program, while placing Fire Prevention signs at the entrances to all canyons. Develop a pre-fire attack plan for the area.

### **San Timoteo Canyon**

Continue to maintain a diligent LE100 Program while placing Fire Prevention signs at entrance(s) to canyon. Inspections would focus on enforcement of posting address and inspecting Railroad Right of Way clearance. Develop a pre-attack fire plan for the area.

### **Pigeon Pass / Box Springs**

Continue to maintain a diligent LE100 Program. Develop a pre-fire attack plan for the area including the Box Spring Mountain area and the Hidden Spring community.

### **Gilman Springs**

Target the area for enforcement of existing laws for off road vehicle use and target shooting. Area has a history of strip and burn stolen vehicles as primary ignition sources. Develop a pre- fire attack plan in the 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.

### **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. This restoration of the habitat would lessen the fuel loading; therefore, decrease the area fire intensity.

The Moreno Valley Division is in the planning stages to develop pre-fire attack plans for the historical fire danger locations within the division. These plans will identify roads, water sources, heli-spots, staging areas, evacuation decision points, potential resource needs for structure defense, and possible incident base locations.

### **Battalion 11**

Battalion 11 is our largest threat area that encompasses the mountainous areas of the Riverside County, ranging from Hemet east to the west of the City of Palm Desert, south of the City Banning and North of the Communities of Lake Riverside and Anza. Battalion 11 sits inside and surrounds the perimeter of the San Jacinto Ranger District of the San Bernardino National Forest.

In Cooperation with the Idyllwild Fire Department, and United States Forest Service enhancing our shared boundaries for cooperative fire protection is a priority. Both agencies along with RRU Cal Fire work diligently to establish relationships to achieve each other's mission and goals when working in unified command within mutual threat zone boundaries.

Continue to maintain a diligent LE100 Program. Develop pre-fire attack plans for the area surrounding mountain communities within County of Riverside and SRA lands.

Plan, establish, and complete VMP projects with the mountain communities for the protection from wildland fires that threaten the surrounding communities.

### **Battalion 13 - Menifee**

The City of Menifee sits within southwestern portion of riverside county with a population of over 100,000 residents. Menifee is one of the fastest growing cities within the county. Menifee station 68, Sun City Station 7, and Quail Valley Station 5 pose the highest risk for wildland fires inside of Battalion 13. The city of Menifee and the surrounding communities within Battalion 13 pose a high WUI threat zone and is highly susceptible to wildfires because it is where homes are built in relation to where the environment meets with undeveloped wildland or vegetative fuels.



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.

In the Salt Creek riparian are, there is a continual fuel bed from the Winchester, Menifee city limits and runs west to the City of Canyon Lake. The creek bottom fuel load is made up of annual grasses, willows, and other various brush and tree species.

Concentration of LE100's and LE95 inspections along the Highway 215 corridor to reduce our fire potential and remove fuels for defensible space.

In Cooperation with the Murrietta City Fire Department, enhancing our shared boundaries for cooperative fire protection is a priority. This will make for better cooperative firefighter safety and access points along jurisdictional boundaries by allowing multiple agencies to work together in unified command.

## **Battalion 14**

In the Santa Ana River drainage, there is a continual fuel bed from the Mission Boulevard Bridge to the Van Buren Boulevard Bridge in Pedley extending west to Highway 71 along the Riverside County northernborder. The river bottom fuel load is made up of annual grasses, bamboo, various brush, and tree species.

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.

In Cooperation with the Riverside City Fire Department, enhancing our shared boundaries for cooperative fire protection is a priority. The City of Riverside is currently working on placing additional turn around points along the bike trail on the south side of the Santa Ana River. They are also placing Mile/Trail Markers on the Bike Trail to better locate fires or medical emergencies. These items will make for better cooperative firefighter safety and access points along the river.

We will concentrate our LE100 program and inspectors in the areas of Battalion 14 along the I-15 and Highway 60 corridor to reduce our fire potential and remove fuels for defensible space. In Battalion 14 we've coordinated our efforts with Battalion 9 to cover the north and west sides of Box Springs Mountain along with the efforts of the Riverside City Fire Department to provide defensible space and perform LE100 inspections.

Continued Truck Trail maintenance continues to be a priority, specifically Skyline, Indian and the Bedford. These truck trails are vital ingress and egress routes for fire suppression resources and continual maintenance is coordinated thru cooperative agreements with state, federal and county agencies and dependent upon funding sources.

A focused review and of the evacuation, pre-attack and initial attack portions of the Riverside County Strategic Contingency Plan of 2008 which apply to this Division are a priority.

## **Battalion 15 – Temecula**

Battalion 15 encompasses the Temecula valley and surrounding areas. The valley area is predominantly developed LRA and contains the cities of Temecula and Murrietta. The heavily populated valley is bisected by Interstates 15 and 215 and is bordered on the north by the cities of Wildomar and Menifee, and by the San Diego County line to the south. The northern portion of the battalion contains pockets of SRA that are predominantly grass a light brush mix, that about developed residential neighborhoods.

The hills on the west side of the valley are predominantly covered by heavy brush with some oak woodlands are SRA from the valley floor to the Cleveland National Forest, and Camp Pendleton Marine Base (FRA) to the west. The western hills have a significant WUI component as they encompass the communities of La Cresta, Tenaja, and De Luz, which contain large estate type homes on 5-to-10-acre parcels. Due to their proximity to the Pacific Ocean and the funneling effect of the Santa Margarita River Canyon, the western hills see strong southwesterly winds most afternoons that will override slope driven fire behavior and cause significant downhill fire runs.

The SRA in the southern portion of the battalion along the Highway 79 South Corridor is predominantly grass and light brush that transitions to heavier brush on the Palomar district of the Cleveland National Forest (FRA). The climate is typically hotter and drier than the western hills and supports rapid rates of spread and spotting. There are isolated structures scattered in the area and two campgrounds that pose a WUI challenge.

The eastern portion of the battalion is all SRA and is dominated by rolling hills of predominantly grass and light brush, supporting rapid rates of spread and spotting. There is a large WUI component ranging from large estate type homes throughout the wine country area to more isolated dwellings toward the Sage area.

## **PRE-FIRE MANAGEMENT TACTICS**

- Continued diligent Defensible Space Inspections in all WUI areas.
- Work with the land managers of the 3 large open space preserves (Lake Skinner MSR, Santa Rosa Plateau, Santa Margarita Preserve) to conduct yearly VMP burns to reduce fuel loads, remove invasive species, and provide for habitat re-hab.
- Work with Caltrans and the USFS to reduce fuels along Highway 79 south, to prevent roadside starts, and maintain the highway as a vital evacuation route for Aguanga, South Sage, Anza, and the San Diego County communities.
- Continue to work and assist other departments with prescribed burns, and building relationships to ensure we all follow and respects the mission at hand.

## APPENDIX A: PRE- FIRE PROJECTS



### Pre-Fire Projects

#### Riverside Unit (RRU)

01/01/2023 through 12/31/2024

| Program   | Project Name               | Project Status | Total Acres |
|-----------|----------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Fire Plan | Davis Unit VMP             | Planning       | 10,000      |
| Fire Plan | Cahuilla Fuel Reduction    | Completed      | 998         |
| Fire Plan | El Cariso HFR              | Active         | 153         |
| Fire Plan | Idyllwild / Pine Cove      | Active         | 425         |
| Fire Plan | LEFCFB                     | Completed      | 80          |
| Fire Plan | Lake Mathews VMP           | Active         | 5770        |
| Fire Plan | Lake Perris Assist         | Active         | 829         |
| Fire Plan | Lake Skinner VMP           | Active         | 1430        |
| Fire Plan | Oak Glen Water Canyon HFR  | Active         | 636         |
| Fire Plan | Point of Rocks HFR         | Planning       | 345         |
| Fire Plan | RRU Truck Trail Maint. HFR | Ongoing        | 481         |
| Fire Plan | Red Hill VMP               | Active         | 222         |
| Fire Plan | Santa Rosa Plateau VMP     | Ongoing        | 4101        |
| Fire Plan | Stone Creek HFR            | Active         | 277         |
| Fire Plan | Tenaja Road HFR            | Completed      | 415         |
| Fire Plan | USFS Main Divide           | Completed      | 1163        |

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

## **APPENDIX B: UNIT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2024 RIVERSIDE UNIT GOALS**

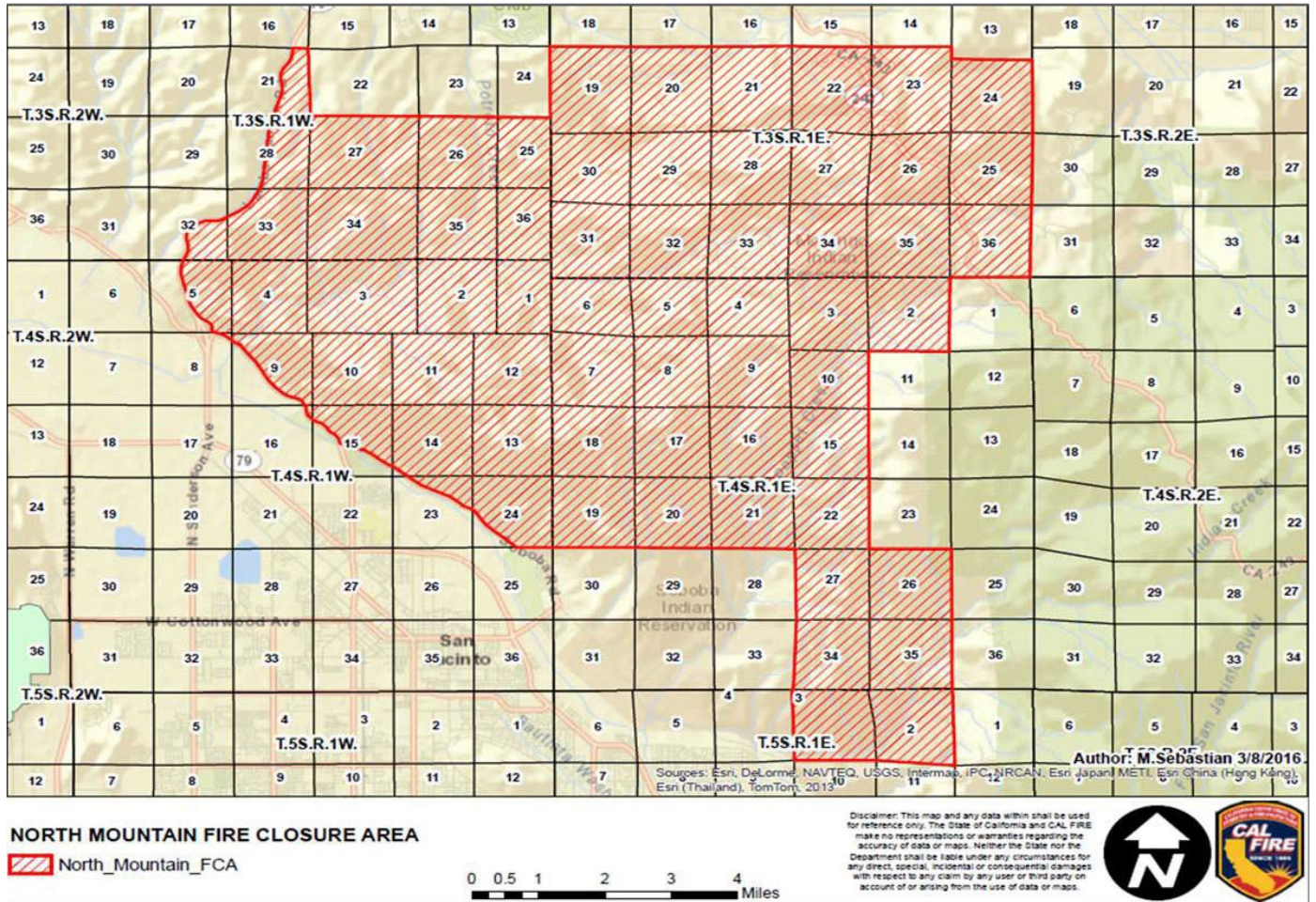
- Move forward with current and planned Pre-Fire projects.
- Complete the Red Mountain VTP Environmental Review and CEQA Document. Once Completed, begin the on the ground reduction of vegetation.
- Pursue funding sources for Unit “In Maintenance” fuel reduction projects and prioritize.
- Resume maintenance of historic truck trails, fuel breaks and water tanks. Complete GIS Geodatabase edits on Unit Truck Trail data base and populate data on Mobile Data Computers (MDC’s)
- Maintain fuel breaks around critical infra-structure (communication sites) and high-risk residential areas.
- Continue Gold Spotted Oak Borer control and eradication measures.
- Continue monitoring Dead, Dying and Diseased Trees and pursue funding for removal.
- Develop a FRAR field reporting application for Unit resources.
- Solidify Unit SRA/DPA lines through a focused review.
- Promote Grant funded projects within the Riverside Unit.
- Participate in the first review of High Hazard Fire Severity Zones from Riverside County.
- Continue to update, develop, and complete, 5-year SRA review plan.
- Complete planning phases of Davis and Portrero Unit VMP’s.
- 80% Compliance to the LE100 program.

## APPENDIX C: EXHIBIT MAPS

The Riverside Unit Chief annually closes certain areas to entry and recreation due to extreme fire danger at the declaration of the County wide cessation of "Open Burning". The maps in this section reflect those areas.

### EXHIBITS: MAPS

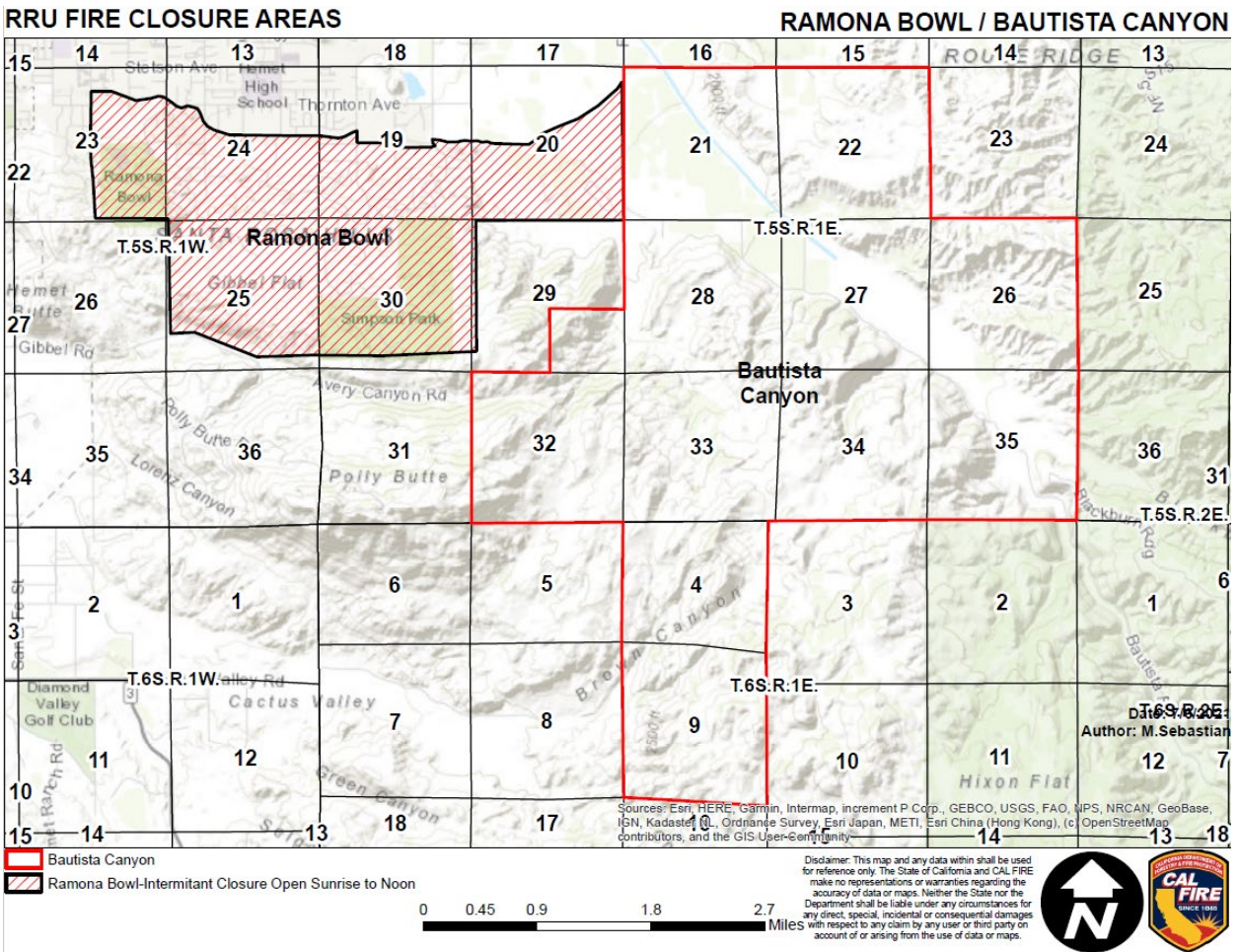
Figure A: Unit Fire Closure Map/North Mountain-Indian Canyon





**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

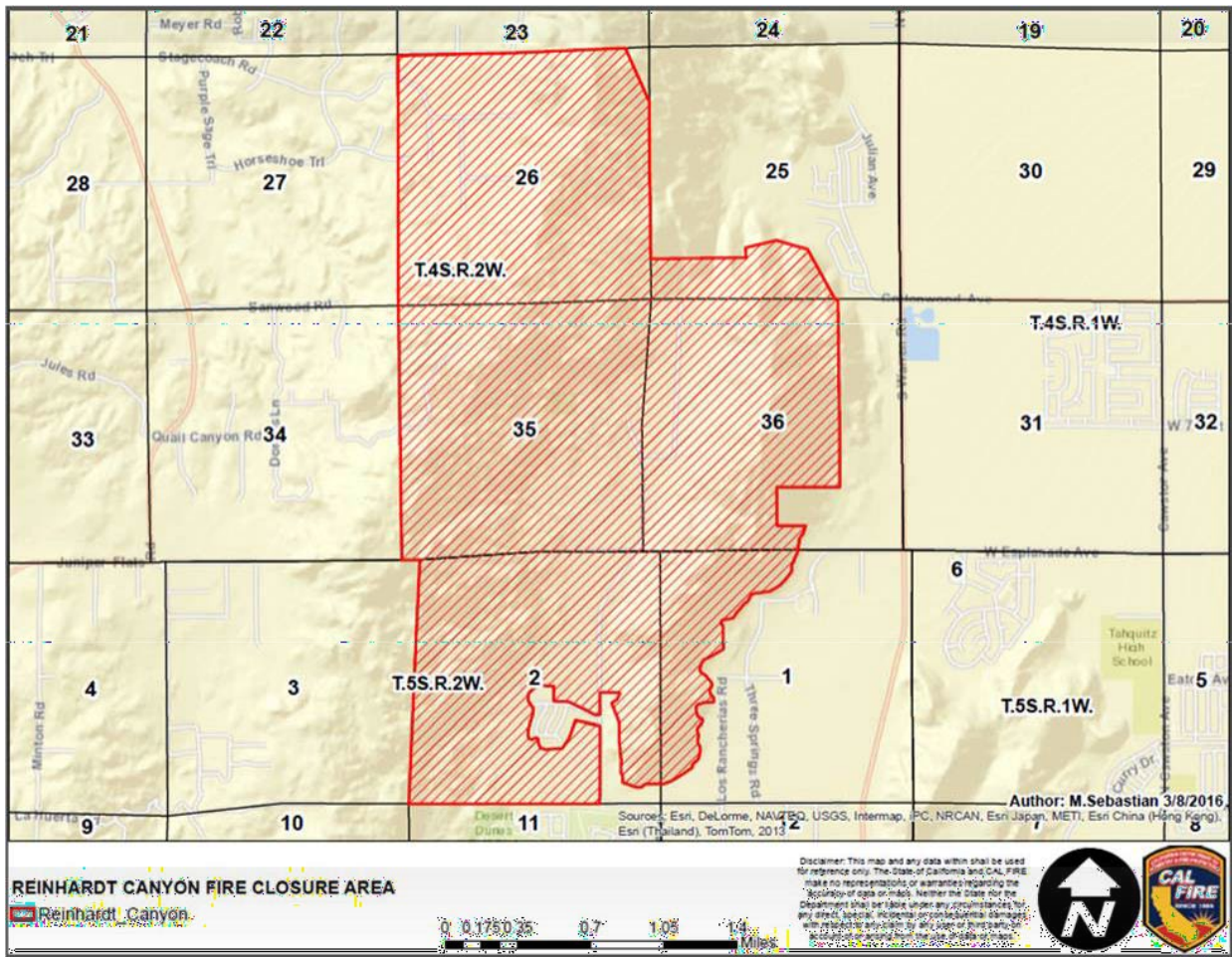
**Figure C: Unit Fire Closure Map/Ramona Bowl-Bautista Canyon**





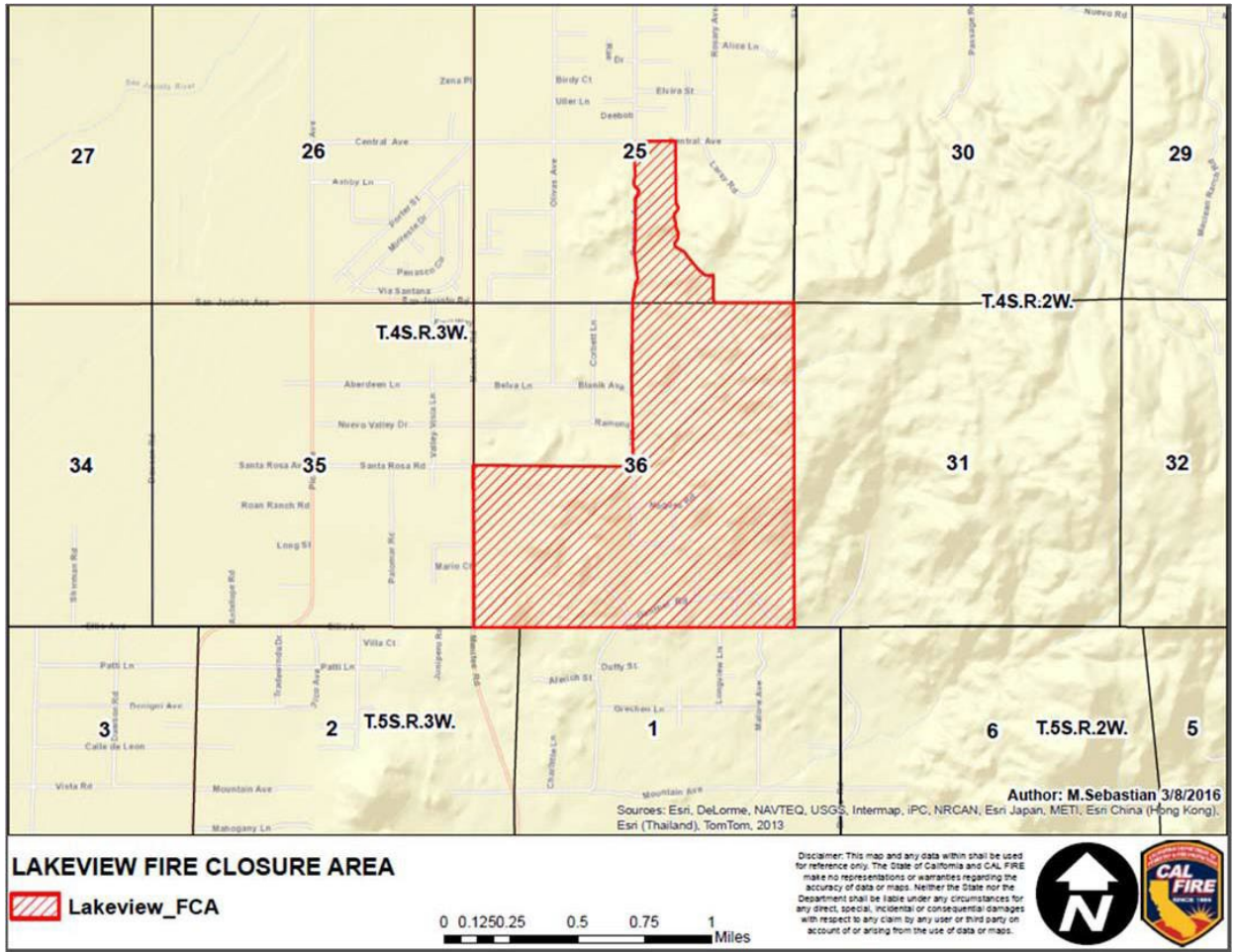
**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

**Figure D: Unit Fire Closure Map/Reinhardt Canyon**



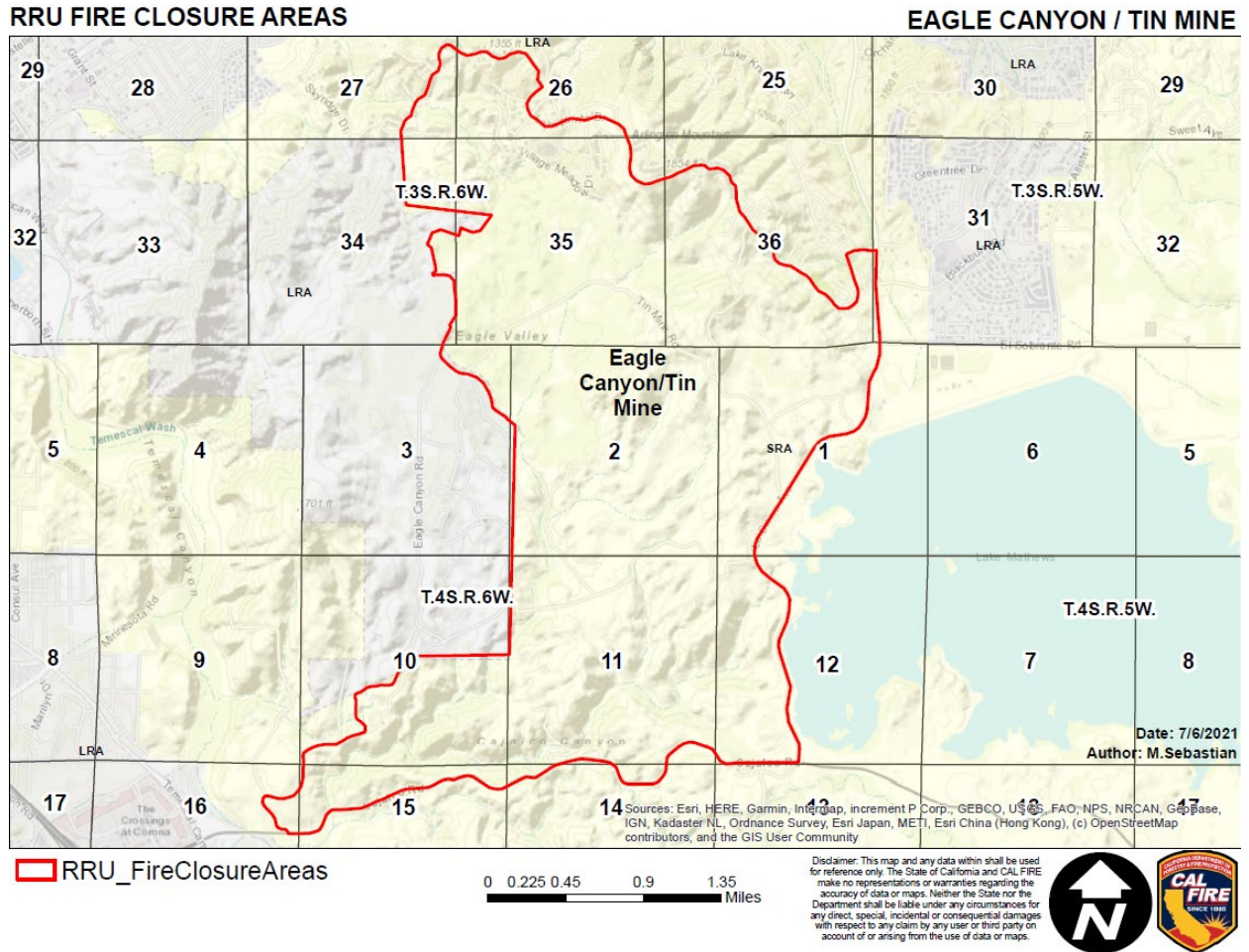
**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

**Figure E: Unit Fire Closure Map/Lakeview**



**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

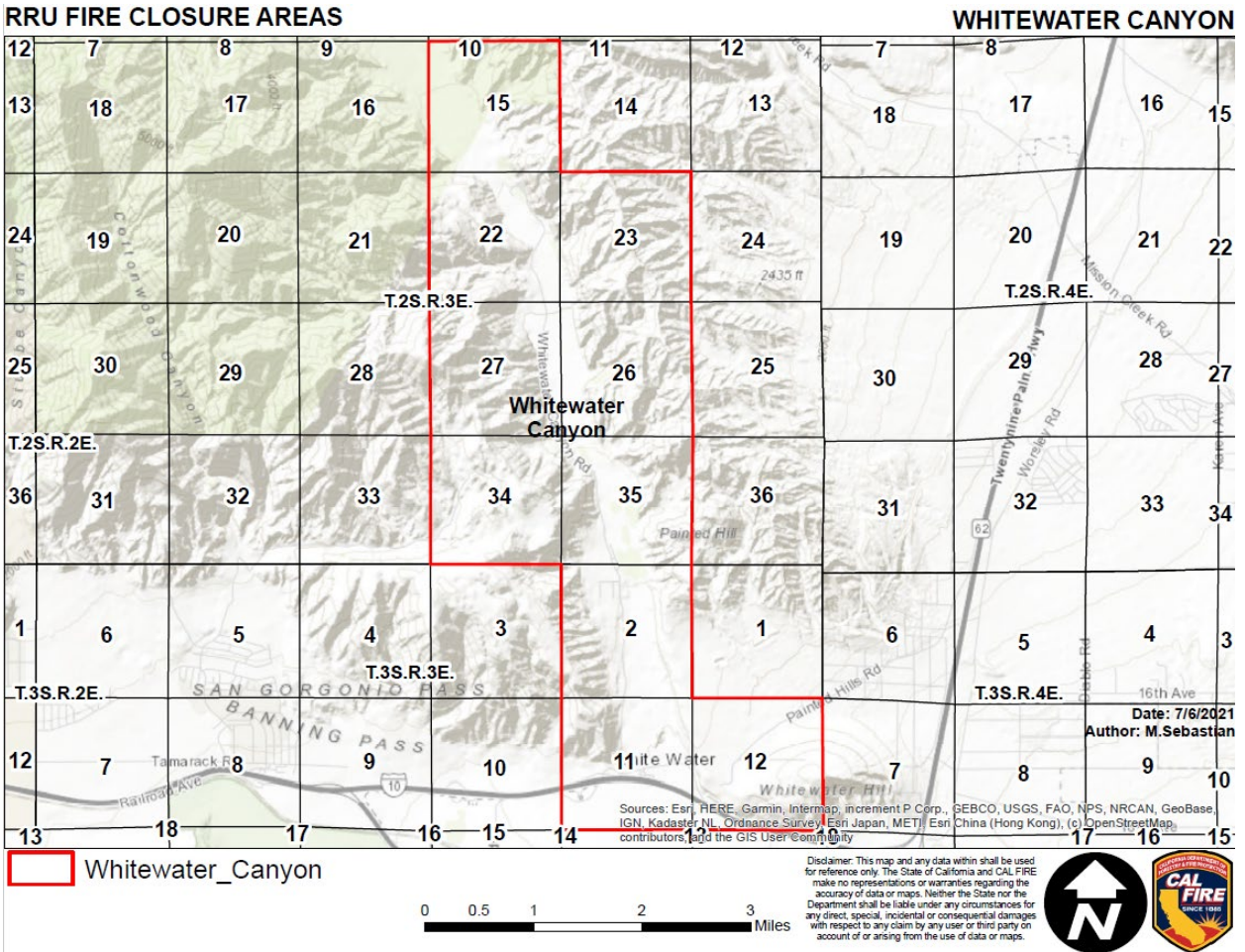
**Figure F: Unit Fire Closure Map/Eagle Canyon-Tin Mine**





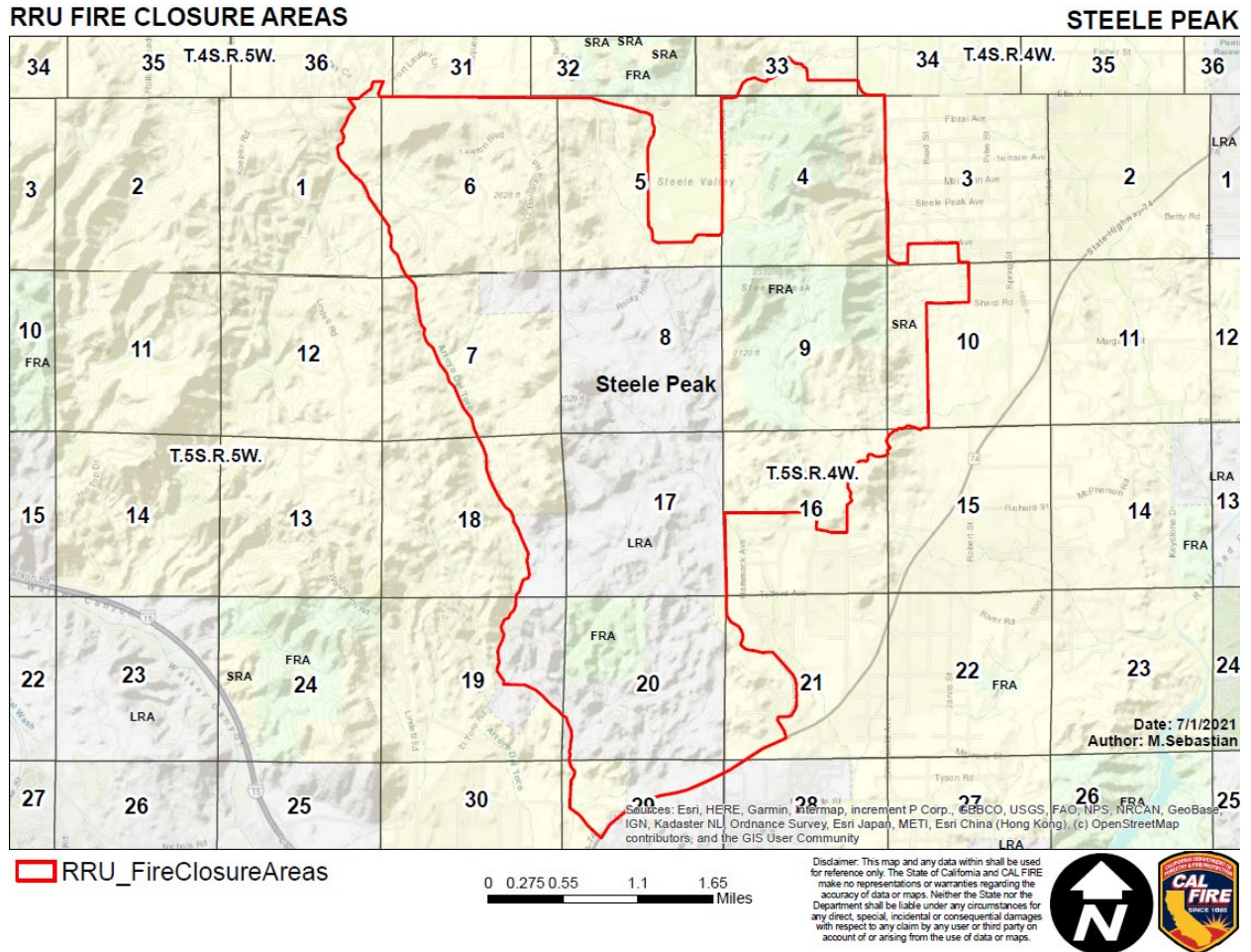
**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

**Figure G: Unit Fire Closure Map/Whitewater Canyon**



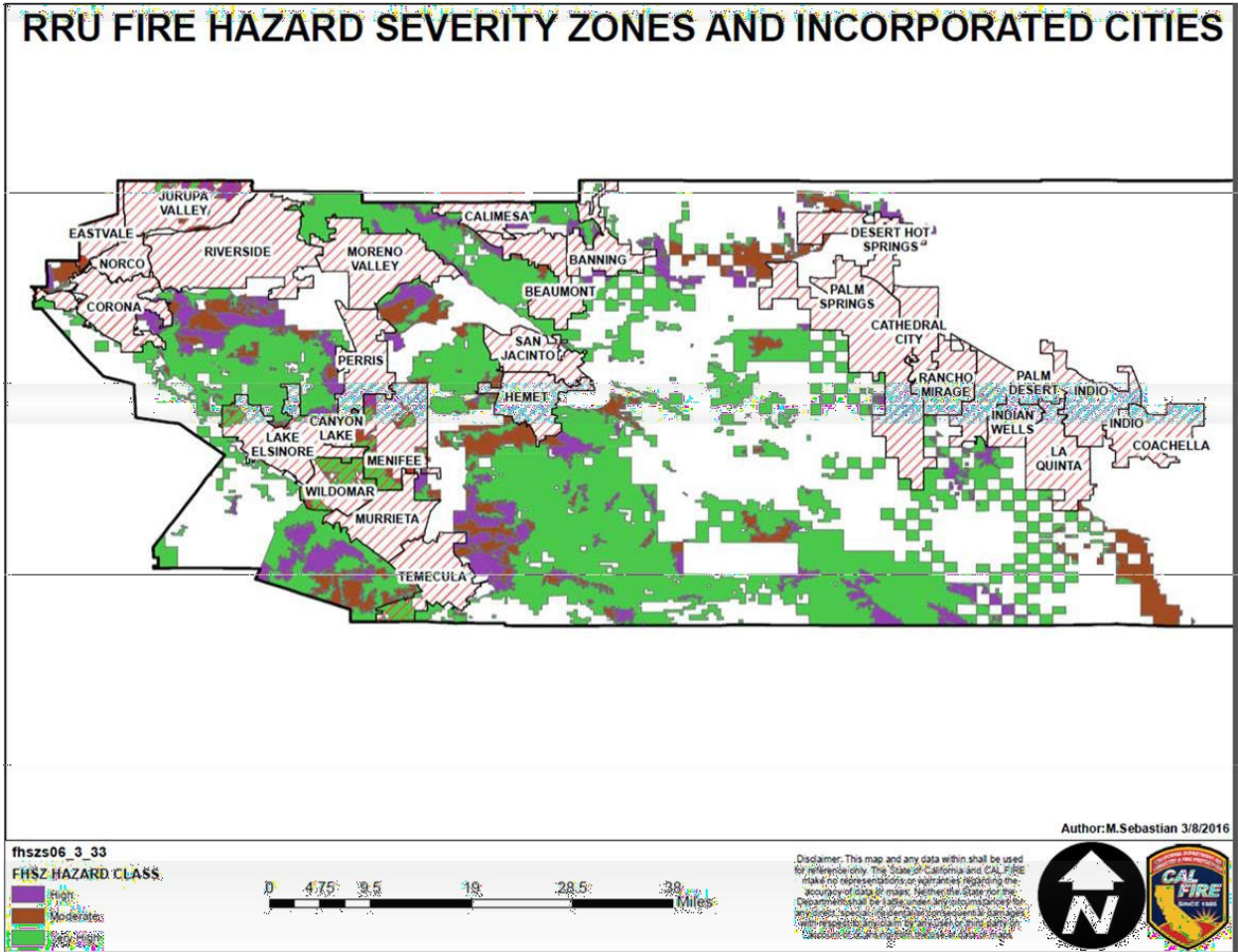
**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

**Figure H: Unit Fire Closure Map/Steel Peak**



**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

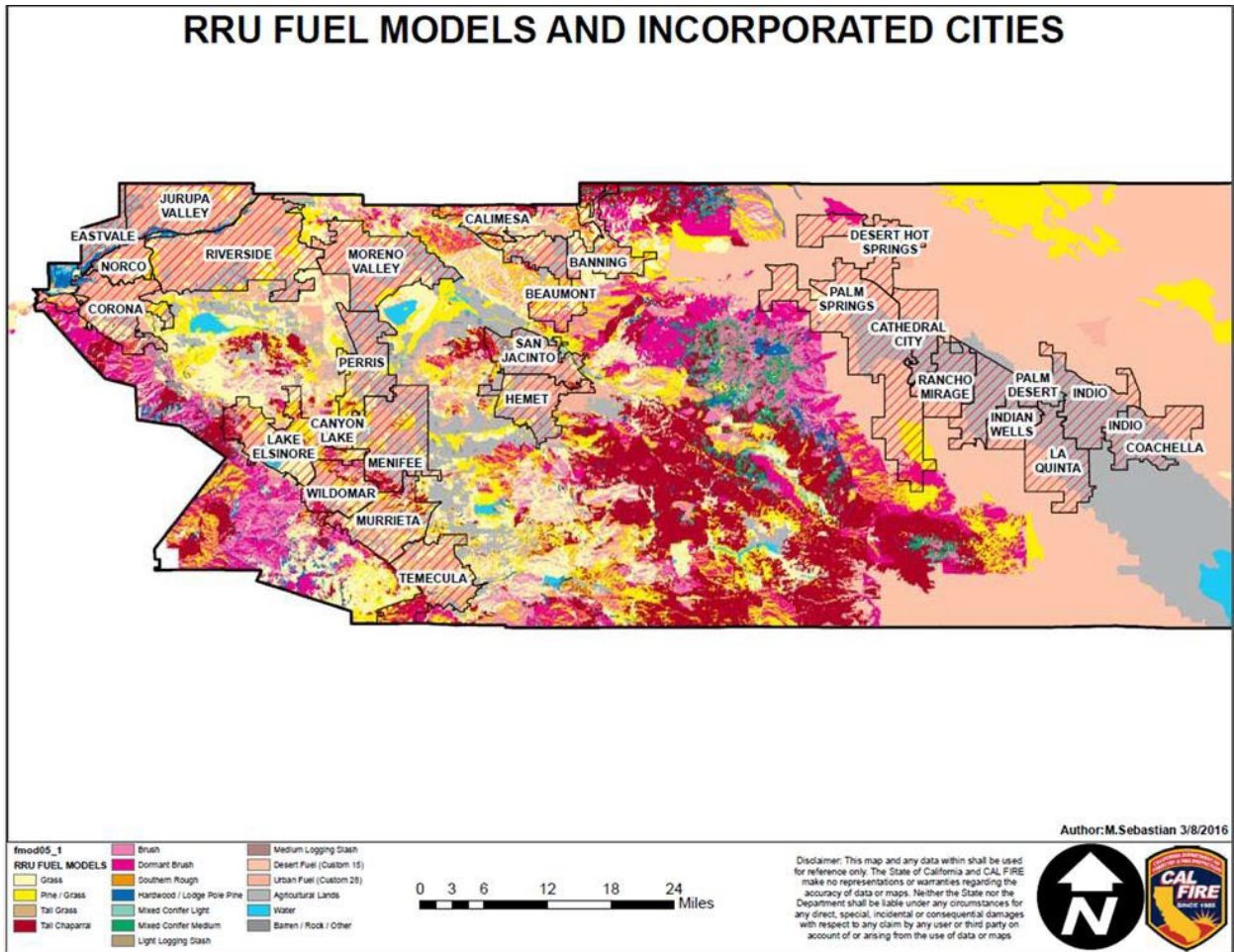
**Figure I: Unit FHSZ Map**





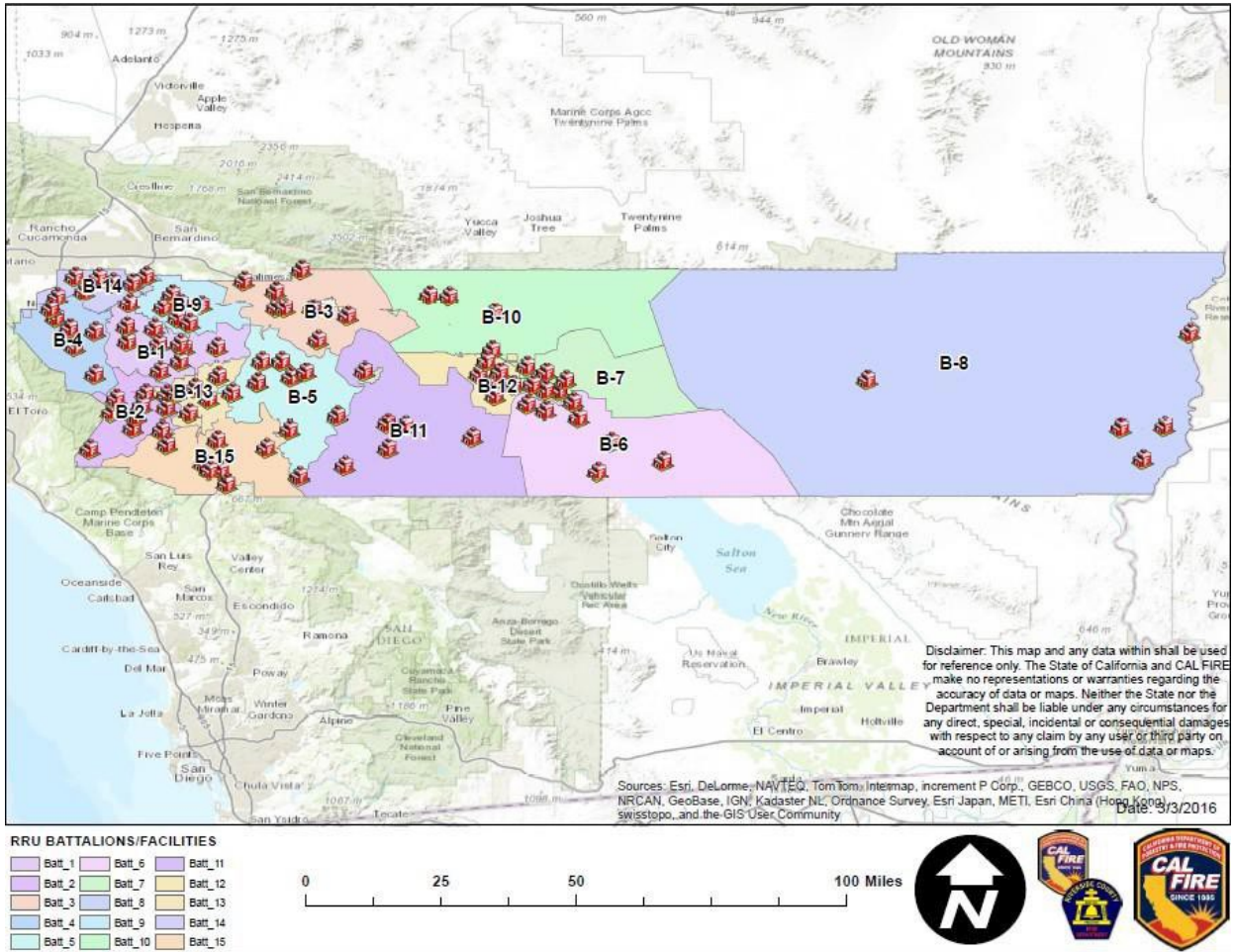
**EXHIBITS: MAPS**

**Figure J: Unit Fuel Model Map**

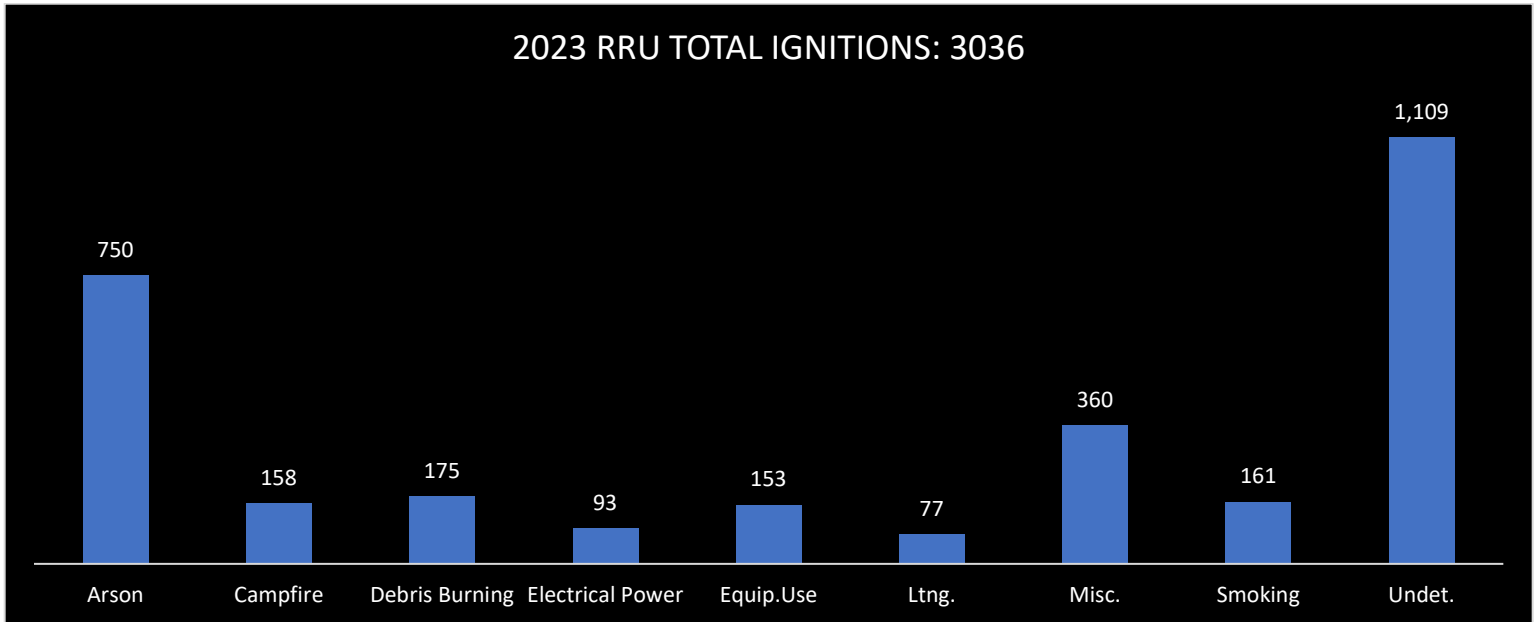


# EXHIBITS: MAPS

## Figure K: Unit Boundary/Battalions/Facilities

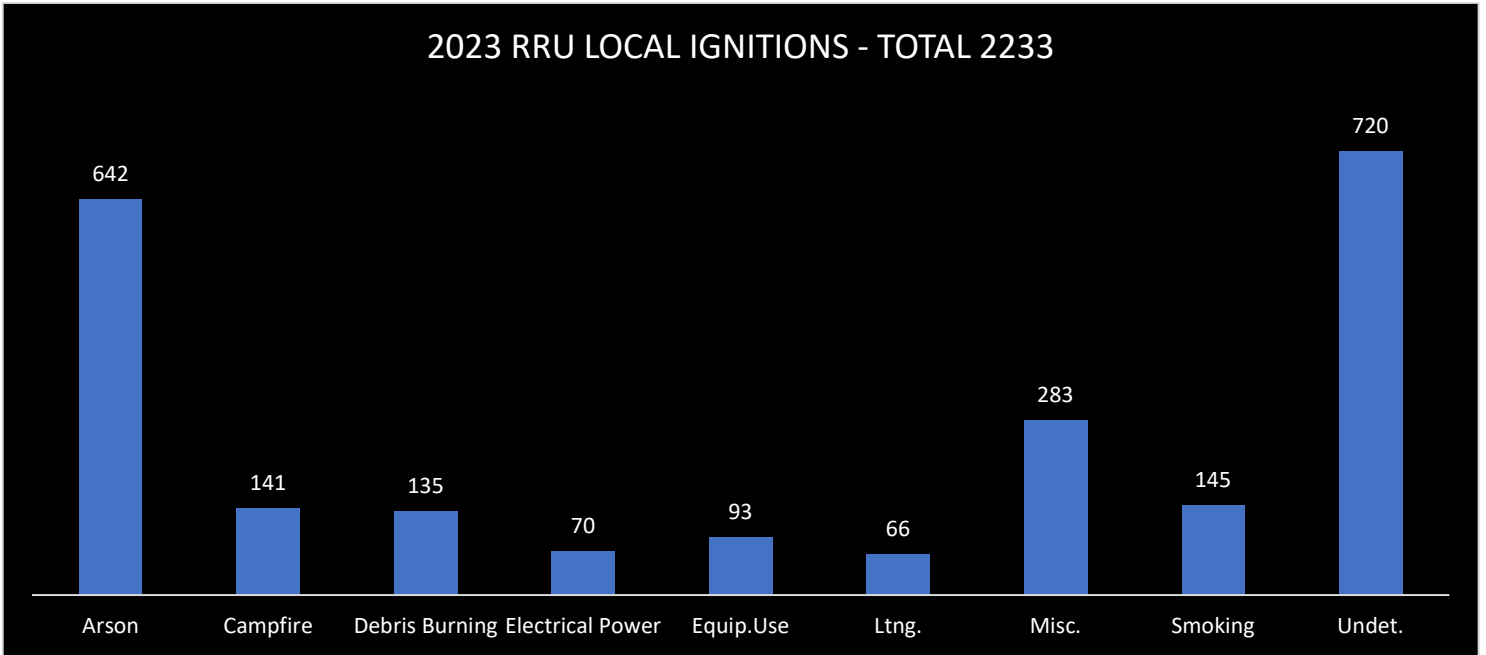
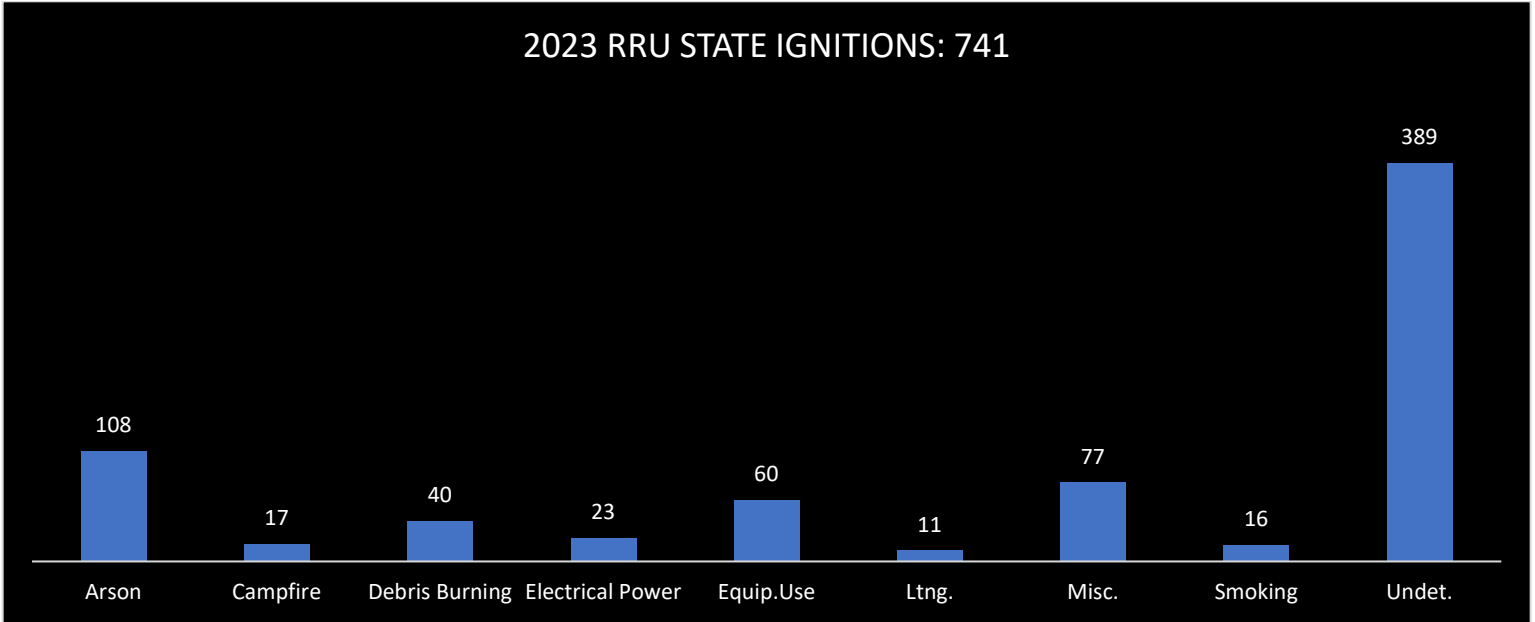


## APPENDIX D: RIVERSIDE UNIT IGNITION DATA



Ignition data for the Riverside Unit was analyzed for a 3-year period (2021-2023) to evaluate ignition trends and problems within the Unit. This 2020 dataset includes 5108 ignitions and includes an identification of fire cause. The table represents the ignitions for 2023 classified by fire cause. The 3-year ignition history for the Riverside Unit identifies trends in ignition type, with many ignition causes classified as arson, miscellaneous or undetermined. Equipment use and Vehicle also emerge as significant ignition sources within the Unit. Spatial analysis of ignition sources reveals a direct correlation between ignitions and roads/transportation corridors. High density of ignitions is also observable within and adjacent to urban areas. These concentrations of ignitions along transportation corridors and in urban areas emphasizes the importance of public education and fire prevention activities, including road-side fuel treatments and strategic management of flashy fuels (e.g., grasses) and WUI intermix areas.

Riverside Unit Ignition Data continued.



## **APPENDIX E: FIRE DANGER OPERATING PLAN**

This plan is designed to help guide the application of the National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS) at the unit level. It will provide a framework for consistent thought process to apply the Fire Danger Operating Plan in Riverside County for agency administrators, fire managers, dispatchers, agency coordinators, and firefighters using accurate and effective scientific

and historical fire and weather data. Management decisions dealing with dispatch levels and staffing levels will be assessed based on vegetation condition, climate, and topography in conjunction with NFDRS modeling.

This operating plan is for Riverside County, which encompasses two Fire Danger Rating Areas (FRDA) including Low Country FRDA and High Country FRDA. These two geographic regions are our focus of study because each is composed of a unique combination of fuels, climate, and topography.

This plan offers decision support and helps in quantifying elements that establish agency planning and response levels. Additionally, procedure for developing seasonal risk analysis and fire severity decision points is outlined with the implementation and analysis of this plan.

<http://www.rvcfire.org/Pages/default.aspx>



**US National Fire Danger  
Rating System  
(NFDRS2016)**

## ANNUAL REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2023

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break was funded through 2023. The Red Mountain Fuel Break continued with the planning/environmental phase, and a grant application process.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** Riverside Truck Trail Maintenance continues and is currently under repairs and maintenance. Public education signs are being constructed and put in place for public information in strategic areas within the SRA.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Community Education Bureau: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau, continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. As of December 2023, we now have 103,500 Twitter followers, 94,200 Facebook followers, 28,600 Instagram followers, and 9,100 YouTube followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. Incident call volume averages between 500 and 600 calls per day which lends itself to posting an increasing the number of social media posts on our platforms and creating significant incident fact sheets to the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Over 36,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by grant-funded education specialists in between January 2023 and December 2023. This was all possible with distance learning, zoom meetings and a full-scale video production, “Fire Safety ON, Accidents GONE”, targeting fire safety education for Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. Funding from the CCI grant also allowed the creation and purchase of new hazardous fire area signs that will be posted in seven areas throughout the County as the Fire Chief closes these areas due to the high risk of wildland fires annually.

**Vegetation Management/ Fuel Reduction Activity Reporting (FRAR):** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1, 2, 3, 11, and 15, Broadcast Burning also continued at Lake Matthews, Santa Rosa Plateau and Lake Skinner for a total of over **375 acres** The RedHill VMP, Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP, Point of Rocks, Upper Dry Creek, Main Divide, and Tenaja Road projects were either started or re-entered with a total of **1480 acres** treated. Community chipping programs continued throughout the Unit in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley, Pinyon and La Cresta in association with their specific Fire Safe Councils.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 128 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to local grinding facility in Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal, and spraying application efficiency.

X 

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Bill Weiser  
RRU Unit Chief



## ANNUAL REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2022

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break was funded through 2022. The Red Mountain Fuel Break continued with the planning/environmental phase, and a grant application process.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** The Riverside Unit Truck Trail system was surveyed, road Repair, and vegetation clearing were completed on 7 miles under Local Unit funding.

**Education and Information:** : “Public Information and Community Education Bureau: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau, amid COVID-19 restrictions continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. As of December 2022, we now have 79,000 Twitter followers, 75,000 Facebook followers and 18,000 Instagram followers. Our subscription numbers are also increasing on the Riverside County Fire Department YouTube page. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. Incident call volume averages between 500 and 600 calls per day which lends itself to posting an increasing the number of social media posts on our platforms and creating significant incident fact sheets to the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Over 38,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by grant-funded education specialists in between January 2020 and March 2021. This was all possible with distance learning, zoom meetings and a full-scale video production, “Fire Safety ON, Accidents GONE”, targeting fire safety education for Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. Funding from the CCI grant also allowed the creation and purchase of new hazardous fire area signs that will be posted in seven areas throughout the County as the Fire Chief closes these areas due to the high risk of wildland fires annually.

**Vegetation Management/ Fuel Reduction Activity Reporting (FRAR):** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1, 2, 3, 11, and 15, Broadcast Burning also continued at Lake Matthews, Santa Rosa Plateau and Lake Skinner for a total of **258 acres** The RedHill VMP, Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP, Point of Rocks, Upper Dry Creek, Main Divide, and Tenaja Road projects were either started or re-entered with a total of **973 acres** treated. Community chipping programs continued throughout the Unit in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley, Pinyon and La Cresta in association with their specific Fire Safe Councils.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 118 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to local grinding facility in Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal, and spraying application efficiency.

X 

Bill Weiser  
RRU Unit Chief

## ANNUAL REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2021

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break was funded through 2022. The Red Mountain Fuel Break continued with the planning/environmental phase, and a grant application process.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** Pre-Fire has nearly finalized a remote field Unit based Fuel Reduction Activity Reporting (FRAR) application which will provide real time fuel reduction reporting from field crews. The new RAWS unit was delivered and is operational near Anza which will provide useful additional data to the Unit Fire Danger Operating Plan (FDOP) which was updated by the Unit in 2021. The Resource Management Staff has completed Part 107 Authorization to be Unmanned Air Systems Pilots (UAS). The ability to utilize drones will enable real time data collection, help the staff enter areas hard to reach by vehicle and by foot.

**Education and Information:** "Public Information and Community Education Bureau: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau, amid COVID-19 restrictions continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. As of December 2020, we now have 62,000 Twitter followers, 51,000 Facebook followers and 12,000 Instagram followers. Our subscription numbers are also increasing on the Riverside County Fire Department YouTube page. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being "retweeted" and increase following. Incident call volume averages between 500 and 600 calls per day which lends itself to posting an increasing the number of social media posts on our platforms and creating significant incident fact sheets to the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Over 32,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by grant-funded education specialists in between January 2020 and March 2021. This was all possible with distance learning, zoom meetings and a full-scale video production, "Fire Safety ON, Accidents GONE", targeting fire safety education for Pre-K through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. Funding from the CCI grant also allowed the creation and purchase of new hazardous fire area signs that will be posted in seven areas throughout the County as the Fire Chief closes these areas due to the high risk of wildland fires annually.

**Vegetation Management/ Fuel Reduction Activity Reporting (FRAR):** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1, 2, 11 and 15, Broadcast Burning also continued at Lake Matthews, Santa Rosa Plateau and Lake Skinner for a total of **322 acres**. The Red Hill VMP, Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP, Point of Rocks, Upper Dry Creek, Main Divide, and Tenaja Road projects were either started or re-entered with a total of **973 acres** treated. Community chipping programs continued throughout the Unit in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley, Pinyon and La Cresta in association with their specific Fire Safe Councils.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 132 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal, and spraying application efficacy.

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Bill Weiser  
RRU Unit Chief

## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2020

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break was funded through 2022. The Red Mountain Fuel Break continued with the planning/environmental phase, and a grant application process.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** Pre-Fire has nearly finalized a remote field Unit based Fuel Reduction Activity Reporting (FRAR) application which will provide real time fuel reduction reporting from field crews. The new RAWS unit was delivered and is operational at the Lake Skinner Multi-Species Reserve which will provide useful additional data to the Unit Fire Danger Operating Plan (FDOP) which was updated by the Unit in 2020.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Community Education Bureau: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs and Community Education Bureau, amid COVID-19 restrictions continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. As of December 2020, we now have 62,000 Twitter followers, 51,000 Facebook followers and 12,000 Instagram followers. Our subscription numbers are also increasing on the Riverside County Fire Department YouTube page. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. Incident call volume averages between 500 and 600 calls per day which lends itself to posting an increasing the number of social media posts on our platforms and creating significant incident fact sheets to the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Over 32,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by grant-funded education specialists in between January 2020 and March 2021. This was all possible with distance learning, zoom meetings and a full-scale video production, “Fire Safety ON, Accidents GONE”, targeting fire safety education for Pre-K through 2nd grade students. Funding from the CCI grant also allowed the creation and purchase of new hazardous fire area signs that will be posted in seven areas throughout the County as the Fire Chief closes these areas due to the high risk of wildland fires annually.

**Vegetation Management/ Fuel Reduction Activity Reporting (FRAR):** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1, 2, 11 and 15, Broadcast Burning also continued at Lake Matthews, Santa Rosa Plateau and Lake Skinner for a total of 322 acres The RedHill VMP, Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP, Point of Rocks, Upper Dry Creek, Main Divide, and Tenaja Road projects were either started or re-entered with a total of 973 acres treated. Community chipping programs continued throughout the Unit in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley, Pinyon and La Cresta in association with their specific Fire Safe Councils.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 132 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

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Bill Weiser  
RRU Unit Chief

## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2019

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break was funded through 2022. The Red Mountain Fuel Break continued with the planning/environmental phase. The El Cariso Fuel Break was re-entered and completed. The Main Divide Fuel break was started with three plots completed.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** The Riverside Unit Truck Trail system was surveyed and road repair and vegetation clearing were completed on 2 miles under Local Unit funding. The RRU Fire Danger Operating Plan was completed and implemented with the purchase an additional RAWS.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Fire Safety Education: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs Bureau continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. In December 2018, the Department’s “Twitter” social media site increased from 9,000 followers in 2013 to over 20,000 followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. This will be particularly important as we enter the 2018 fire season. Incident call volume has grown to well over 400 calls per day; and increasing the number of Significant Incident Fact Sheets that are posted and updated on the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nearly 18,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by Department Personnel in 2016. The bureau’s County-funded Fire Captain Position was unfunded due to budget constraints and is now filled and funded by utilization of the State Fire Prevention Fee. SRA funding was approved for mass printing of “Ready, Set, Go!” handouts as well approval to erect nearly 20 road signs with the “Ready, Set, Go!” fire safety message. These signs will be strategically placed throughout SRA and WUI areas within Riverside County.”

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1, 2, 15 and 11, including Orchard Lake Mathews and the Santa Rosa Plateau. The RedHill VMP and Oak Glen/Water Canyon VMP were stated, and community chipping programs continued throughout the Unit in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley and Pinyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 82 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Re-entries were made into the Astro Camp and Upper Dry Creek, and Tenaja Road, resulting in 1,874 acres of fuel reduction completed in the Unit.



5/8/2019

## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2018

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Elsinore Front Country Fuel Break was funded through 2022. The El Cariso Fuel Break was re-entered and completed. The Main Divide Fuel break was started with two plots completed.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** The Riverside Unit Truck Trail system was surveyed, and road repair and vegetation clearing was completed on 2 miles under Local Unit funding. The RRU Fire Danger Operating Plan was completed and implemented with funding being sought for an additional RAWS.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Fire Safety Education: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs Bureau continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. In December 2018, the Department’s “Twitter” social media site increased from 9,000 followers in 2013 to over 20,000 followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. This will be particularly important as we enter the 2018 fire season. Incident call volume has grown to well over 400 calls per day; and increasing the number of Significant Incident Fact Sheets that are posted and updated on the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nearly 18,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by Department Personnel in 2016. The bureau’s County-funded Fire Captain Position was unfunded due to budget constraints and is now filled and funded by utilization of the State Fire Prevention Fee. SRA funding was approved for mass printing of “Ready, Set, Go!” handouts as well approval to erect nearly 20 road signs with the “Ready, Set, Go!” fire safety message. These signs will be strategically placed throughout SRA and WUI areas within Riverside County.”

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1, 2, 15 and 11, including Orchard Lake Mathews and the Santa Rosa Plateau. Community Chipping Programs continued throughout the Unit providing landowners brush disposal in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley and Pinyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 82 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Re-entries were made into the Astro Camp and Upper Dry Creek projects treating 45 acres in the Community of Idyllwild.



5/10/2019

## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2017

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Maxwell Fuel Break was funded through 2017. The El Cariso Fuel Break was re-entered and completed. The Main Divide Fuel break was started with two plots completed.


**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** The Riverside Unit Truck Trail system was surveyed, and road repair and vegetation clearing was completed on 33 miles under Local Unit funding. The RRU Fire Danger Operating Plan was completed and implemented.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Fire Safety Education: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs Bureau continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. In December 2017, the Department’s “Twitter” social media site increased from 9,000 followers in 2013 to over 20,000 followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. This will be particularly important as we enter the 2017 fire season. Incident call volume has grown to well over 400 calls per day; and increasing the number of Significant Incident Fact Sheets that are posted and updated on the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nearly 18,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by Department Personnel in 2016. The bureau’s County-funded Fire Captain Position was unfunded due to budget constraints and is now filled and funded by utilization of the State Fire Prevention Fee. SRA funding was approved for mass printing of “Ready, Set, Go!” handouts as well approval to erect nearly 20 road signs with the “Ready, Set, Go!” fire safety message. These signs will be strategically placed throughout SRA and WUI areas within Riverside County.”

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 1 and 15, including Orchard Lake Mathews and the Santa Rosa Plateau for a total of 1,425 acres. Community Chipping Programs continued throughout the Unit providing landowners brush disposal in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley and Pinyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 116 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Two SRA/FPF projects were started, continued or completed. Are-entry into the El Cariso HFT was continued into January by the California Conservation Corps to treat 40 acres. The Main Divide Fuel Break treated 25 acres.

  
Unit Chief: John Hawkins

5/10/2018



## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2016

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Maxwell Fuel Break was funded through 2017. Tenaja and Rancho Carrillo Road Right of Way Hazardous Fuel Reduction were funded and completed.


**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** The San Jacinto State Park/Stone Creek Truck Trail system was surveyed and road repair and vegetation clearing on the Poppet Flats Truck Trail was completed on 3.7 miles under a Fire Prevention Fee Grant. The RRU Fire Danger Operating Plan was completed, and implementation is set for Spring 2017

**Education and Information:** "Public Information and Fire Safety Education: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs Bureau continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. In December 2016, the Department's "Twitter" social media site increased from 9,000 followers in 2013 to over 20,000 followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being "retweeted" and increase following. This will be particularly important as we enter the 2016 fire season. Incident call volume has grown to well over 400 calls per day; and increasing the number of Significant Incident Fact Sheets that are posted and updated on the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nearly 18,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by Department Personnel in 2016. The bureau's County-funded Fire Captain Position was unfunded due to budget constraints and is now filled and funded by utilization of the State Fire Prevention Fee. SRA funding was approved for mass printing of "Ready, Set, Go!" handouts as well approval to erect nearly 20 road signs with the "Ready, Set, Go!" fire safety message. These signs will be strategically placed throughout SRA and WUI areas within Riverside County."

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 2, 15 and 11, including El Cariso, Rancho Carrillo, Tenaja and Stone Creek State Park. Community Chipping Programs continued throughout the Unit providing landowners brush disposal in the communities of Poppet Flats, Silent Valley and Pinyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 205 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland to date. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Four SRA/FPF projects were started, continued, or completed. The Ernie Maxwell Trail HFT continued in the treatment of 36 acres, The Rancho Carrillo Rd HFR in cooperation with OCFA treated 21 acres of Right of Way, also 32 acres of Right of Way fuels were treated along Tenaja Road as part of the Tenaja HFR. Lastly a re-entry into the El Cariso HFT was started in November by the California Conservation Corps to treat 40 acres.

  
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Unit Chief: John Hawkins

5/5/2017

## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2015

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Maxwell Fuel Break was funded through 2017. Tenaja and Rancho Carrillo Road Right of Way Hazardous Fuel Reduction are awaiting Funding.

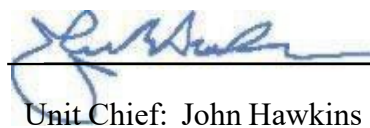
**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** The RRU Truck Trail Database was identified in need of complete editing and the process of updating GIS accuracy was initiated to a total of 175 truck trails. The North Mountain Truck Trail system was surveyed and road repair and vegetation clearing on the Poppet Flats Truck Trail was completed on 4.8 miles under a Fire Prevention Fee Grant.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Fire Safety Education: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs Bureau continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. In December 2015, the Department’s “Twitter” social media site increased from 9,000 followers in 2013 to over 14,500 followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. This will be particularly important as we enter the 2016 fire season. Incident call volume has grown to well over 400 calls per day; and increasing the number of Significant Incident Fact Sheets that are posted and updated on the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Nearly 18,000 Fire Prevention/Fire Safety Education contacts were made by Department Personnel in 2015. The bureau’s County-funded Fire Captain Position was unfunded due to budget constraints and is now filled and funded by utilization of the State Fire Prevention Fee. SRA funding was approved for mass printing of “Ready, Set, Go!” handouts as well approval to erect nearly 20 road signs with the “Ready, Set, Go!” fire safety message. These signs will be strategically placed throughout SRA and WUI areas within Riverside County.”

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 2, 15 and 11, including Camp Maranatha, Dark Canyon and Stone Creek State Park. Community Chipping Programs continued throughout the Unit providing landowners brush disposal in the communities of Tenaja, La Cresta, El Cariso, Poppet Flats, Silent Valley and Pinyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 105 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Three SRA/FPF Projects were completed in 2015, The El Potrero GSC Project removed dead and down vegetation on 68 acres in the Community of Morrell Canyon, The RRU Cistern Rehabilitation Project provided funding to remove hazardous vegetation around the cisterns, locate and dig out valve boxes for access and identify repair needs with was accomplished at the Unit level, lastly the RRU Fire Preparedness *Community Sign Project provided funding to construct and install public information signage at numerous communities in the WUI*

  
Unit Chief: John Hawkins

4/11/2016

## **ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2014**

**Fire Planning:** Priority fuels projects reflected in the Unit Fire Plan were identified and submitted, for Grant funding opportunities in which the Maxwell Fuel Break was funded through 2017. This project is and continues to be a high priority to the Unit and the citizens and communities of Idyllwild and Pine Cove.

**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** A focused Unit wide SRA Review was conducted again this year resulting in the addition of nearly 8,000 acres of LRA lands reverting to SRA. The State of California Facilities data layer was reviewed, and corrections made at the Unit level for FRAP.

**Education and Information:** “Public Information and Fire Safety Education: The CAL FIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Public Affairs Bureau continues to meet the demands of the ever-evolving social media culture. In December 2014, the Department’s “Twitter” social media site increased from 9,000 followers in 2013 to over 11,000 followers. Relevant and daily fire safety messages are posted to raise awareness in hopes of being “retweeted” and increase following. This will be particularly important as we enter the 2015 fire season. Incident call volume has grown to well over 400 calls per day; and increasing the number of Significant Incident Fact Sheets that are posted and updated on the [www.rvcfire.org](http://www.rvcfire.org) website 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During recent years, the bureau’s County-funded Fire Captain Position was unfunded due to budget constraints and is now filled and funded by utilization of the State Fire Prevention Fee. SRA funding was approved for mass printing of “Ready, Set, Go!” handouts as well approval to erect nearly 20 road signs with the “Ready, Set, Go!” fire safety message. These signs will be strategically placed throughout SRA and WUI areas within Riverside County.”

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in Battalions 2, 15 and 11, including Camp Maranatha, Dark Canyon and Stone Creek State Park. Community Chipping Programs continued throughout the Unit providing landowners brush disposal in the communities of Tenaja, La Cresta, ElCariso, Poppet Flats, Silent Valley and Pinyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 62 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees identified and/or removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild and Romoland. In cooperation with the University of California Riverside Extension biologists, a collaborative effort is underway involving, hatching studies, identification, ground and aerial mapping, removal and spraying application efficacy.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Two Fire Prevention Fee funded fuels reduction projects were completed. The El Cariso Hazardous Fuel Reduction Project was a 42-acre fuel break surrounding the community of El Cariso. The other was the Red Hill North Fuel Reduction Project; this was a 41-acre shaded fuel break buffering Highway 243 protecting the western edge of the community of Pine Cove.

**4/30/2015**



Unit Chief: John Hawkins

## **ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2013**

**Fire Planning:** Instituted a Battalion Chief SRA/CalMapper training and reporting program, a major component of this program is the establishment of a tracked Fuels Project submission process from Operations through Resource Management. Began a re-write of the 2012 Fire Plan which will reflect themany operational and administrative changes and improvements within the Riverside Unit.

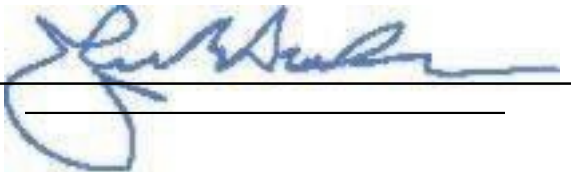
**Wildland Fire Prevention Engineering:** Updated Geodatabase file management at the Mountain Resource Center. Quarterly CalMapper updates were submitted to FRAP.

**Education and Information:** Since February 2011, when CAL FIRE/Riverside Unit implemented a “Twitter” social networking account that now has nearly 9,000 followers in 2013. The site is used to post relevant fire safety information, community events and serves as a conduit 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 message.

**Vegetation Management:** Fuels treatments continued in the San Jacinto Range completing the Astro Camp and Upper Dry Creek projects. The Clay Hill Plot on the Santa Rosa Ecological Preserve was successfully burned in conjunction with the Cal Fire Intermediate Firing Class. Mountain Fire, damagedtree removal completed in the SRA portions of the Bonita Vista community of Apple Canyon.

**Fire Hazard Severity Mapping and Mitigation:** GSOB control continued throughout the year with 30 GSOB confirmed Black Oak trees removed and transferred to the grinding facility in Idyllwild.

**Other Fire Prevention Projects in SRA:** Continued fuel reduction and pile burning in cooperation with California State Parks on the Stone Creek project within the San Jacinto Range.



**4/30/2014**

Unit Chief  
John Hawkins

**Date**

## ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2012

The Riverside Unit Strategic Fire Plan sets forth a vision to identify and evaluate Wildland fire hazards and recognize life, property and natural resources at risk, including watershed, habitat, social and other values of functioning ecosystems. In 2012, the Riverside Unit made great strides in fostering inter-agency relations, collaboration, and abiding by the goals and objectives set forth in the Strategic Fire Plan for California

In 2012, the Riverside Battalions were successful in providing 4291 Public Resource Code inspections, fire prevention and fuel reduction education to communities. The Battalions collectively completed 11,213 LE-100 inspections, with 1,638 Violations. The engine companies completed 2,123 Fire Prevention public contacts with a total of 558 Prevention hours.

As part of the collaborative California Cooperative Wildland Fire Management and Stafford Act Response Agreement (CFMA) process, the 2012 review identified that a Direct Protection (DPA) adjustment was necessary to re-align the DPA to the mission of each agency. The mission of the Federal agencies is to manage and protect national forest and public lands and to protect lands under cooperative agreement with other wild land fire agencies. The mission of CAL FIRE is to protect the state, private and federal lands under the cooperative agreement and, where appropriate, provide local government fire protection services. As a result of this review, CAL FIRE Riverside Unit assumed DPA for 25,690 acres in the San Jacinto Mountain area. This additional acreage was assumed in the Riverside Unit without additional budget/staffing increase. The re-alignment of the DPA will not impact the level of response to Wildland fires. The response to Wildland fires will continue to be immediate, decisive and aggressive.

Resource Management continues to make progress in fuel reduction in the Riverside Unit, utilizing the Healthy Forest Treatment 1 and 2 grant funded programs. Additionally, the Forest Care program, which is funded through a cooperative grant of the USDA Forest Service, successfully completed, 240 single tree removals covering 201 acres. The Riverside Unit conducted several Vegetation Management burns totaling 280 acres in cooperation with Federal, State and Local land managers.

CO-OP: is a joint program with the Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council (MCFSC) in which county grant funds are used to perform abatement work (PRC 4291) within 100 feet of structures in the mountain communities. The program spent \$221,315, treated 81.4 acres, and produced 343.1 tons of biomass, while servicing 101 landowners.

Time and Material: is a fuel reduction program based on the lowest cost bidder's rates for their equipment and labor. This program allows for a broader type of fuel reduction that single tree removal does not. It covers fuel brake re-habilitation, log and slash pile removal, protection of evacuation routes, brush removal, and proper clearing of shelter-in-place areas. This program spent \$168,922, treated 80 acres, and produced 299.75 tons of biomass that was safely disposed of. There were 20 projects completed, helping 12 landowners.

The new Department resource, Cal Mapper, has been instrumental in collecting data, tracking, fiscal reporting, emergency response, planning, and assessment, for fuel reduction projects in the Riverside Unit. In the Riverside Unit a total of 17 projects with 39 treatments areas are either active, in maintenance, or completed.

The CAL FIRE Riverside Unit is collaboratively working with communities and stakeholders to stop the movement of the Gold Spotted Oak Borer (GSOB) through firewood transportation. The gold spotted oak borer (GSOB) has been detected in recently killed California black oak trees in the Riverside County Mountain community of Idyllwild. This new detection of GSOB represents the first long-distance movement of the borer from its known area of infestation in San Diego County, 40 miles to the south. It is believed to have made the jump from San Diego to Idyllwild through the movement of infested firewood. The Riverside Unit is actively engaged in the education of various local mountain community volunteer groups, Fire Safe Councils and the MAST (Mountain Area Safety Taskforce) members to help in the identification of affected trees.

## **ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORTING 2011**

Completed CWPP for the Southwest Fire Safe Council

Completed approximately 662 acres of broadcast burning.

Completed approximately 15 acres of pile burning.

Completed approximately 46 acres of fuel reduction.

Completed approximately 18 acres of fuel reduction for repeater sites.

Completed 2 new VMPs.

Remove many tons of hazardous fuels from the communities of Pinyon, Poppet Flats and the Southwest Fire Safe Council area through the community chipping program.

Treated 25 parcels for 19.5 acres and 103 tons of biomass removed in the San Jacinto Mountain area with the CO-OP project between the Mountain Communities Fire Safe Council and Cal Fire/Riverside County Fire.

Conducted live wildland fire training for Anaheim City, the City of Orange and Orange County Fire Authority at Clark Training Center.

Single tree contract: removed 71 trees, treating 51 acres.

Time and materials contract: removed 276 tons biomass, treating 47 acres.



## UNIT STRATEGIC FIRE PLAN AMENDMENTS

| Date    | Section Updated              | Page Numbers Updated | Description Of Update           | Updated By   |
|---------|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| 6-20-12 | Unit Prep                    | 9                    | Statistics                      | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | Red Hill VMP                 | 28                   | Fuel Break Maintenance          | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | Lake Perris VMP              | 30                   | Planned Burns                   | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | Multi-Species VMP            | 30                   | Habitat Experiments             | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | Johnson VMP                  | 31                   | VMP Renewal                     | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | Wood House VMP               | 31                   | New VMP                         | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | 2012 Projects                | 32                   | Listed 2012 projects            | M. Barr      |
| 6-20-12 | Projects List                | 49                   | Wood House VMP added            | M. Barr      |
| 3-18-20 | Supplement                   | 63                   | Unit Accomplishments            | M. Barr      |
| 4-1-14  | Cover Page                   |                      | Update                          | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Executive Summary            | 2                    | Update                          | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Unit Overview                | 4                    | Fire Situation                  | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Vegetative Fuels             | 6                    | Perris – Beaumont               | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Vegetative Fuels             | 7                    | Jurupa- San Jacinto             | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Vegetative Fuels             | 8                    | Moreno Valley                   | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Vegetative Fuels             | 9                    | Garner Valley - Menifee         | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-19  | Unit Preparedness            | 11                   | CERT-Resource Management        | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-19  | Collaboration                | 14                   | Contacts                        | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Sec. III/Values at Risk      | 18                   | Perris- Lake Elsinore           | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Sec. III/Values at Risk      | 19                   | Beaumont                        | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Sec. III/Values at Risk      | 19,20                | San Jacinto-Moreno Valley       | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Sec. III/Values at Risk      | 20,21                | Battalion 11                    | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Sec. III/Values at Risk      | 21                   | Battalion 14                    | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Sec. IV/Fire Prevention      | 24                   | LE-100                          | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Sec. IV/Fire Prevention      | 25                   | Ord. 695 – Railroad Inspections | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Sec. IV/Fire Prevention      | 25                   | Power line Inspections          | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-14  | Engineering/Ignitability     | 28                   | Update                          | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Public Information           | 29,30                | Update                          | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Vegetation Management        | 33                   | Redhill North                   | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-18  | Vegetation Management        | 36                   | El Cariso HFR                   | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-14  | Vegetation Management        | 39                   | 2014 Project List               | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-14  | Sec. V/ Pre-Fire Tactics     | 43                   | Battalion 9                     | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-14  | Sec. V/ Pre-Fire Tactics     | 44                   | Northwest Division              | M. Sebastian |
| 4-1-14  | Sec. V/ Pre-Fire Tactics     | 49,50                | Battalion 2                     | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Appendix A                   | 54                   | Pre-Fire Projects               | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Appendix C                   | 56                   | Unit Goals                      | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Ignition Data                | 59,60                | Update                          | M. Sebastian |
| 3-18-20 | Ignition Data/Maps/App A/C/D |                      | Update                          | M. Sebastian |

|          |                                       |                 |        |             |
|----------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|--------|-------------|
| 4-29-22  | Annual revision of the Unit Fire Plan | Entire Document | Update | C. Matthews |
| 3/24/23  | Annual revision of the Unit Fire Plan | Entire Document | Update | C. Matthews |
| 02/01/24 | Annual revision of the Unit Fire Plan | Entire Document | Update | M. Escandel |