

Wildland Fire Management

\$7.8 Million in USDA State Fire Assistance Funds Awarded To San Diego County

The Forest Service was pleased to fund the County of San Diego Land Use and Planning Department, Federal Assistance grant request in the amount of \$7.8 million. These funds are provided through the State Fire Assistance program identified in the Appropriations bills. The funding is

being used by the county to clear hazardous trees from evacuation routes on Palomar Mountain, Lost Valley, Julian, Laguna Mountain, Cuyamaca Rancho State Park, and Los Coyotes Indian Reservation areas.

Cleveland National Forest & Fire Safe Council Awards \$1.1 million in San Diego County

On August 24, 2004, eight community groups were awarded the first installment of funds for fire prevention projects in San Diego County, hardest hit during the 2003 firestorms. The primary work accomplished with these grant funds will be fuel reduction projects, a critical need in a dangerous fire season. The projects are part of the Forest Service's 2004 grants cycle, and cover work that will be completed between March 31, 2004 and August 31, 2006. These projects will impact 3,844 acres, comprising 7,827 homes and 28,354 community members. Rural communities in the wildland/urban interface of San Diego County have special and urgent fire prevention needs. In these isolated areas, there are large amounts of unburned fuel loads, complicated by difficult access due to narrow roads, single ingress/egress, steep slopes, ravines, and more. Many of these communities were either impacted by or narrowly escaped the fire conflagration in October of 2003.



Fire Safe Council Check Presen-

Fuels Reduction Program

The Forest is continuing with on-going fuels reduction program. Prescribe burns were conducted near the following Forest areas: Cottonwood Fuel Break near Oak Grove; fuel break maintenance adjacent to Sunrise Highway on Laguna Mountain, Kitchen Creek Road, and Pine Valley; and a fuel break along the Tenaja Creek and

Los Alamos Creek. These prescribed burns were conducted to reduce heavy brush build up in national forest areas. In addition to the prescribed burning, the Forest conducted fuels reduction activities through mechanical treatment in many areas of the Forest.

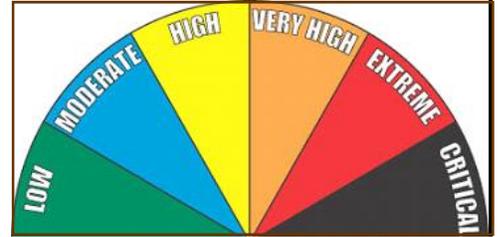
Forest Releases Fire Siege Safety Report

In 2004, the Cleveland National Forest and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection released the Fire Siege Safety Report. The report focused on firefighters and public safety while fighting the 2003 fires. The report included findings, recommendations, and related background information. The report was completed by an interagency fire safety review team composed of wildland fire ground and aviation experts. The report can be viewed on the Forest web site at www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland.

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Fire Danger Awareness System Starts On The Cleveland

In 2004, the Cleveland National Forest implemented a new Fire Danger Awareness System for residents and visitors. Forest visitors should use care and caution when visiting the Forest. They should also check before they visit the Forest to see what the allowable activities are and what restrictions are in place. Visitors can visit local Forest Service Offices Monday through Friday (8:00 am to 4:30 pm); phone for a recorded message at (619) 593-2183; or for online information log on to www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland.



Fire Siege 2003 – Recognition and Thanks

In recognition of the one year anniversary of the Cedar & Paradise Fires, the Cleveland National Forest held 4 recognition ceremonies to thank employees for their hard work and dedication during the 2003 fires. Approximately 70,000 acres of the Cleveland National Forest burned in the Cedar and Paradise fires, resulting in one of the largest rehabilitation efforts in the history of the Forest. During the fires, employees pulled together in spite of personal hardship and sacrifice to overcome the difficult challenges and obstacles. Over 300 employees received recognition for their efforts associated with the suppression of the 2003 wildfires or the subsequent effort to rehabilitate the land.

Forest Service Employees Assist With National Emergencies

Forest employees are frequently called upon to help with emergencies around the world, such as hurricanes, floods, earthquakes, and human-caused disasters.

In 2003 - Two twenty-person crews and additional support personnel from the Cleveland National Forest were dispatched to Texas, to help locate debris from the Space Shuttle Columbia; twenty-one Forest employees provided support to the Newcastle disease (poultry quarantine) activities in the southwestern United States; and one Forest Employee assisted the USAID in developing recovery plans for post-military activities for Iraq.

In 2004 - fifteen local firefighters, members of one of the national Incident Management Teams, were sent to provide assistance with hurricanes Francis, Ivan, and Charlie. The southern California firefighters were from county fire departments, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Forest Service. They provided logistical support, and helped to ensure that residents had food, water, and shelter. The team also helped with mapping and debris removal.

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Fire Engine Parade

Burn Run

The Burn Run is an annual “parade” of fire apparatus, which travels throughout San Diego and Imperial counties. Firefighters representing fire departments from throughout San Diego and Imperial counties make check presentations to the Burn Institute from each fire station stop along the “Burn Run” route. Many of the departments have held special events and sponsored projects throughout the year to make this special donation. Proceeds benefit the important work of the Burn Institute including Camp Beyond the Scars for burn-injured children. Cleveland National Forest Fire Fighters committed their personal time to raise \$7,887 from T-shirt sales.

Wildland Fire 3D SIMS Goes Down Under

The Forest Service displayed the new 3D Simulated Information Management System (SIMS) Wildland Fire Simulation training program to the international community during the Third International Wildland Fire Conference and exhibition held in Sydney, Australia during the fall of 2004. Since that time, the beta testing has been completed and the final product will be available for distribution to fire service agencies nation wide in the spring of 2005. The program was developed in partnership with the National Fire Administration and the USDA Forest Service. The program presents the user with simulated fire situations (based on actual events) and tests the fire manager’s strategy and decision making for deploying equipment and personnel to efficiently and safely control a fire suppression event.



Sydney Australia