

BORDER AGENCY FIRE COUNCIL



Border #50 Fire

Year End Report 2005

What is BAFC? – The concerned citizens of the United States and Mexico formed the Border Agency Fire Council. It is a consortium of government and private entities, emergency responders, environmental specialists, law enforcement, fire protection, and elected officials. It began under emergency conditions and has proven to be an extremely successful collaboration. People are alive today because of BAFC. Threatened habitat is protected and even improved because of this program. An unprecedented bi-national mutual assistance agreement is in place and working because of this program. The members of BAFC have worked without judgment or malice toward their fellow human being. From the beginning, their motivation has been primarily to save lives and protect the sensitive habitat of the border area.

Thirty-four organizations make up BAFC; a list of members is at the end of this report. The members meet quarterly during the winter and every six to eight weeks during fire season. They meet at the San Diego headquarters of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) in El Cajon, California. Through collaborative effort, they have altered the environment to allow better access into the wildland for emergency responders, while respecting the natural values of the area. They have enhanced communication among emergency responders on both sides of the U.S. - Mexico border. They have reached out to people in both countries with safety messages in Spanish and English. This report provides a brief description of the many projects the Council and agencies have accomplished this year and ongoing projects started in other years yet still active today.

History - For decades, people have entered the United States illegally by crossing from Mexico into San Diego County. They entered on foot from Tijuana. In 1995, "Operation Gatekeeper" tightened security near Tijuana and the immigration pattern shifted to the east. A trip that formerly took a few hours turned into several days and involved a strenuous hike through rugged wilderness. In summer, the heat is sweltering; in winter, the temperature drops below freezing at the higher elevations. Many of these people simply didn't understand the difficult conditions they would face. That lack of knowledge proved to be life threatening.

The Border Agency Fire Council was formally created during the 1996 fire season, with the first meetings conducted in the fall of 1995 due to a dramatic increase in wildfire activity in southern San Diego County. Investigators determined that improperly extinguished campfires left by undocumented immigrants were causing these fires, as they traveled into the United States through the San Ysidro Mountains. They also carried torches to guide their way at night. These two activities were responsible for a huge increase in the number of wildfires. This meant hundreds of people were on foot every day in steep, rugged terrain with wildfires around them.

Fire officials believed the threat to human safety was of crisis proportion. Emergency response vehicles could not travel safely on the narrow dirt paths. There were no safe places for a rescue helicopter to land. People continued to accidentally set fires, apparently not understanding that they were endangering their own lives. Consequently, the Border Agency Fire Council was formed with the goal of saving lives and property.

Much of the land in the border area of San Diego County is protected wilderness. Special permission was obtained from the Secretary of Interior to make changes in the landscape. Roads were widened and helipads were installed. Additionally, an organized warning/information system was put into place. Today the number of wildfires is down. Lives and property have been saved through the communication and response efforts of this council.

Highlights and Issues of 2005

Fire Season 2005 – Fire season was declared on May 30th this year in San Diego County due to continued drought conditions. Many fire agencies, including CDF, once again hired extra personnel and/or added equipment to meet anticipated staffing needs for a potentially very busy fire season in Southern California. By Executive Order of the Governor, CDF San Diego was authorized to staff all engines with four persons every day. In partnership with the County of San Diego, through the San Diego Sheriff's Department, two medium helicopters flown by Sheriff pilots and staffed with CDF firefighters were placed in service at Gillespie Field and Fallbrook Airport. Copter 10 and Copter 12 were valuable resources utilized during the 2005 Fire Season. The largest fire that occurred within the BAFC boundaries was the Border Fire # 50 that began on October 5, 2005. The fire began near the town of Tecate, Baja, California at the Mexico/US border. This fire actually started in Mexico and burned into the US. Engines from California crossed the border and entered Mexico at the Tecate Point of Entry. Efforts of the US fire personnel were concentrated around Tecate Peak, a sacred and historical monument. CDF worked with CONAFOAR and Tecate Civil Proteccion as a 25 acre run threatened a housing development. The fire burned 4,151 acres of land, with 1,210 acres within Mexico. This fire event was in newspapers in Sacramento and nationally and illustrated the great partnership exhibited between Mexico, the United States and members of the Border Agency Fire Council.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) reported a total of 59 "border related" wildfires in 2005 for a total of 5,218 acres burned within the BAFC boundaries and CDF State Responsibility Areas (SRA). The cost to suppress those fires was estimated to be \$3,789,182. The Emergency Fund Expenditures included within the cost was \$597,769. The number of wildfires in the border area remains much less than before BAFC was founded in 1996. Fire statistics regarding the acreage burned are within reasonable expectations for a typical fire season in San Diego's border area. The Otay Fire of 2003 that consumed 45,971 acres altered the statistics from a declining mode to an increasing mode of fire activity, specifically acres burned, for that specific year. The increase in total acreage burned in 2005 compared to ten (10) years earlier of about three hundred (300) acres, may be attributed to the ongoing drought conditions. Absent the Otay Fire and drought, as in previous years, many believe the number of fires has decreased because of an aggressive outreach effort on the part of the Council.

Border Agency Fire Council 10th Anniversary Signing Ceremony - The BAFC held a media signing event on June 9, 2005 to celebrate ten successful years of existence to save life and property through partnerships with members and other agencies in the border area of San Diego County. Member agencies were once again asked to reaffirm their partnership in BAFC by signing a revised Operations Plan. The event was held at CDF Headquarters in El Cajon and was well received by those participating in the event.

Visits - The BAFC invited many visitors to meetings during 2005. The Council through its membership continues to invite guests to participate in the meetings and perhaps to become members of the organization.

Goals And Objectives – The council continues to support the original and amended goals and objectives of the organization. The newest goals and objectives are as follows: Establish and maintain relationships with Mexican government agencies, strengthen awareness and cooperation on biodiversity, and continue effective fire prevention, emergency response and suppression efforts. All goals and objectives are blended into the existing approved charter for BAFC. It was also identified that the BAFC will continue to support Firesafe Councils and Homeland Security issues. The Charter was to be amended in 2006 to incorporate these new goals.



International Fuel Break - Otay Mountain, a section of an international fuel break located at the border between the United States and Mexico in San Diego County California, was completed in 2002 and receives annual maintenance work. This on-going project has several goals that include protection of life and property in adjacent communities, improved endangered species habitat, reducing the risk of large scale fire in the protected Tecate Cypress groves on Otay Mountain, and enhanced national security due to open areas that deter illegal immigration across the border. Additional special considerations are required due to the rare and endangered Quino Checkerspot Butterfly found in the area. The on-going work on the International Fuel Break is an excellent example of fire mitigation on an interagency basis that provides multiple benefits to the local communities in both the United States and Mexico.

The Sunrise Fuel Break in the Julian area also continues to receive needed maintenance to help protect the greater Julian area from fire. BLM and CDF work as partners to complete this necessary project.

Rescues – The Border Patrol continued to provide rescue service to undocumented immigrants. They conducted 124 rescues in 2005 to victims of all types, undocumented immigrants and agents included. This was a significant decrease in rescues compared to the 184 rescues conducted in 2004.

Cold and Warm Weather Rescue Kits - Fire is not the only threat to human life in this area. Extreme temperatures in summer and winter have taken lives since the migration pattern has shifted through the rugged mountainous area of San Diego County. During the winter, temperatures drop to well below freezing in the higher elevations. During the summer, temperatures rise to around 100 degrees with no water to be found. Smugglers lead unprepared people into this area and when they fall behind, the smugglers leave them to die. In 2001, the Border Patrol placed emergency rescue kits in specially marked underground sites within the area. Responders can now use a special tracking device to locate the kits and assist stranded or injured people. The kits contain blankets, basic medical supplies, food and water. (See Agency Reports – Border Patrol section for photographs and further details on these kits.)

Fatalities – The US Border Patrol reported that unfortunately there were twenty-one (21) migrant deaths within the San Diego Sector, for 2005. The rugged terrain and variable harsh weather are contributing factors to these sad losses.

Partnership with Mexico – Mexico continues to be a valued partner in the work of the Border Agency Fire Council. In keeping with the Mutual Assistance Agreement, U.S. and Mexican firefighters remain available to assist each other automatically for wildland emergencies. Radio and television continue to run public service announcements regarding the dangers faced by those who attempt to enter the U.S. through the remote and rugged terrain of San Diego County. The U.S. and Mexican consulates play key roles in the education information process. In addition, Mexican firefighters continue to receive wildland fire training from CDF and the US Forest Service. Mexico has been a valued cooperator from the beginning of BAFC.

Mutual Assistance Agreement with Mexico and the U.S. – The Mutual Assistance Agreement was revised in 2005 to reflect language corrections and emergency contact phone numbers for assistance. This unprecedented mutual assistance agreement has continued since 1998. The agreement between Mexico and the U.S. allows emergency responders to cross the border to protect lives and property. The Mexican Consulate, Mexican officials and the U.S. fire officials review the document annually. This agreement continues to save valuable time in crossing boundary lines without delays and red tape. Emergency responders call immediately to the U.S. and Mexican authorities through their communications network. The response personnel may proceed directly to the scene for any necessary action without waiting for any approval process.

The BAFC Operations Plan is the parent document that allows the detail of the agreement to be developed and implemented

Binational Prescribed (Controlled) Burns With Mexico – Once again, planned prescribed burns were conducted by fire agencies on both sides of the border near Tecate Peak. These projects are undertaken to protect citizens of both countries, protect habitat on both sides of the border and provide training for firefighters in Mexico along with the Mexican Nature Conservancy known as ProNatura.



CDF Training With Mexican Firefighters (Bomberos) - CDF continues to cross the border to participate in joint training with the firefighters in Tecate, Mexico. A major training event was held May 14, 2005. This was the third annual Binational Forestry Environment Camp training activity held near Tecate. Training subjects included Fire Behavior (S-190), chainsaw training, communication and Incident Command System. This was a multi-agency training event. The Incident Command (ICS) System class known as ICS 200 or introduction to ICS, translated into Spanish continues to be presented to Mexican fire personnel. Personnel from CDF that speak Spanish provided this training, along with other basic wildland fire training. This annual training opportunity is allowed through the Mutual Assistance Agreement between the US and Mexico.



Sister Forest Agreement - Cooperative Training with Mexico – Cleveland National Forest Supervisor, Tina Terrell, visited Baja, California Mexico to support the Sister Forest Agreement. The USFS continues to meet with partners in Mexico to increase cooperation between the two countries wherever possible. An example of the training available is a 32-hour Basic Fire Fighter train-the trainer module. This class was offered again in El Hongo, Jardines del Rincon, La Rumorosa and Jacume, Mexico. Training materials in Spanish are given to participants for them to conduct the Basic Firefighter training at their home units. This type of training is conducted under the Sister Forest Agreement that the Cleveland signed with Mexico in 2001.

Bug Kill, Drought And The Forest Area Safety Task Force (FAST) – The council was aware of the drought conditions for the last five years that created a Bug Kill problem in many areas of San Diego County. BAFC supported the pursuit of grants to address the potential fire problem with thousands of dead, dying and diseased trees. Governor Davis and Governor Schwarzenegger issued Proclamations in 2003 and 2004 to advise the public of the drought and associated Bug



Coordinating with Other Emergency Groups – Members of BAFC are encouraged to speak out on issues pertaining to the work of the council whenever the opportunity presents itself. BAFC representatives serve on boards and commissions and attend meetings of other organizations which have similar public safety and environmental missions.

Media Coverage - U.S. and Mexican media have been very helpful in distributing BAFC' messages on both sides of the border. Again this year, media outlets accepted and broadcasted public service announcements with safety messages in Spanish and English. The consulates of both countries and members of the Public Outreach Committee coordinate this distribution of messages.

Environmental Cleanup - Again this year the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management employed crews to pick up garbage left behind by undocumented immigrants. More than four (4) tons of trash and food was removed from Wilderness Areas.

Operations Plan for 2005 – The Operations Plan was reviewed again this year and an errata sheet was to be issued to all members. The plan is reviewed on an annual basis.

Roads Continue to Serve - The Border Patrol continues to maintain the Otay Truck Trail and associated smaller roads improved through the efforts of the BAFC and all members. These roads have made a huge difference in getting fire engines and other emergency response vehicles into this remote area.

Guidebook - The Resource Protection Committee (a sub-committee of BAFC) met several times during 2005 to update the Natural Resources Guidebook. The new guidebook will not be available for distribution until 2006/2007. Six new areas are being added to the BAFC document. Originally, the Guidebook was to be a three-ring binder with 500 copies being printed at a cost of \$14,000. Grants were pursued to assist in cost reduction without success. CD's of the Guidebook will be the primary distribution mechanism available to member agencies. The guidebook is a valuable tool to response agencies that work in sensitive habitat within the BAFC boundaries. The goal of the Guidebook is to empower responders to perform their duties and protect the environment at the same time.

Safety Messages - From the beginning, BAFC recognized the importance of telling people how dangerous it is to travel on foot through this border area. Again this year, staff from the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Border Patrol and the Bomberos (Mexican firefighters) distributed flyers on both sides of the border with the BAFC safety message.

Detention Centers – After they are picked-up by Border Patrol, undocumented immigrants are held in detention centers before being returned to Mexico. While in custody, they watch a Spanish language video produced by BAFC and the Border Patrol, which clearly explains the dangers of being on foot in this rugged terrain. The viewers are warned of extremes in temperature during both summer and winter periods, dangerous trails with steep slopes, poisonous snakes, lack of drinking water, and the threat of wildfire. Featured in the video are the loved ones of those who have died while traveling in this wilderness.

Safety Mirrors on Roads – Border Patrol has installed safety mirrors for vehicular visibility and safety on the Minnewawa Truck Trail

Safety Video for Law Enforcement Officers - Safety videos were once again distributed to the California Highway Patrol and the Sheriff for officer training and awareness of the dangers of wildfire and their required public safety duties. The BAFC members prepared the videos through the Border Patrol with an emphasis on personal safety in a fire situation, including the use of emergency fire shelters. Law Enforcement personnel have recognized the need for basic fire safety clothing and personnel protections and they continue to work with the various fire agencies for their needs.

New Members of BAFC – In 2005, the council welcomed the Consul General of Mexico – San Diego Consulate as a full member of the BAFC. The Consul General has been active in the council as an Associate Member since the BAFC began.

BAFC Website - BAFC's website managed through the Cleveland National Forest has been effective in distributing information about the council. Access to the website is www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland.

Private Group Activity at the Border - “Border Watch Groups” were in the Campo/Jacumba area this year for the first time. Approximately 70 persons were on private property in McCain Valley.

Annual Report – The Annual Report for 2004 was completed and distributed at a regular meeting of the BAFC in June 2005.



Participants in 10th Anniversary Signing Ceremony

BAFC

MEMBER

REPORTS



USDA Forest Service Cleveland National Forest



Sister Forest Agreement with Mexico

In 2004, the Cleveland National Forest, CDF, and CONAFOR celebrated the second annual Bi-national multi-agency Children's environmental education event. The celebration took place at El Prado campground in the Laguna Mountain Recreation Area on the Descanso Ranger District and was a huge success. Approximately 165 children and adults from 15 different agencies on both sides of the border planted trees and participated in environmental education activities throughout the day. The day ended with certificates presented to the participating children. These events have been sponsored under the Sister Forest Agreement with Comisión Nacional Forestal (CONAFOR) Mexico and continues today.

Border Agency Fire Council Web Site

The Border Agency Fire council continues to have a web site through the Cleveland National Forest. The page is housed on the Cleveland National Forest web site at www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland and is listed on the front page of the site. It provides links and information on member agencies, and accomplishment and annual report information.

Border Fire Prevention and Resource Protection Crew

The Cleveland National Forest, located some five miles north of the international border with Mexico, is the southernmost of the national forests in California. Unauthorized travel, camping, and campfires in the southernmost portion of the Forest create significant resource impacts. The Cleveland National Forest staffs a border fire prevention and resource protection crew that hikes daily on user-created trails to pick up trash, extinguish abandoned campfires, and rehabilitate damage to the land. The accomplishments of this crew from 1996 to 2004 has been the detection of over 6000 illegal campfires of which 229 escaped and burned 1345 acres. The likely wildfire suppression cost savings of this early detection and suppression action is \$1 to \$5 million annually. During 2005, the crew removed more than four tons of food and drink containers, and other refuse from the Forest. Since 1997, more than 108,000 pounds of refuse has been collected and removed. In the past, the crew has also assisted the Bureau of Land Management with resource protection work in the Otay Mountain Wilderness Area.

Statistics indicate a gradual decline in the amount of trash collected and numbers of illegal campfires since the border fire prevention and resource protection program began in 1996. The crew has generally observed that undocumented immigrants passing through the Cleveland are building fewer campfires. The illegal campfires that are built have more cleared space around the actual campfire and more campfires are extinguished before immigrants move on. The declining statistics are a testament to the success of the border fire prevention and resource protection program. The long tenure of this unique program, media attention, education efforts on both sides of the international border, and close coordination and communication with BAFC member agencies are all likely contributing factors to the improving trends in resource management issues in the border area.

Safety Patrols

During stormy conditions, Cleveland National Forest personnel along with Border Patrol crews check the roads and trails in the Forest for people who might have been caught unprepared. These interagency efforts have significantly reduced the deaths of immigrants during winter storms in the mountains.

International Firefighting Crew

The Bravo Ten firefighting crew, sponsored by the Cleveland National Forest and federal, state and local fire service agencies in Mexico, is a fully trained and equipped 20-person Mexican handcrew available for fire suppression in the U.S. The Bravo Ten crew has assisted in prescribed burn and fuels projects on the Descanso Ranger District and in 2003, participated in fire suppression efforts on several wildfires in the Forest, including the Cedar Fire.

Mutual Assistance Agreement with Mexico and the U.S.

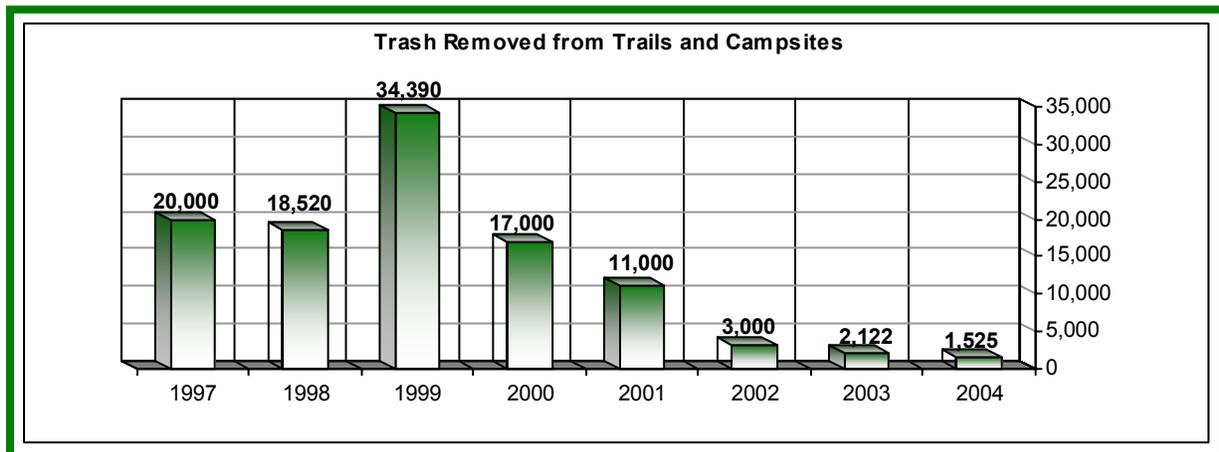
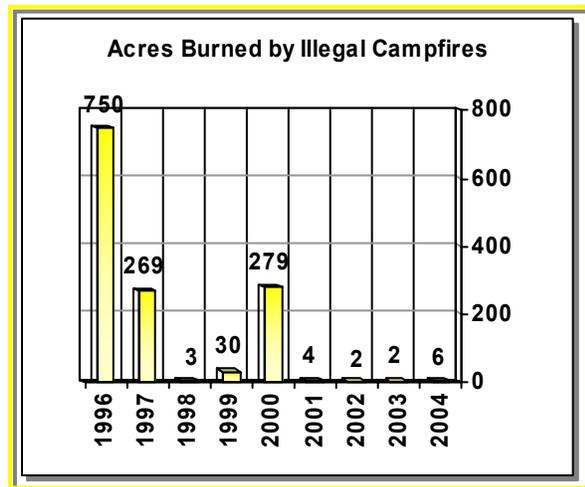
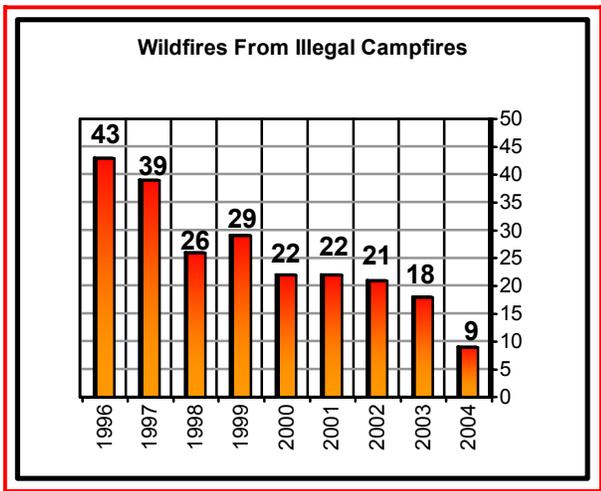
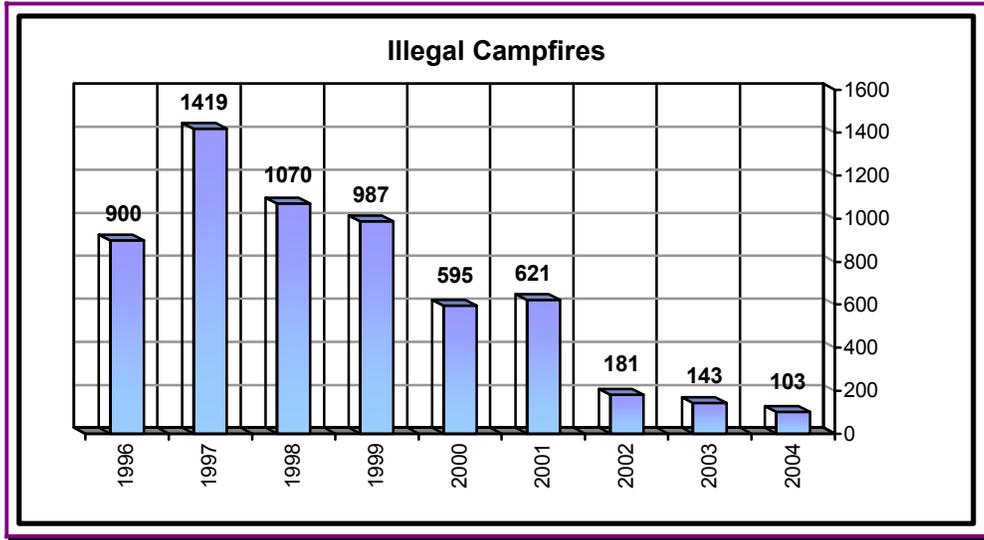
The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and Cleveland National Forest recently updated the Mutual Assistance Agreement with Mexico. This important agreement establishes dispatching and resource utilization procedures that enable participating agencies to work cooperatively to suppress fire and take appropriate actions on floods and other emergency situations on border lands of the U.S. and Mexico.

Cooperative Fire Training with Mexico

In the past, the Cleveland National Forest has provided Basic 32-hour wildland fire suppression and 8-hour Refresher training to individuals from various federal, state and municipal Mexican fire service agencies. All written and video materials for the Basic 32 and 8-hour Refresher firefighter courses have been translated into Spanish by Cleveland National Forest staff. Thirty firefighters from 15 Mexican states completed a train-the-trainer course in 2003, and are teaching the Basic 32 hour course in the states in Mexico. The Cleveland National Forest and Mexican fire service agencies are looking at ways to expand the cooperative fire training program in 2006 and beyond.



Cleveland National Forest Border Impact Statistics





California Department of Forestry And Fire Protection

For 1.5 million acres of San Diego County, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) is the fire department. CDF maintains a joint emergency command center with the U.S. Forest Service and CDF shares the supervision of inmate firefighters with the California Department of Corrections at four conservation camps. There are 25 CDF fire stations providing fire protection and other emergency services within the county. CDF fights fire from the air with helicopters and airtankers stationed at Ramona and Gillespie Field.

Fire Season 2005 – CDF San Diego, along with San Bernardino and Riverside CDF units, received augmentation funding from the Office of the Governor to hire personnel to have four persons on each engine instead of three due to the projected fire season potential. The severe drought and bark beetle infestation caused an increase in mortality rates in the pine-forested areas and some associated brush fields. In many areas, like Julian, it was estimated that 35% to 40% of the conifers were dead. Similar percentages were affecting other types of vegetation. CDF San Diego hired additional firefighters in May 2005 and engines were staffed with permanent personnel at that time. The increased staffing has been extremely useful during prior year fires like the Cedar Fire in October/November 2003.



The number of border related fires increased when compared to the previous year, and the acreage was also increased when compared to 2004. The total number of “border related” fires in the BAFC was fifty-nine (59). The total number of acres burned in 2005 in the CDF SRA lands within BAFC boundaries was 5,218. The total estimated suppression costs from the State Emergency Fund in 2005 was \$597,769 compared to \$472,834 in 2004. The total cost to suppress all fires in the border area including the Emergency Fund costs was \$3,789,182. The largest fire at the border was Border Fire #50 that burned 4,151 total acres with 1,210 acres within the United States. The fire was caused by an illegal campfire. This fire entered the United States from Mexico and no structures were reported to be destroyed.

Binational Prescribed (Controlled) Burn With Mexico – A planned prescribed burn was conducted by fire agencies around Tecate Peak near the border. The project Protects life, property and sensitive habitat on both sides of the border. A fire brigade from Rancho La Puerta and Pronatura (Nature Conservancy) members in Mexico participated with CDF and CONAFOR. This was the third partnership of this type to enhance the habitat and to protect citizens of both countries. Prescribed fire will be a key element of a successful program. CDF San Diego continues to work with partners in Mexico that control acreage adjacent to the U.S. property. Mexico has embarked on a new era to protect the environment on private lands that matches well with CDF goals. Another example of BAFC working to protect people and the environment.

Protecting the Environment and Preventing Fires – Determining how to remove fire hazards (weeds, brush, dead trees, etc.) while protecting threatened and endangered plant and animal species continues to be the challenge for BAFC. The Quino Checkerspot Butterfly survives in the Coochama State Forest (west of Tecate area). CDF in cooperation with San Diego County, planned a series of “test plots” in which various methods of fuel reduction was to be implemented. These methods may include the burning of small blocks under low intensity fire, hand clearing of selected vegetation, and possible use of goats to reduce fuel load. The intent of the project is to discover which of these methods has the least impact, if any, on the Quino habitat. Another goal of this project is to determine if Quino habitat can be improved or created through any of these methods. This is another example of BAFC working to protect people and the environment.

Firefighters Use the Border Guidebook – When CDF firefighters respond to a wildfire in this area, they consult the Guidebook created in 1998 by BAFC. This publication provides information to the firefighters on how to extinguish fires, while minimizing harm to the environment and the endangered species that live there. The book is expected to have a complete revision in 2006.

International Fuel Break-Otay – CDF continues to work with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and to maintain the necessary work needed on this fuel break parallel to the Otay Truck Trail. Fire crews from McCain Valley Conservation Camp under the direction of an on-site BLM representative conduct this work. The project also creates habitat within the Otay Wilderness.

Training Video – CDF has provided videos for the CHP and Sheriff on shelter deployment and wildland fire dangers that may affect officers of these departments. In an effort to make the CDF fire safety training more available to all agencies in need, CDF and the Border Patrol produced a video of the training. CDF provided the training and the Border patrol taped, edited and copied the video. The product was then distributed by CDF. Since the beginning of BAFC, CDF has provided fire safety training to law enforcement, firefighters and emergency medical technicians who might be exposed to wildfire. This video supports that effort.

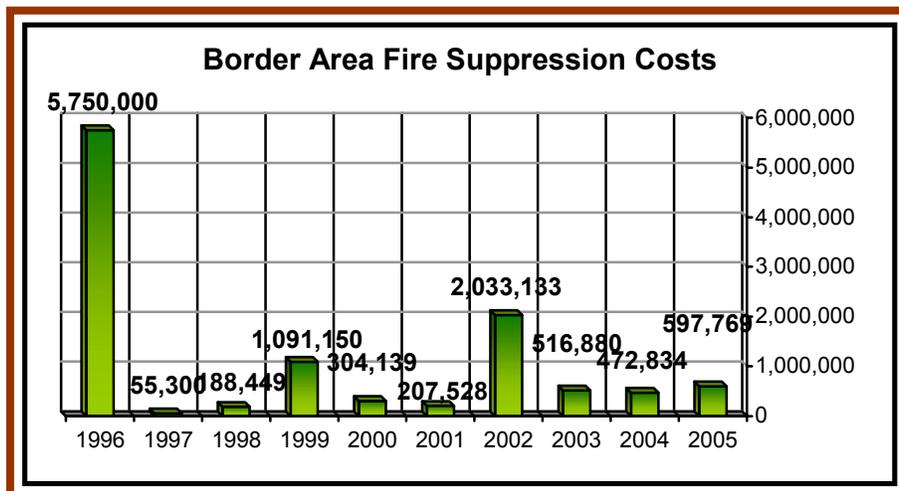
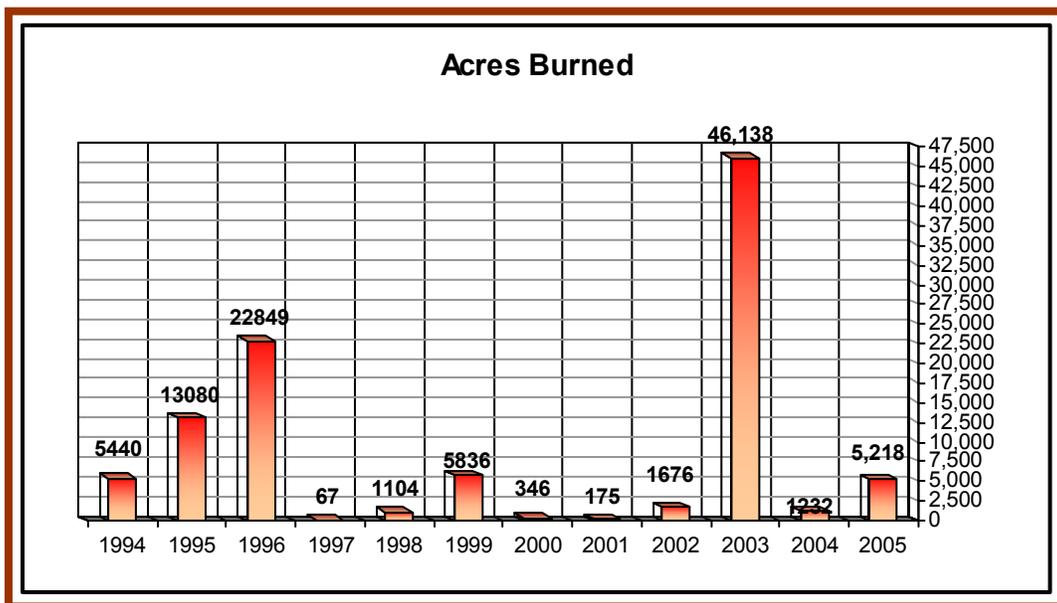
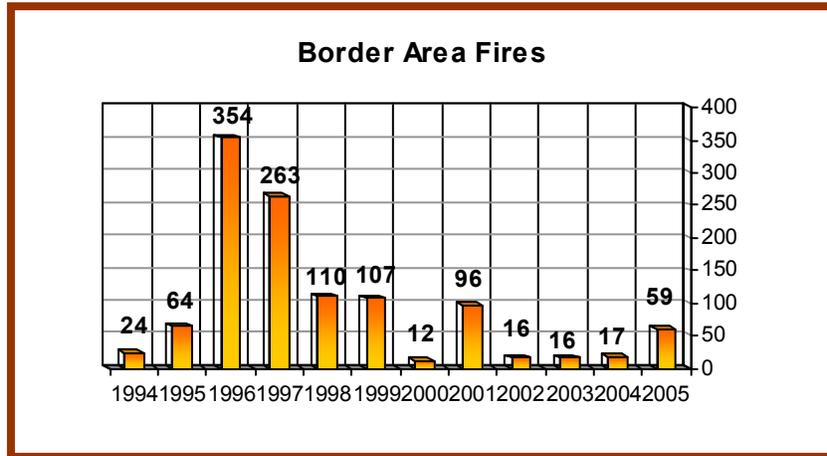
Mutual Assistance Agreement - A positive relationship between the fire agencies from both countries continues to grow and improve. CDF personnel have also crossed the border to train firefighters in Bonita/Juarez Mexico. Firefighter Training this year included the following subjects: Fire Behavior S-190, Introduction to the Incident Command System, First Aid, Hand Tool Use, Fire Line Construction, Chainsaw Use and Maintenance and Use of hoselays in wildland fire suppression. In 2003, CDF fire personnel translated the Incident Command System (ICS) I-200 course, an introduction to Incident Command, into Spanish. In both cases, Spanish speaking CDF employees provided the training to the “Bomberos” and has continued to be most effective. CDF also held meetings with fire agencies and the US and Mexican Consulates to update and finalize the Mutual Assistance Agreement as part of an annual review process.



2005 Binational Camp in Mexico. At left Firefighter Reynolds helps kids squirt water. Below Captain Reuben Hernandez explains fire safety to a group of kids.



CDF Border Impact Statistics





San Diego County Sheriff's Department

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department is proud to be one of the founding members of the Border Agency Fire Council. Working in partnerships with our communities as well as fellow members of BAFC, deputies assigned to the Rural Law Enforcement Division continue to provide quality service to the citizens of the rural areas.

Working with our partners in the fire service, we assisted in numerous fires that occurred throughout the backcountry portion of San Diego County, including the massive Cedar Fire that took place in October of 2003. Our goal to provide services at fire scenes resulted in a massive activation of Sheriff's personnel for the Cedar/Paradise/Otay fires during this time period. It was truly a team effort with our fire department colleagues in this historic critical incident.

The Sheriff Departments' excellent working arrangement with the various fire and law enforcement agencies in the backcountry areas has proved very useful at both fire and disaster scenes. Deputies assigned to the Rural Law Enforcement Division of the Sheriff's Department carry fire turnout gear, extra water for rescue personnel and victims, as well as the ability to utilize common radio frequencies to talk to other agencies.

Adhering to our mission statement of ***"In partnership with our communities, we provide the highest quality public safety services"***, the Sheriff's Department continues to support the Border Area Fire Council by actively participating in the regular meetings and various projects.





United States Border Patrol

"To enforce the rule of law along the border, enhancing the quality of life of the people we proudly serve."

The San Diego Sector of the U.S. Border Patrol is responsible for 66 linear miles of the U.S./Mexico border, and nearly 7,000 square miles, roughly corresponding to the boundaries of the County of San Diego. San Diego Sector had continued success for fiscal year 2003. Since the implementation of Operation Gatekeeper in 1994, illegal entries in San Diego County have steadily declined to a 29 year low of 100,681 in 2002. However, there was an increase in 2003 to 111,510 arrests.

The success of Operation Gatekeeper has enabled the San Diego Sector to appropriate more resources to the development of search & rescue teams, anti-smuggling investigative units, public outreach programs, and border safety initiatives. The availability of personnel and resources has enabled the sector to become more proactive and the leader in innovative uses of new technology. San Diego Sector has evolved from the most neglected area of the southwest border to the flagship of the U.S. Border Patrol and a model of effective, efficient, and humane border control.

Department of Homeland Security - The President has charged the new Department of Homeland Security with the mission of stopping another terrorist attack on American soil. Securing our borders is a crucial aspect of that mission. Border security can no longer be an immigration issue alone. It can no longer be a Customs issue alone. It can no longer simply be about air or port security. Instead, it must encompass all of these issues. And so, on March 1, 2003 the United States Border Patrol joined the new Department of Homeland Security under the Bureau of Border and Transportation Security.

Border Safety Initiative - The Border Safety Initiative (BSI) began in San Diego in 1998 as an effort to make the international border safer for everyone. BSI addresses related concerns in the following areas: **Prevention** of illegal entries through potentially hazardous areas, **Search and Rescue** capabilities and commitments, and interactive support in situations requiring the **Identification** of deceased persons.



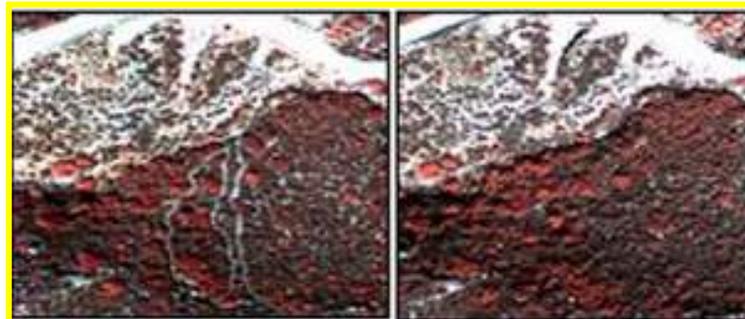
In 2002 the San Diego Sector Public Information Office, with the help of the El Centro and Yuma Border Patrol Sectors, participated in the production of another **Public Service Announcement**. San Diego Sector wrote and directed a new PSA depicting the dangers of the hot and arid deserts of the southwest border and introduced the innovative *rescue beacons* located across the desert. This was used in 2003.

The San Diego Sector began issuing emergency response supplies to agents in 1998 as one facet of the Border Safety Initiative. Backpacks were loaded with a variety of items appropriate for summer or winter emergency aid. Each bag is packed with enough supplies for more than one individual. Easily digestible food, such as special granola “trail mix,” dried “tropical fruit mix” and carbohydrate energy gel replaces earlier food items. “Gatorade” is included along with water and electrolyte tablets. Basic medical response supplies as well as first aid guides are included. Additional instant “cold-packs” were added. The San Diego Sector supplied deputies from the Alpine Sheriff’s Office and Sheriff’s Rural Enforcement division with these same packs in the event they encounter individuals in remote areas suffering from dehydration, heat stroke or malnutrition.

Enforcement Technology Department (ETD) - The San Diego Sector created the U.S. Border Patrol’s first Enforcement Technology Department (ETD) in January of 2000. ETD is charged with researching emerging technology that can enhance the capability, effectiveness, and efficiency of border enforcement and management activities. ETD was envisioned to enhance the sector by strengthening technology capabilities and awareness while serving as a coordinating tool within the agency.

The office has several collaborative efforts underway, including:

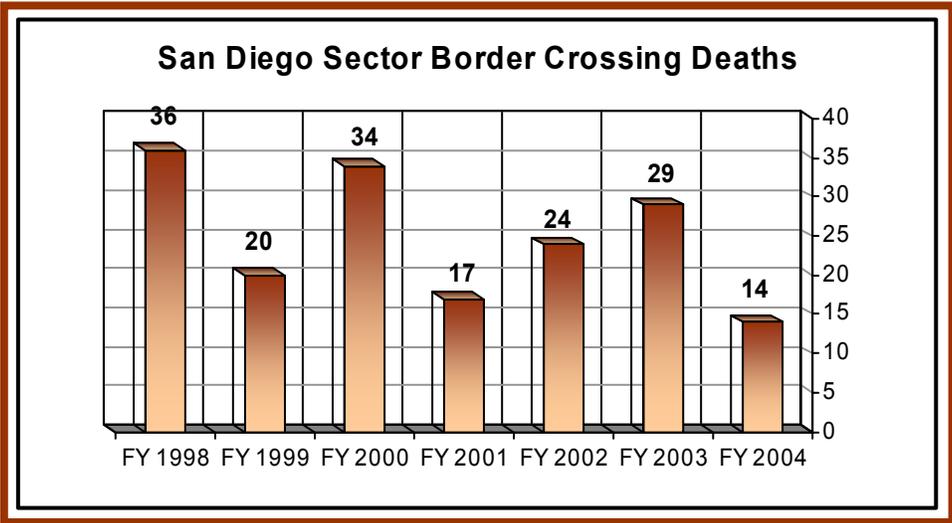
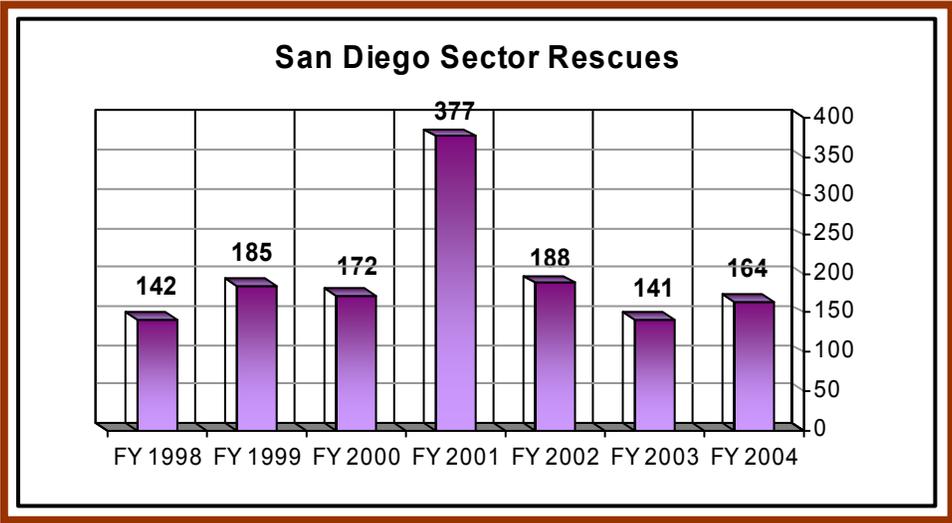
San Diego State University / NASA Trail Extraction Project. This effort uses remote sensing to extract trail network from imagery



GIS technologies detect the changes in vegetation and illustrates new trails as in the image.

San Diego Police Department / San Diego Sheriff’s Department Data sharing. ETD is working with both agencies to develop a common operating picture for emergency response in the area.

San Diego County Border Agency Fire Council Mapping Project. ETD is facilitating the production of new maps for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The maps contain over thirty layers of information.



SAN DIEGO SECTOR NARCOTIC SEIZURES – QUANTITY AND VALUE

Narcotic Type (in pounds)	FY 1999	FY 2000	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004
Marijuana	25,882 \$20,732,599	33,629 \$25,678,211	26,561 \$9,460,822	20,656 \$8,280,555	36,177 \$12,663,646	
Cocaine	414 \$13,265,647	198 \$4,378,521	63 \$639,318	43 \$426,200	152 \$1,521,337	
Heroin	132 \$567,486	5 \$11,207	116 \$99,733	2.02 \$1,636	0.16 \$145	
Other Drugs	141 \$2,939,407	1,221 \$419,297	252 \$279,648	155 \$347,172	16.512 \$99,430	



SAN DIEGO COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

The mission of the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services (OES) is to coordinate San Diego County's response to disasters. Ron Lane, Director, has overall responsibility for managing OES and for directing the Emergency Operations Center in times of an emergency; co-chairing the Terrorism Working Group; and representing the county with state and federal agencies. OES assists public and private organizations in San Diego County with preparing for, responding to and recovering from major emergencies, including terrorism.

County OES has been an active supporter of the Border Agency Fire Council. OES has:

- Received approval by the County Task Force on Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services on a spending plan of \$400,000 for twelve fire protection agencies to meet their capital needs and improve the fire protection services to the public.
- Secured \$30,589,666 for the San Diego Operational Area in Homeland Security Grant Program funds since 2003. These grant programs were:
 - State Homeland Security Program
 - Law Enforcement Terrorism Prevention Program
 - Emergency Management Performance Grant
 - Metropolitan Medical Response System
- Coordinated with the City of San Diego to secure \$16,653,618 for FY 2005 in other grant programs:
 - Urban Area Security Initiative
 - Buffer Zone Protection Program
 - Transit Security
 - Intercity Bus Security Grant Program

As a member of BAFC, staff from OES provided technical assistance in the original development of the Operating Plan. OES also assisted with the update of the plan each year. The BAFC Operating Plan coordinated medical and rescue response to any multi-casualty incident. OES continues to support the BAFC and the Operational Area to respond to and recover from disasters.



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

Since wildlife has been affected by the dramatic increase of human traffic, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) joined BAFC and have been actively involved from the beginning. The FWS oversees 15,000 acres of wildland, which provide 12 critical habitat areas that are home to 21 threatened or endangered species in San Diego County.

Removing the Hazards – Fish and Wildlife crews are working with CDF and the East County Fire Protection District to implement fuel breaks and other hazard abatement work in the east county. These projects involve removing dry brush and weeds, which propel wildfires into the natural habitat and the adjacent homes. Through National Fire Plan Grants, FWS in Partnership with San Diego Rural Fire Protection District, USF&WS has implemented a community chipping program to reduce the fire hazard in Jamul. Two chippers have been purchased and operators have been hired to work this program.



U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management continues its active support of and participation with the Border Agency Fire Council under the direction of Field Manager Gail Acheson. South Coast Project Area Manager Janaye Byergo represents BLM in Resource Issues operating under a management team concept including Joyce Schlachter Biologist, Joseph Funk Law Enforcement Ranger, Clayton Howe Fire Mitigation Specialist, Rolla Queen Archaeologist and Thomas Gey Realty Specialist.

As perhaps the largest landholder in the border area in San Diego County, the South Coast Management Team endeavors to meet the needs of cooperating agencies with separate distinct missions with the responsibilities of BLM related national regulations and policy. Another concern for BLM is our relationship with our neighbors and stakeholders with-in the Border Mountains Management Unit.

The greatest continuing threat in the Border area is that of Wildfire. Pre-fire planning and post fire emergency rehabilitation requirements also take a great investment in time and resources. BLM Fire personnel and Law Enforcement Rangers actively perform High Visibility Patrol during those greatest periods of man caused risk to assist in area fire prevention activities and Agency Representation. Other projects have included bilingual fire prevention signs, video and radio public safety announcements and public education to border area residents.

BLM and Law Enforcement personnel responded in 2005 to several Border Fires and Medical Emergencies related to Immigration Activities. CDF provides fire suppression services and investigates fires to recoup suppression costs on BLM Administered lands through a state-wide agreement. BLM provides Fire Prevention, Fuels Management and Resource Management in the unit.

Special projects included the Tecate Peak Emergency vegetation management request by CDF to modify vegetation surrounding the emergency communications site at Tecate Peak. CDF with the cooperation of BLM were able to foresee wildfire potential based on patterns of fires in the Tecate area. A week after completing the project a wildfire originating in Tecate, Mexico swept up onto the peak. Although the fire burned with extreme behavior over lands administered by BLM and adjacent CDF Forest Lands the critical \$2 Million Dollar + valued site survived intact.

Another project of note is the Hauser Mountain Truck Trail repairs in which CDF, BLM and the Border Patrol cooperated to repair the Truck Trail so essential to fire and law enforcement activities in the Hauser Mountain area. Hauser Mountain has areas where there is no recorded fire history indicating the possibility of 90-100 year old specimens of aged chaparral communities. The Pacific Crest Trail transits through the area and immigration traffic can be high, making a emergency response route necessary for public safety.

Continuing projects include Truck Trail Improvements throughout the unit, road inventories, scientific studies and determining public needs for recreational use.



Department of Planning And Land Use

WHO WE ARE

Mission Statement: Maintain and protect public health, safety and welfare, and the quality of life for County residents by maintaining a comprehensive plan as required by statute and administration and enforcement of codes and ordinances.

Vision Statement: We will consistently provide the highest quality of service to all customers. We remain dedicated to working in partnership with all and to be responsive, flexible and solution-oriented.

The County's General Management System is based on three strategic initiatives:

Improve Opportunities for Children

Promote Natural Resource Management Strategies that Ensure Environmental Preservation, Quality of Life, and Economic Development

Promote Safe and Livable Communities



COMISIÓN NACIONAL FORESTAL

Comisión Nacional Forestal Gerencia Regional I

Península de Baja California

What is CONAFOR? - The Forestry National Commission (Comisión Nacional Forestal-CONAFOR) was created as a decentralized federal agency, independent from SEMARNAT (Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources) on April 4, 2001. Its mission is to inspire the participation from Mexican society to make the necessary changes to create a new sustainable forestry development policy in Mexico. Its general goal is to develop and to impulse productive activities and forest conservation and restoration.

According with the Mexico's General Law of Forestry Sustainable Development, CONAFOR is the federal agency responsible for the coordination of the wildfires prevention, detection and suppression in all the country, with the assistance of other federal, state and county public administration agencies, including volunteer groups.



Cienega Redonda Fire, June, 2005.

2005 Baja California Fire Season.

The 2005 Final Statistics Report registered 374 wildfires in Baja California; these fires burned almost 96,228 acres. Fortunately around 40% of this burned vegetation were grasses, just 0.18% were trees.

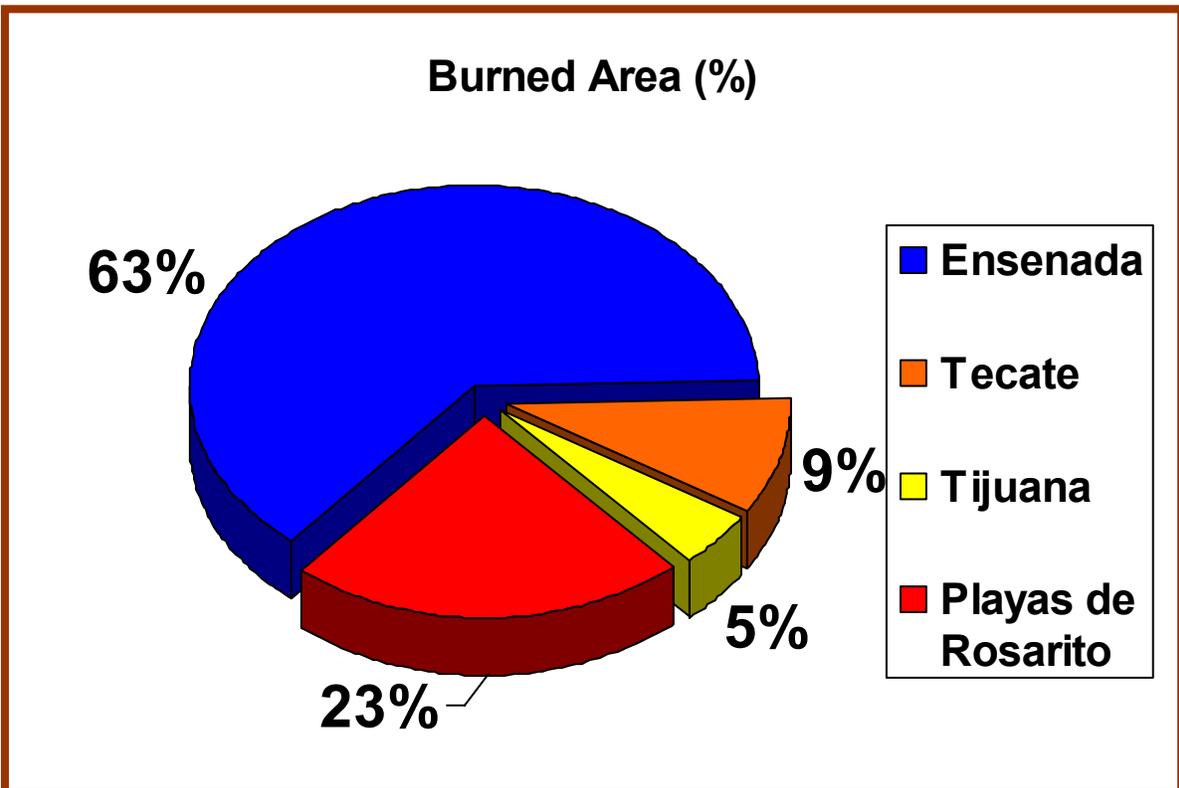
Twenty nine wildfires (7.7 %) occurred close to or on the International Border between California and Baja California. These fires burned 1,040.5 acres (1.08 %).

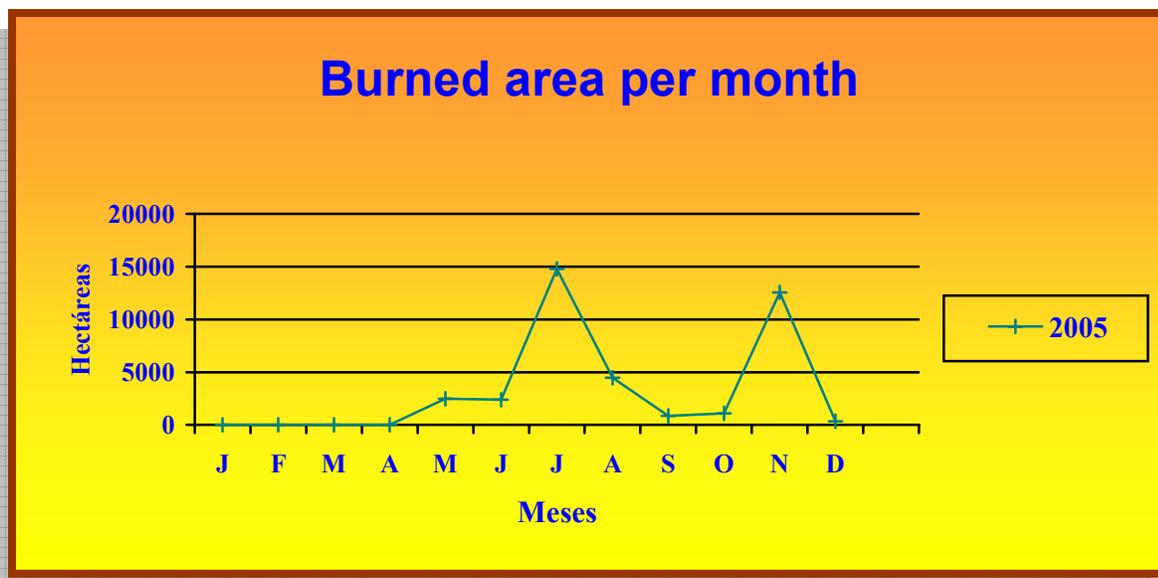
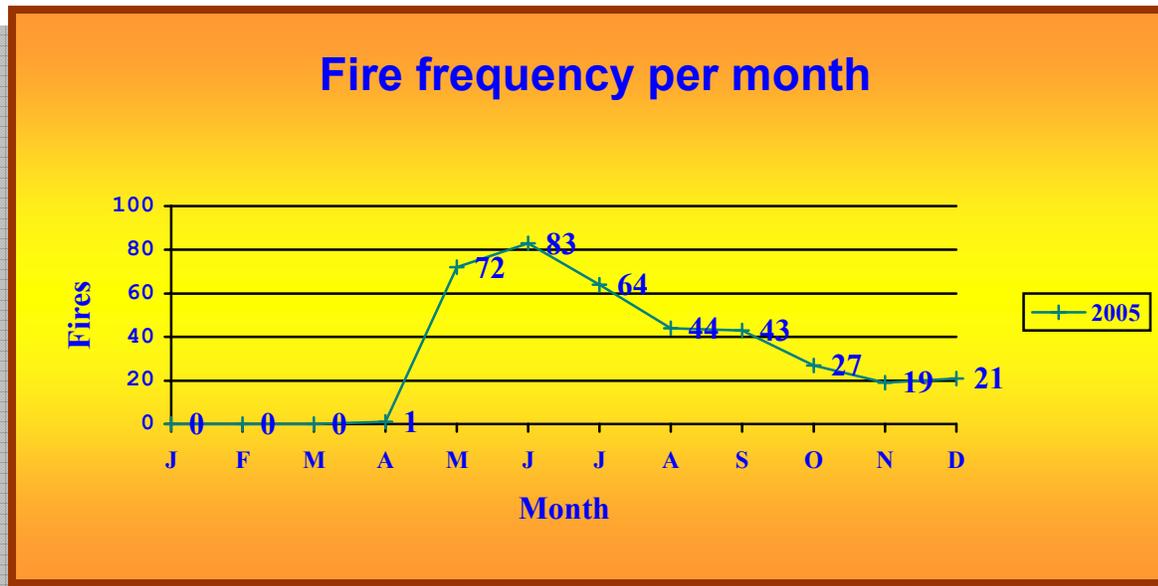
The most dangerous fire occurred in early October in “Cerro Cuchuma”, near Tecate City. For suppression of this fire, it was necessary to exercise the participation of agencies from both sides of the border, such as, CDF, Tecate Fire and CONAFOR

MUNICIPIO	NUMBER OF FIRES	BURNED AREA (Acres)				TOTAL
		GRASS	BRUSH	TREES		
				YOUNG TREES	ADULT TREES	
TECATE	167	6383.7	2712.06	0	13.58	9109.34
ENSENADA	164	20781.9	40030.6	9.88	90.155	60912.535
TIJUANA	38	2958.4	1472.12	0	49.4	4479.92
ROSARITO	5	6886.4	14832.35	0	7.41	21726.16
TOTAL	374	37010.4	59047.13	9.88	160.545	96227.955
%	100	38.46	61.36	0.01	0.17	100



Cerro Costilla Fire , Sierra San Pedro Martir, July, 2005





Important Binational Activities.-

3rd Binational Forestry Education Camp

On May 14, 2005 was held the 3rd Binational Forestry Education Camp in Tecate, Mexico, this public event was organized by fire agencies from both sides of the California-Baja California Border, such as, Unit San Diego CDF, Cleveland National Forest, SEFOA and CONAFOR, with the participation of other organizations and Baja California and California children.



Press Conference



Education activities



Education activities



Tree plantation



Participant children

1st Border Wildfire Training Course

From May 23rd to May 27th, took place the 2005 Border Wildfire Training Course BC/CA. In this training sessions was trained 83 both official and volunteer Mexican firefighters, from States of Baja California and Sonora, it was developed in El Condor, near La Rumorosa, Tecate, Mexico.



After chainsaw training



In hose lay practice

This training event was organized and coordinated by CONAFOR and CDF (Dulzura Fire Station), and it was sponsored by CONAFOR, CDF, Sycuan Fire Department, SEFOA, DEPC (Baja California OES), and other. The training program included S-190, Introduction to ICS, First Aid, Hand Tools use, Fire Line Construction, Chainsaw - use and maintenance - and Hose Lay. It was great training event for Mexican firefighters and we hope repeat it on 2006 in coordination with American fire agencies.

Ing. Juan Ramón Cruz Domínguez
BC Wildfire Program Coordinator
Coordinator

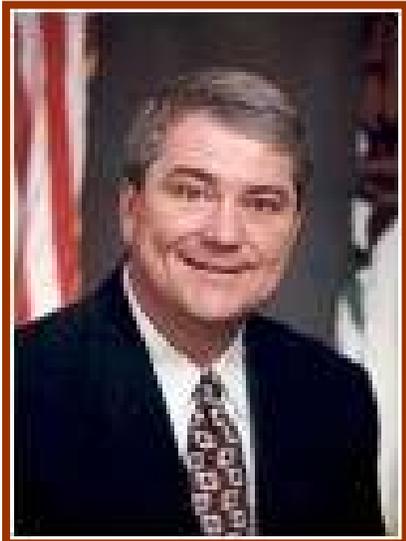




Greetings to the BAFC from Senator Bill Morrow, 38th District

The Border Agency Fire Council fills a critical need in dealing with situations that put lives and the environment at risk every day. I commend the establishment of and ongoing interagency cross-border coordination of efforts to address these issues.

Fiscal Responsibility + Protecting Children + Property Rights + Family Values + Fighting Crime + Senior Citizens + Personal Liberty + Economic Opportunity + Education Reform + Military Veterans + Health Care + Civil Justice + Natural Resources Conservation + Fire Safety + Jobs + Transportation + Community Support + Energy Reform



Senator Bill Morrow

One of California's most energetic senators, California State Senator Bill Morrow is a Republican representing the 38th Senate District, which includes a portion of South Orange County and much of North San Diego County.

The Senator's efforts in the California Legislature blend his strong fiscal conservatism, commitment to traditional family values, respect for justice, support for business and working people, tough-on-crime attitude, and compassion for senior citizens, children, and the needy.

Morrow consistently supports legislation to limit government. Throughout his legislative career he has honored his original pledge to vote against all new taxes. First elected to the Assembly in 1992, he was re-elected in 1994 and 1996 by overwhelming majorities. He was elected to the State Senate in 1998. After serving his first term in the Assembly, he was named "Legislator of the Year" by the Orange County League of Cities. In 1995, the Pro-Life PAC of Orange County also elected Morrow as their "Legislator of the Year".

Now serving as the long-time Vice-Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Senator served as Chairman of the powerful Judiciary Committee while Assembly Republicans held the majority. In the State Legislature, Senator Morrow has been the point person in the fight against frivolous lawsuits. Recognizing his efforts to effect legal reform, the Orange County Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse (CALA) selected Morrow as their Civil Justice "Legislator of the Year" for 1996. That same year, the California Republican Assembly also named him as "Legislator of the Year." In 1997, the Golden State Mobilehome Owners League named Senator Morrow their "Legislator of the Year".

One of the state's premier supporters of private entrepreneurship, free markets, and property rights, Senator Morrow was named 2001 "Legislator of the Year" by California Small Business Association. In 2005 he began serving on the Senate Committee for Business, Professions and Economic Development. He currently serves on four Senate Select Committees: (1) Citizen Participation, (2) Defense and Aerospace Industry (3) Retirement Investment Protection and Corporate Responsibility, and (4) Mobile and Manufactured Homes.

His legislative victories include school fund equalization, which gave more than \$5.2 million to low wealth districts in his Senate District. This legislation was introduced at the request of the Capistrano School District, but other low-wealth school districts throughout the state also benefited from this legislation. In October 2001, the San Diego County Board of Education honored him for his exceptional leadership in school equalization, funding and spending flexibility for school districts, charter schools, libraries, and literacy. He currently serves on the Senate Education Committee.

Senator Morrow also is a leading figure in criminal justice reform. In 2003, Crime Victims United of California named him their "Legislator of the Year." His crime-fighting efforts include focusing attention on the senseless delays in the appeals process for criminals who have received the death penalty. He has successfully introduced and passed legislation to expedite punishment phases.

Entrusting Senator Morrow with extra responsibility to help lead the state out of its emerging electricity crisis, the Senate leadership appointed him as a new member and Vice Chairman and ranking Republican on the Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications. He is also a member of that committee's Subcommittee on New Technology. The Senate Republican Caucus has appointed him Chairman of the Senate Republican Energy Working Group and he served as a member of the Select Committee to Investigate Price Manipulation of the Wholesale Energy Market.

In 2003, the Senate appointed Senator Morrow as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veteran's Affairs and he continues to serve in that capacity. He has carried a variety of bills helping veterans, active duty and reserve military personnel, and service families. In 2004 the County Veterans Service Officers Association selected him as their "Legislator of the Year." Other Standing Committees on which he serves include: Business, Professions and Economic Development and Education.

Morrow is a strong conservationist and supporter of fire prevention. He is the only legislator at the state level who is a member of the FireSafe Council. Morrow carried legislation for year-round firefighting air tanker support for three Southern California counties that was adopted administratively by the state. Senator Morrow was directly responsible for securing a \$500,000 grant for fire prevention-related activities for the Greater San Diego County Resource District working in conjunction with the San Diego County FireSafe Council chapter. He was instrumental in ensuring a successful grant for \$100,000 for a project managed by the Fairbanks Ranch Homeowners Association and the San Diego County FireSafe Council Chapter.

Beyond his legislative duties, Senator Morrow works hard to improve our communities through local organizations such as the Boys & Girls Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, Kiwanis Clubs, YMCA, Laura's House, the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). He has been privileged to be the keynote speaker on four occasions at the Veteran's Loyalty Day Celebration in San Clemente.

Born and raised in Southern California, Bill Morrow was elected the Student Body President of his class at Mt. San Antonio College. He graduated from UCLA with honors, and received his Juris Doctorate from the Pepperdine School of Law. After earning his degree, the Senator was recruited by the United States Marine Corps. For eight years he served with distinction as a commissioned officer and military judge advocate. As the Chief Trial Counsel and prosecutor at Camp Pendleton, he prosecuted crime, waste and corruption in the military. Captain Morrow left active duty with the USMC in 1987 and entered the private sector as a small business attorney.

Senator Morrow lives in the City of Oceanside with his wife Barbara and their nine-year-old son Will. The Senator is an enthusiastic outdoorsman with a deep love and respect of nature.



Office of State Senator Denise Moreno Ducheny, 40th District

“As a newly signed member of the Border Agency Fire Council, I look forward to participating in its mission of protecting our border region’s natural resources by fostering open binational communication.” Senator Denise Moreno Ducheny

Senator Denise Moreno Ducheny, a Democrat, was elected to the California State Senate on November 5, 2002, to represent the 40th District. As a native Californian Senator Ducheny has been involved with neighborhood issues such as jobs, education, and improving the quality of life in her district for over 25 years.



40th Senatorial District - The district incorporates portions of San Diego and Riverside Counties and all of Imperial County, spanning the entire California/Baja California border from Imperial Beach to Yuma, Arizona. Senator Ducheny Chairs the Senate Budget Subcommittee on Health and Human Services and is Vice Chair of the Committee on Agriculture. She also serves on Transportation and Housing, Government Modernization, Efficiency and Accountability, and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee. Senator Ducheny chairs the Senate Select Committees on California-Mexico Cooperation,

the Colorado River and Oversight of UC Energy Labs, and serves on several other select committees. Senator Ducheny served as Chair of the Senate Committee on Housing and Community Development from 2002 to 2004.

Background - Ms. Ducheny was born in Southern California, where she attended public high school and received a four-year scholarship from Twentieth-Century Fox Film Corporation to attend Pomona College. While in college she studied Spanish in Cuernavaca, Mexico, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History. She went on to study economic history at the University of Lund, Sweden.

While attending the Southwestern University School of Law in Los Angeles, Ms. Ducheny served as student director of the Southwestern Clinical Law Center. She has been practicing law in South San Diego since 1979, when she earned her Juris Doctor and was admitted to the California State Bar.

Accomplishments - Prior to her election to the California State Senate, Senator Ducheny served in the California State Assembly from 1994 to 2000. While in the Assembly, Senator Ducheny served as Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee between 1997 and 2000, and as Vice-Chair in 1996. As an Assemblywoman, she was the first San Diegan, first woman, and first Latino ever to be appointed to this powerful position overseeing the state's \$100

billion spending plan. As a legislator, she also served as Chair of the Select Committee on California-Mexico Affairs, Co-Chair of the Special Committee on Welfare Reform, Vice-Chair of the Joint Legislative Budget Committee, and Vice-Chair of the Latino Legislative Caucus.

As a legislator in both houses, Senator Ducheny has worked diligently to improve California's bi-national relationship with the Republic of Mexico by coordinating various meetings and tours with U.S. and Mexican officials, to discuss cross-border business, transportation, education, environment and health issues. During the 1999-2000 legislative session, she authored legislation that created a permanent Office of Binational Border Health to facilitate cooperation between health officials and health professionals in California and Mexico to reduce the risk of disease in the border region. She also spearheaded organization of the Border Legislative Forum, a project of the Council of State Governments, comprised of legislators of the 10 U.S.-Mexico Border States, and the Legislative Forum of the Three Californias.

Senator Ducheny previously served as an elected trustee of the governing board of the San Diego Community College District, as a member of the board of directors of the California Community College Trustees Association, and as Founder and Chair of the Association of Latino Community College Trustees. From 2000 to 2002, Senator Ducheny served as a Presidential Fellow at San Diego State University, Board Member of the San Diego Natural History Museum, Trustee of the Anza-Borrego State Park Foundation, Commissioner for the State Commission of the Californias, Commissioner for the San Diego County Regional Governance Efficiency Commission and member of the California Border Environmental Cooperation Commission.

Senator Ducheny's Capitol and District Offices contact information:

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BAFC Membership

Thirty-two organizations and elected officials are active members of the Border Agency Fire Council. Each contributes staff and funds to this unique collaborative effort.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Office of the Governor

U.S.D.A. Forest Service

U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management

U.S. Border Patrol

Office of Supervisor Dianne Jacob

San Diego County Office of Emergency Services

U.S. Attorney's Office

Office of Congressman Duncan Hunter

California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

California Highway Patrol

San Diego County Department of Health Services Agency

San Diego County Department of Planning and Land Use

Rural Fire Protection District

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

San Diego County Sheriff

Office of Senator Bill Morrow

Office of Senator Dennis Hollingsworth

Office of Senator Denise Ducheny

San Diego Gas and Electric

Joint Task Force 6

California Department of Fish and Game

San Diego Trauma Hospital Administrators

California Department of Corrections

Southern California Watershed Fire Council

U.S. Consulate General Tijuana

San Diego Fire and Rescue Department

FireSafe Council San Diego

CONAFOR (Comician Nacional Forestal), B.C., Mexico

Director de Proteccion Civil del Estado, B.C. Mexico (Baja OES)

Estatad de Forestal y Fauna Ensenada, Mexico

Tecate Fire Public Safety (Bomberos de Tecate)

Mexican Consul General San Diego (Associate Member)

Direccion de Bomberos de Tijuana

Border Agency Fire Council (BAFC) Area of Concern

