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## Los Angeles County Prepares for Disaster

The flames may be gone, but emergency responders in Los Angeles County are still working hard to protect their citizens. After September's Station Fire burned over 160,000 acres, the Coordinated Agency Recovery Effort (CARE) was created to deal with the very real threat of catastrophic debris flow triggered by winter rains. The CARE outreach program combines the efforts of County Public Works, US Forest Service (USFS), National Resource Conservation Service, US Geological Survey and Caltrans. CARE's program includes regular updates and bulletins, technical assistance for residents on constructing mudslide diversions (800-214-4020), a "one-stop" website with helpful storm preparation information, public service announcements, and a speaker's bureau

for community meetings.

Already, Public Works engineers have inspected over 200 properties and—together with USFS officials—hosted several public meetings in at-risk communities.



"Our Department of Public Works has already completed many of the physical repairs to County roads, including replacing more than 850 road signs, 4,500 road

markers, 27 miles of re-striping, and is working to install 95 sections of guardrail along with the removal of 900 burned trees," reports County Supervisor Michael Antonovich. "The Department is also looking to increase capacity at seven of the 29 debris basins in the Station Fire burn area and is cleaning out an additional nine basins before the rains come."

## Grants Clearinghouse 2011 Cycle

Find us online at [www.grants.firesafecouncil.org](http://www.grants.firesafecouncil.org)

Please come to a Grant Writing Workshop this year, there are a lot of new changes that we can't wait to tell you about!

- |                             |                         |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|
| Call for Grant Applications | Dec 7, 2009             |
| Grant Writing Workshops     | Jan 4-22, 2010          |
| Grant Writing Workshops     | Feb 1-12, 2010          |
| Grant Application Deadline  | Feb 26, 2010 (midnight) |
| Applicant Notification      | June 14, 2010           |



## From the Desk of Bruce Turbeville



As California's recent fire activity illustrates, the work we embark on together is essential. Our fire safe projects have been put to the test, and are making a difference in saving homes. Getting the Fire Safe message out one neighborhood at a time may seem like the hard way to do our work, but for your efforts are paying off every time a firefighter decides a homeowner has done their homework and has defensible space.

We can't sit on our laurels, however. There is still much to be done throughout the state, both in new project work and maintenance of completed projects. We also need to take some time to educate new wildland-urban interface residents about the risks they face in exchange for their beautiful vistas.

I have every faith that you are all up to the task. I hear inspirational tales of Fire Safe Council activities throughout the state. Enjoy the few we are able to share in this space, and perhaps come away with renewed inspiration for how you can work together to make your local area more Fire Safe.

*Bruce*

## Deer Springs FSC Takes on Most Dangerous Area



Moosa Canyon, located in north inland San Diego County, extends six miles long, one mile wide, with slopes as steep as 45° with 40-year-old chaparral over 8' high. Labeled as one of the most fire prone areas within San Diego County, Moosa Canyon became the centerpiece of Deer Springs Fire Safe Council's 2007 grant proposal to CFSC. The project was funded by US Forest Service, and work began May 1, 2009, using female inmate fire crews from the CAL FIRE Rainbow Conservation Camp.

Working on the Moosa Project provides excellent training and conditioning for these crews very similar to what they face when deployed to help fight wildfires. So far about 200,000 pounds of dead and dying chaparral and invasive species have been chipped in this ongoing project.

## "Together is Better" in San Jose

California Insurance Commissioner Steve Poizner joined several Northwest California Fire Safe Councils, Farmers insurance employees, and CAL FIRE representatives at our fourth "Together is Better" workshop held in San Jose in September. Fire Safe Council representatives included Santa Clara County, San Bonito, San Mateo, Mount Diablo, Soquel, Western Shasta, plus CAL FIRE Battalion Chiefs, CAL FIRE Morgan Hill, the state Weed and Abatement Division, PG&E and the Fire Chief from El Cerrito, CA.

"The recent, devastating wildfires are a somber reminder of the destruction that all Californians are prone to," said Commissioner Poizner. He offered pointers for all Californians to help protect their homes and belongings. A Department of the Interior booth offered disaster kits for all attendees. Seven of the Fire Safe Councils present also had booths, along with Farmers' FireFacts booth and Customer Care vehicle outside. The event was covered by the San Jose Mercury News, KGO Radio, San Francisco and the East Bay City News.



# Wheeler Crest: Clearing with a Conscience

On the east side of the Sierras, Wheeler Crest Fire Safe Council (WCFSC) has been spreading the word about fire prevention since 1997. Working with the Wheeler Crest Fire Protection District, the Inyo National Forest and the Bureau of Land Management they created a fuelbreak that protected residents from the 2002 Birch Fire. These days, their efforts are focused on clearing and chipping brush in the community of Swall Meadows – a project made possible by a CFSC grant funded by the US Forest Service.

As of August, nearly half of the area’s property owners have participated in the program. WCFSC has found a creative method to make sure community chipping days are fair. Residents stack brush in 20’x5’x5’ bundles. Participants are allotted an equal number of bundles, each of which takes about five hours to produce and another hour to chip.

Residents are careful to remove hazardous fuels while retaining essential habitat. “We didn’t want to ‘clear cut’ properties, just reduce the fire danger,” explains WCFSC chairperson Robin Connors. “Many property owners have made a concerted effort to ‘clean up’ their property, leaving bitterbrush and some sage which supports the deer habitat and helps retain the aesthetics in the area.”



**Have you ever wondered...**  
 how many local fire safe councils are operating in California?  
 Or pondered if there is a local fire safe council near you? So have we!  
 Please help us update our database of local fire safe councils at  
<http://www.firesafecouncil.org/find/index.cfm>.  
 Does your local fire safe council have a web link listed at this page?  
 If so, please take a moment to ensure your contact information is correct.  
 If you would like to be added to this list or need help updating your page,  
 please complete the form available at [www.firesafecouncil.org](http://www.firesafecouncil.org).  
 Then keep an eye on our website as we update  
 the list of local fire safe councils!

For questions or assistance please contact Alli Shetler at 1-866-372-2543 or  
 via e-mail at [ashetler@cafiresafecouncil.org](mailto:ashetler@cafiresafecouncil.org)

## CFSC Welcomes New Helping Hands

CFSC’s new Affiliate Manager, Katie Ziemann, says fire safety has long been in the forefront of her mind. As a former neighbor of Senior Grant Manager Cathy Brooke, Katie had been inspired by the great grassroots efforts local FSCs. She couldn’t have predicted that the day she interviewed for her position she would be watching the Station Fire from her new home. Katie will be working throughout the state helping emerging local Councils work on creative ways to get started and get folks involved. Katie loves to travel—while studying abroad in college she visited 15 countries in 9 months. She’s looking forward to visiting all 58 of California’s counties! If you are a fledgling FSC or know of one, give Katie a call at 800-372-2543.



Randy Richter spent 25 years working as a Forester in the forest products industry, and brings a wealth of experience to the central coast area as CFSC’s newest Grant Manager. Randy enjoyed meeting many of his grantees from the San Francisco Bay area and surrounding counties at September’s “Together is Better” event. He was able to make his first site visit as the Department of Interior toured the work of Fire Safe Marin. Randy says, “My awareness for the need for WUI fuels management was heightened as I worked in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. I know this work will be rewarding; I am inspired by the enthusiasm of the residents as they work together.”







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## Crescenta Valley Makes One Call Now

Newly emerging Crescenta Valley Fire Safe Council in Los Angeles County is rivaling much more established Councils in their preparedness, and it is paying huge dividends. Proud recipients of a “mini grant” from Farmers Insurance, the group purchased the “One Call Now” emergency notification network program. So far, this program has proven to be remarkably useful.

In June, CVFSC president Roger Young heard that an Alzheimer’s patient was missing from his home, and that the Sheriff’s Department had been unable to find him after a two-hour search. Roger thought this was a great trial for the One Call Now program, promptly activated it, and within minutes a neighbor reported that the missing man was napping in his back yard.

September’s Station Fire came right up to the property lines of many hillside residents of La Crescenta. Roger found a way to use the One Call Now system to “add texture and color” to media reports, notifications from the County and the fire statistics from the Forest Service. He regularly toured the area, using One Call Now to provide updated information twice each day to the 1,700 residents living in the fire-threatened neighborhoods in unincorporated La Crescenta. Roger received numerous phone calls, emails and in-person hugs from residents grateful to have this system up and running.

To create sustainability for the system’s annual costs, CVFSC is collecting \$10 annual donations from each household, a small price to pay for the benefits they’ve already experienced!



Crescenta Valley Fire Safe Council’s mini grant from Farmers allowed them to purchase emergency notification software.