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Chairman J. Keith Gilless
Board of Forestry and Fire Protection
P.O. Box 944246
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September 25, 2014

Dear Chairman Gilless:

This letter is a follow up of my participation in both the June and August Board of Forestry hearings and associated Resource Protection Committee meetings regarding the "Potential Board Guidance and Regulations for the SRA Fee Grant Program". Specifically I have been requesting that the board consider and hopefully authorize the use of SRA Grant Funds for the payment of annual salaries and administration expenses of County and/or Regional (more than one county) Fire Safe Council Coordinators.

Throughout California there are 174 community Fire Safe Councils, 27 County Fire Safe Councils and 4 Regional Fire Safe Councils. As we move forward in addressing the growing catastrophic fire problem that is threatening our citizens, communities and resources it is critically important that the Coordinator salaries and expenses be funded through the SRA Grant Program because the previously utilized Title III funds of the Secure Rural Schools Act which started in 2001 terminates at the end of the 2014 federal fiscal year (five days from now). Since the Title III payments for 2014 are distributed to the counties in early October, hopefully a few of the CFSC's have been successful in working with their County Board of Supervisor's to get another year of funding through this program.

Back in August Pat Kidder, Chairman of the California Fire Safe Council, myself and two other board members had a conference call meeting with Cal-Fire Director Pimlott and members of his staff regarding the SRA and Cap and Trade grant programs that will be forthcoming and administered by Cal-Fire. During this conversation I specifically asked the director if either the SRA or Cap & Trade funds could be used for the purpose of paying the annual salaries/expenses of the coordinators and the reply from his staff was that there is "no authority in either law that allows it".

Although at this time the BOF may not be involved in the distribution of the Cap & Trade funds, ABX 29 (SRA) is quite specific that you are involved in the defining and funding of fire prevention and educational programs that are in the state responsibility area and benefit

subsequent home owners. As shown on the attached materials, the County/Regional Fire Safe Council Coordinator is “the key to success” and brings all of the players (local, state and federal) to the table for the collaborative development and implementation of a County Fire Plan. The administration, monitoring and updating of various fire prevention, fuel reduction and educational projects along with associated meetings that fall within the intent of a County Fire Plan (CWPP) require the continual dedication and commitment of the Coordinator.

In 2010 and again earlier this year I surveyed the County/Regional FSC Coordinators to get a feeling for the use of Title III funds for their salaries. In both surveys I received back 22 responses of which 18 were dependant on Title III funds for a portion or all of their annual salary. The average annual salary for the two surveys was \$41,000 plus \$12,000 for administration/overhead cost. The range of Title III funds covered from 30% to 100% of their annual salary and averaged \$32,000 plus \$4,000. In other words, the annual ball park figure for potential Title III replacement needs with SRA grant funds would average \$650,000 to \$700,000 annually.

The following two **suggested modifications** are offered to clarify the use of SRA grant funds for paying annual salaries/expenses of a County/Regional Fire Safe Council Coordinator under the Resource Protection Committee 1665.8 Grant Program rules:

14 CCR - 1665.8 Grant Program.

- (a) (2) Creation, **administration, monitoring and updating** of strategic wildfire planning documents, such as a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) **and/or a County Fire Plan.**
- (9) **Fund County/Regional Fire Safe Council Coordinator annual salary and administration expenses.**

Cordially,

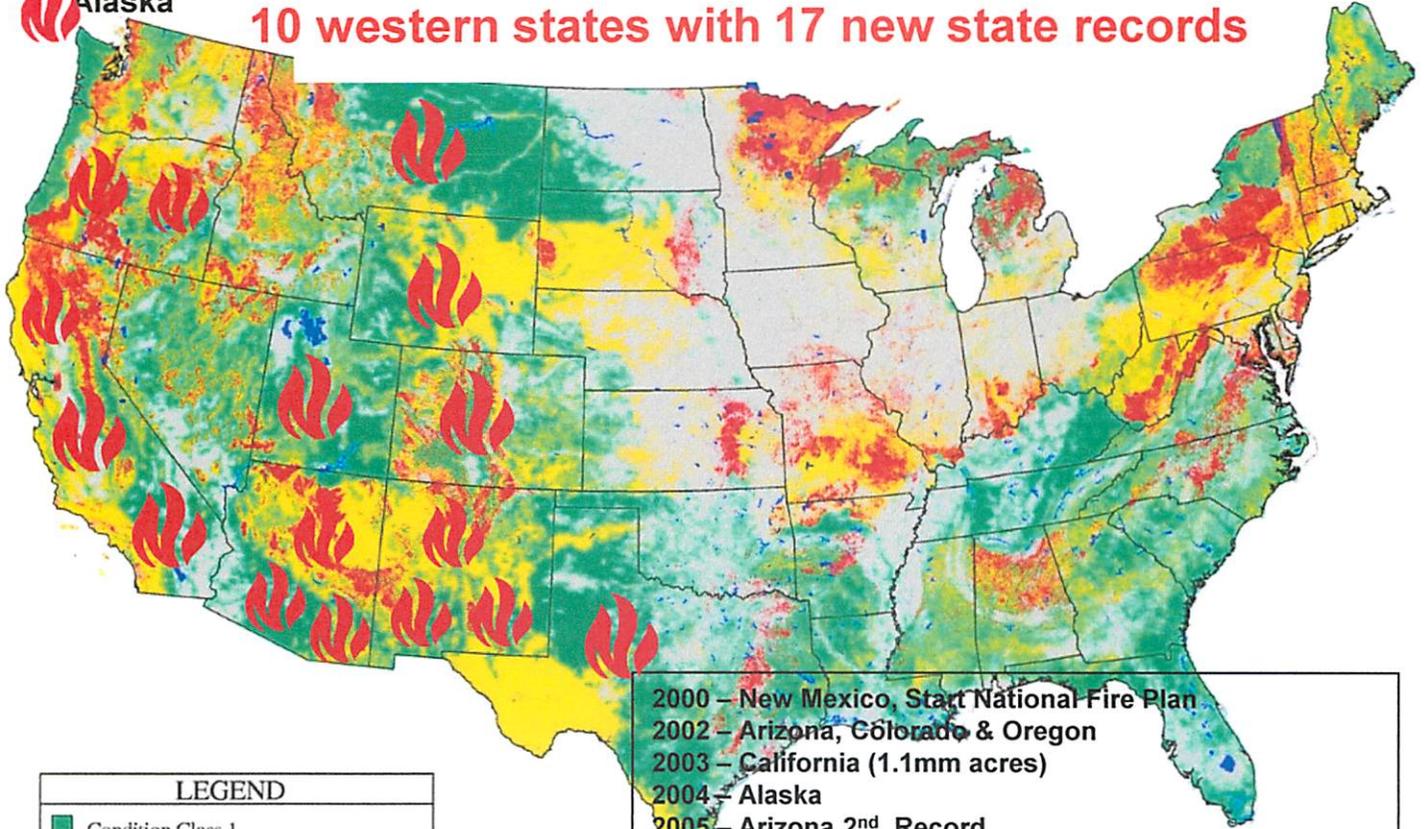
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A Growing Threat to Communities, Watersheds & Wildlife

The National Fire Plan was developed in 2000 after New Mexico experienced its' worst fire season in state history for annual acres burned. Since 2000, Colorado, Oregon (2 records), California (3 records), Alaska, Arizona (3 records), New Mexico (3 records) Utah, Texas & Wyoming have suffered through new state historic records for annual acres burned. The problem is **GETTING WORSE – NOT BETTER** and as we move further into the realities of climate change, the annual **Pace & Scale** of strategic hazardous fuel reduction and forest restoration activity acres must be increased significantly across the landscapes throughout the western states.

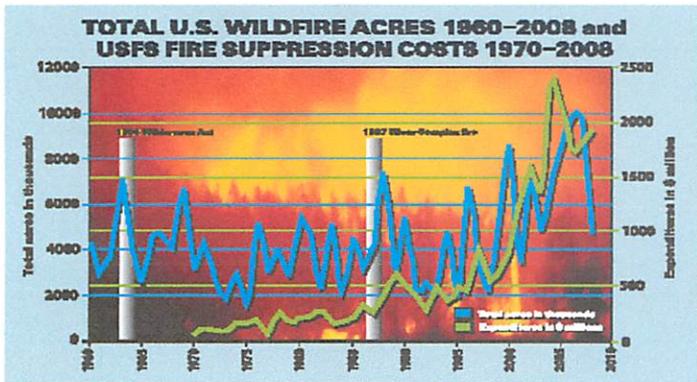


10 western states with 17 new state records



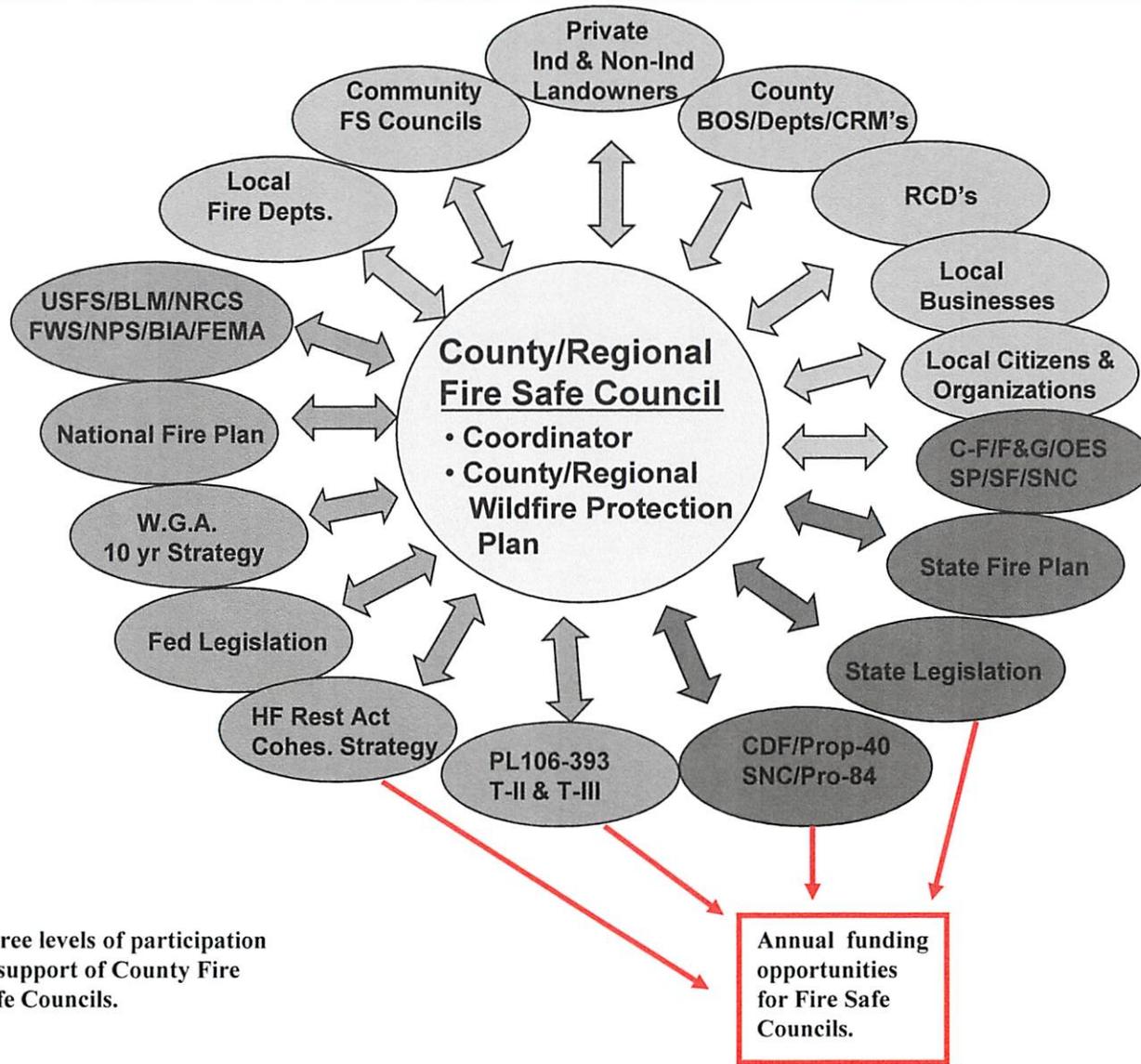
| LEGEND | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ | Condition Class 1 |
| ■ | Condition Class 2 |
| ■ | Condition Class 3 |
| ■ | Water |
| ■ | Agriculture & Non -Vegetated Areas |

- 2000 – New Mexico, Start National Fire Plan
- 2002 – Arizona, Colorado & Oregon
- 2003 – California (1.1mm acres)
- 2004 – Alaska
- 2005 – Arizona 2nd Record
- 2006 – New Mexico 2nd Record
- 2007 – Utah, California 2nd Record (1.3mm acres)
- 2008 – California 3rd Record (1.6mm acres)
- 2011 - Texas, Arizona 3rd Record, New Mexico 3rd Record
- 2012 - Oregon (2nd Record), Wyoming, Montana



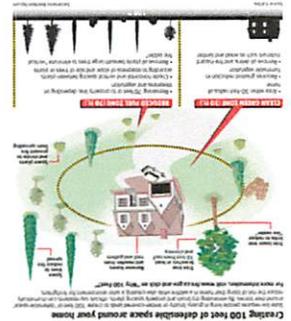
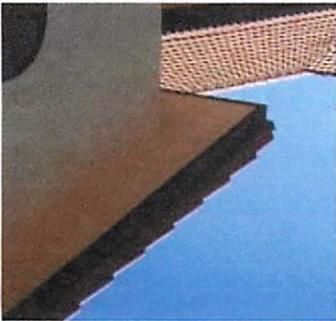
Run Bear Run

County/Regional Fire Safe Councils serve as the hub to bring it all together at the local level for the collaborative development of fuel reduction and fire protection projects on private & public lands that are strategically implemented through the County/Community Wildfire Protection Plan & utilized for fire suppression activities by local, state and federal fire fighters.



- County
- State
- Federal

Three levels of participation & support of County Fire Safe Councils.



County Fire Safe Councils the key to success are the coordinators



