

Wildfire Protection



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



California's Wildland Fire Challenge

The BLM is working together with other agencies and local communities in California to protect people, property and resources from wildfires. Coordination is key to meeting this challenge in a state

with 38 million people, increasing development in the wildland urban interface and extreme fire conditions.

The bad news is that sometimes these factors reach critical mass, such as the 2007 fire season, one of the worst in history, with 1.6 million acres burned, 8,881 fires, 3,830 homes and structures burned, and numerous lives lost. The good news is California's Federal, State, and local wildland firefighting agencies have formed

extraordinary partnerships to fight fires, and work with local communities to reduce fire danger.

In fact, the BLM assists more than 2,300 communities at risk in 51 of California's 58 counties.

For the past 10 years, the BLM has provided the following assistance:

- \$90 million in grants
- 1,100 projects funded
- 200,000 private acres treated
- 192 Fire Safe Councils supported
- 130 Community Wildfire Protection Plans completed

CALIFORNIA FIRE ALLIANCE

This coalition of federal, state and local partners works to identify and mitigate fire danger and its devastating effects

on communities living in the wildland urban interface. Together, agencies support the creation of more fire adaptive communities and promote local efforts through groups such as the Fire Safe Councils.

FIRE SAFE COUNCILS

The BLM and other partners are working with 192 Fire Safe Councils to accomplish critical work in reducing fire threats by implementing Firewise concepts. Federal grants are provided through a grants clearinghouse for hazardous fuels reduction, Community Wildfire Preparedness projects, risk assessments and fire prevention education.

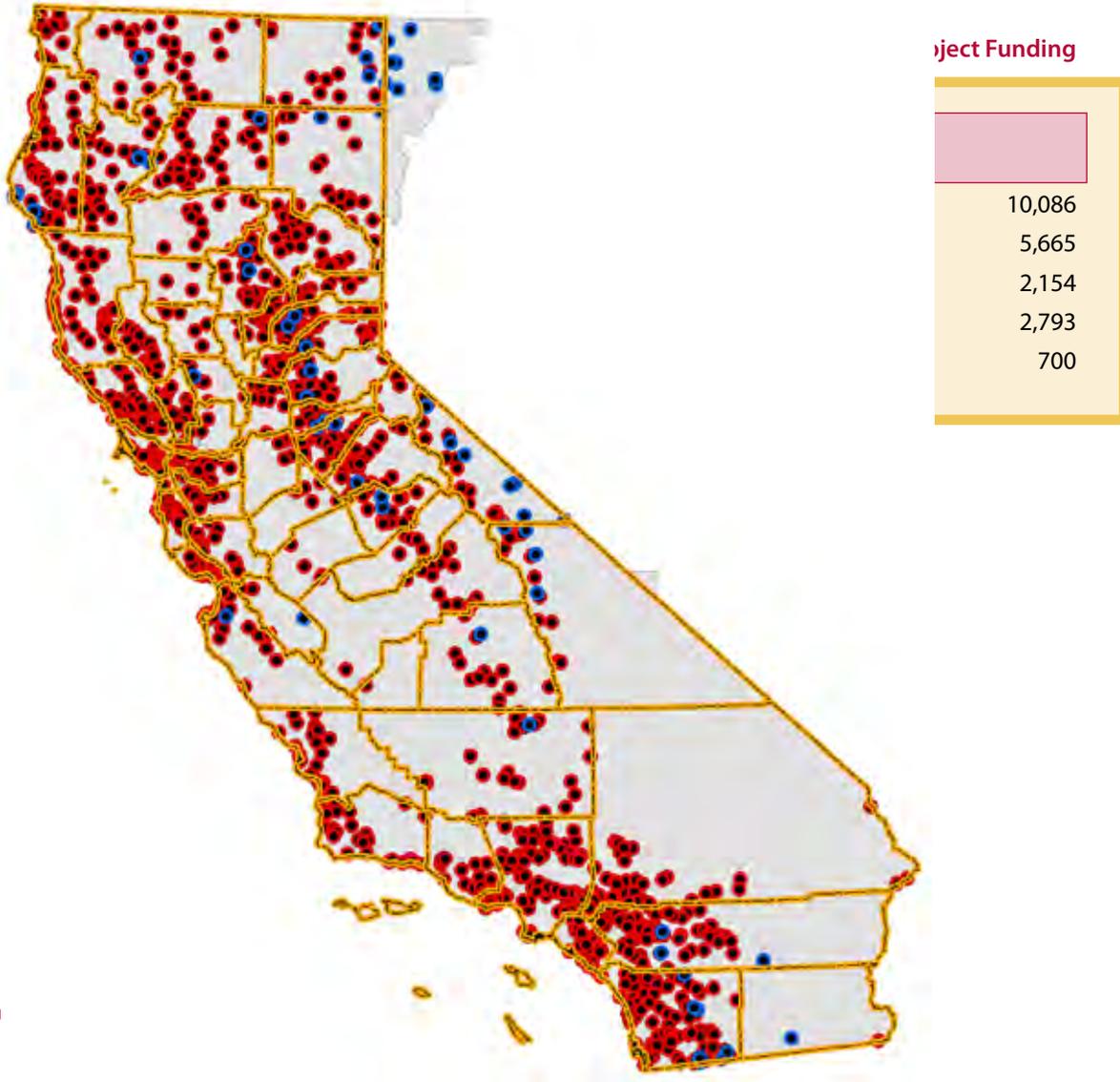


COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Firewise; Take Responsibility; Ready, Set, Go!; and ReadyforWildfire.org are community outreach programs that give the public tips and tools to successfully prepare for a wildfire. These programs incorporate both making homes more resistant to wildfires and ensuring that families are ready to evacuate early and safely when wildfires occur.

There is a statewide consensus in California that preventing fires is much more cost-effective than fighting them.

RI M Funds to Protect California Communities



- State Designated Communities at Risk
- Federal Register Communities at Risk
- County Boundaries

Table 2: Wildfire Costs

Year	Suppression Cost	Fires	Acres Burned	Structures Lost
2006	\$15,949,273	300	59,927	254
2007	\$17,568,674	183	31,841	2,505
2008	\$23,221,103	176	45,055	88
2009	\$11,199,103	190	24,401	5
2010	\$12,929,923	186	47,556	16

Fire Safe Projects that Work

Fuel Break System in the King Range

The King Range Fuel Break System was designed to limit the spread of wildfire into Shelter Cove, a federally registered Community at Risk. The plan uses fire as a natural land management tool and allows opportunities to re-establish a natural fire regime in the King Range Wilderness Area. The BLM portions of the project were completed in October 2010. Private segments were treated by the Southern Humboldt Fire Safe Council as part of a federally funded Community Wildfire Assistance grant administered by the California Fire Safe Council. The project is a good example of how working with cooperators to achieve a common goal can result in effective hazard fuel mitigation treatments across ownership boundaries.



Thinning and chipping hazardous fuels to reduce vegetation along a King Peak road.

Defensible Space Helps Spare a Mountain Town

During a relatively quiet fire season nationally, BLM's Bakersfield Field Office experienced a flurry of fire activity in the summer of 2010. California's Governor declared a state of emergency for Kern County for the second time in less than a month after the Bull and West fires charred more than 17,000 acres and destroyed many homes. The Post Fire broke out in August of 2010 near the mountain community of Lebec, and immediately began to threaten the 250 homes of the Los Padres Estates. The fire grew rapidly, pushed by strong winds, steep topography, high temperatures, and receptive fuels. However, thanks to efforts earlier in the year to create fuel breaks in the area, the Post Fire was stopped after charring only 1,300 acres. No houses were damaged or destroyed and no injuries to civilians or firefighters occurred.

Fire Fuel Reduction at Pine Hill Preserve

As part of ongoing fuel management at the Pine Hill Preserve, the BLM is burning vegetation within fuel breaks created during the last two years to enhance public and firefighter safety and protect natural resources at the Pine Hill Preserve in El Dorado County. The BLM's management goal is to restore and/or mimic in a responsible manner the natural habitat dynamics at the Pine Hill Preserve. The BLM is using alternative ways to manage vegetation in the area that suit the Cameron Park and Pine Hill communities and meet the Preserve's needs.



BLM crews burn piles in the Sudbury Drive area.



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