

CHAPARRAL MANAGEMENT

5220

(May 1988)

Chaparral Management strives to significantly reduce damages from wildfire, floods, and accelerated erosion; to increase the productivity of range and forest lands; to increase water yields; to improve waterlife and fish habitat; and to improve air quality and protect irreplaceable soil resources.

To accomplish this, private landowners may contract with CDF to conduct prescribed burns with the state assuming up to 90 percent of the cost, based on degree of benefits to the public. CDF personnel inspect, prescribe, and prepare the site, and they perform the burn on a cost-share basis. FY 1986/87 plans are to prescription burn 67,000 acres owned by about 300 individuals.

The program started because unmanaged shrub-covered lands lead to disastrous unmanageable wildfires and reduce productivity. CDF has identified approximately five million acres of highly hazardous shrub-covered land throughout the state. Prescribed burning is the most cost-effective and environmentally sound treatment for achieving these objectives.

The status of the program is as follows:

- Regulations took effect on October 16, 1981.
- Program EIR approved.
- Instructions and training to field units in applying program completed.
- Program is operational with land management plans developed and burning completed in excess of 200,000 acres as of June 1986.
- Air quality considerations of program being addressed by a smoke management plan.
- Land management plans have been developed on numerous projects utilizing the Coordinated Resource Management Planning approach due to multiple ownership.

The legislation for this program is located in Health and Safety Code (H&SC) §13009, and PRC §4464, 4475, 4475.5, 4476, 4480, 13009 and 4491, and the funding sources is the Environmental License Plant Fund (ELPF).

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