

PREFACE TO 6400 CAL FIRE-CDCR CAMP OPERATIONS HANDBOOK

(January 2010)

The year 2010 marked the sixty-fourth anniversary of cooperation between the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) in the Conservation Camp Program. California pioneered the employment of incarcerated individuals in wildland fire protection. Since its inception, the program has expanded into a highly mobile work force engaging in all risk disaster mitigation, prefire fuel management, the development and maintenance of fire defense improvements and facilities, and performance of conservation related projects for local, state, and federal agencies. The program provides convicted felons with the opportunity to give something back to the citizens of California while paying their debt to society.

Both departments have enjoyed a rewarding partnership since the inception of the program in 1946. The CAL FIRE/CDCR Conservation Camp Program has grown from a handful of inmates at Rainbow Prison Camp to the 2009 level of 196 authorized fire crews in 39 camps statewide. This cooperation includes the use of female inmates at two camps and wards at two camps. CDCR contracts with the Los Angeles County Fire Department for five fire suppression camps. Over the years, this program has been outstanding in the conservation of both human and natural resources.

This Camp Operations Handbook was originally written by an interagency committee of experienced personnel consisting of Camp Division Chiefs, Camp Commanders, and the program staff of both departments. The participants were successful in combining the CAL FIRE Manual of Instructions, Part 6400, with the CDCR Department Operations Manual 51130. This created a single, definitive procedural handbook. It has, since the original writing, been revised a number of times including a complete overhaul by a group similar to the original drafters. This draft was completed in 1999. The overhaul was a cover to cover update, including new policies, procedures, organization, and terminology.

The signatures affixed to this document signify our joint adoption of this handbook as the operational policies and procedures that implement the CAL FIRE/CDCR Interagency Agreement. It is incumbent upon the personnel at all levels of each agency to administer these provisions and to maintain the cooperative spirit in which they were developed and adopted.



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