

## Message from the Chief

December 2012

For over 100 years, the California Public Resources Code has required CAL FIRE to provide fire prevention and suppression across the 31 million acres of State Responsibility Area (SRA) in California. This responsibility includes the protection of our natural resources such as air quality, forests, and watershed that are vital to our State.



In addition to this statutory responsibility, CAL FIRE provides fire protection and emergency response through cooperative agreements with 150 different local government entities in 36 of California's 58 counties. The origins of many of these agreements date back to the mid-1920's and they paved the road for the Cooperative Fire Program we have today.

Over the past two years, we have seen an increase in the number of inquiries from local governments asking about the cost for CAL FIRE to provide emergency response services in their areas. While we review every one of these requests to ensure they would be beneficial to the State, many of these inquiries are simply local jurisdictions doing their due diligence to make sure they are delivering the best level of service to their residents, especially in these trying economic times. However, in 2012, we have welcomed Norco, Soledad, Morgan Hill, San Miguel and the Town of Paradise into the CAL FIRE family. I truly understand how difficult it can be to transition and I commend the employees, their families, local elected officials, CDF Firefighters and the Department for working together to make these transitions as seamless as possible.

It is important for each of us to understand the value of these mutually beneficial partnerships between CAL FIRE and local government. As new contracts are implemented, the State benefits from the experience and skills that the men and women transitioning from these departments bring to CAL FIRE. The addition of these agreements also increases the depth of resources available to carry out the CAL FIRE mission. In turn, CAL FIRE provides broader opportunities for new employees who are interested in other aspects of the Department's mission or who wish to work anywhere from Yreka to San Diego.

I value our local government partnerships as they result in the ability to provide an efficient level of service to the State, local government jurisdictions and, most importantly, the citizens we serve. These agreements can, in many instances, provide the most efficient and effective model for the delivery of emergency services the public expects and deserves.

Please join me in welcoming our newest employees. I look forward to a long relationship with them and the communities who have entered into these new partnerships. Regardless of who is providing the fire protection, it is critical that we continue to maintain strong cooperative relationships within the California fire service.

**Chief Ken Pimlott**  
CAL FIRE Director