

East Fork Fire Protection District

OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE

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East Fork Fire Protection District Meets With USFS

Minden – The East Fork Fire Protection District facilitated a pre-fire season meeting with the representatives from both the Humboldt Toiyabe National Forest and Tahoe Basin Management Unit. The three-hour session covered several key topics, including each group’s firefighting capacities, fire suppression intent, logistics, air craft access and use, incident support, delegations, and cost sharing. Fuels management projects were also a major point of discussion.

While the up-coming operational considerations were central to the discussion, the most important objective was to introduce each agencies incident management and command staffs to each other.

District Chief Tod Carlini explained that there has been a significant amount of leadership changes with in the region, both at the local and Federal levels. Chief Carlini noted the importance of establishing relationships with our regional partners before everyone is thrown together at an incident. East Fork alone



has one new Deputy Chief, two new Battalion Chiefs, and at five Fire Captains with less that two years in the position. Carlini stated that in his career he has always valued the relationships he has had with regional partners. *“It makes a big difference when you meet with your Federal counterparts in incident management before you are thrown together at an actual incident. Most of our wildland fire incidents, if not all, will include Federal lands.”* The East Fork Fire Protection District covers 650 square miles which is about 96% of Douglas County. The District has jurisdictional area in the Lake Tahoe Basin as well, which requires working with two different Forest Service management units and personnel. All were represented in the Wednesday meeting.

The predicted fire forecast for the up coming summer and fall period has the same potential as last year. The Tamarack Fire burned over 17,000 acres when it crossed into Nevada and East Fork’s jurisdiction. The fire consumed 10 primary structures, impacted 5 others, and destroyed numerous outbuilding, vehicles, garages, and other personal property. The fire forced the evacuation of all of southern Douglas County and stayed active for over five days. *“Long term fire operations are becoming more and more frequent in our area,”* noted Chief Carlini. *“Campaign Fires”* as they are known, can run as long as a couple of months, such as the Caldor Fire.

The meeting with the USFS also covered the specifics of resource deployment, pre-fire attack plans, use of aircraft and bull dozers, water supplies, evacuations, and post fire actions. The District and USFS discussed the concepts of full suppression and incident command decision during the initial phase of an incident. A meeting with the BLM will soon be schedule and the District is coordinating exercises, both table top and in the field.