

## **Message from the Chief**

**Chief's Memo – April 24, 2006**

### ***Governor Appoints Director and Chief Deputy***

Last week Governor Schwarzenegger appointed me as the Director of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.



I am honored that Governor is giving me this opportunity to continue to serve the people of California at the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. This state deserves the highest standards of fire prevention, fire fighting and resource management, and I am determined to maintain and build upon the Department's history of success.

In addition, Governor Schwarzenegger appointed Crawford Tuttle as CDF's Chief Deputy. I am pleased that the Governor selected someone with Crawford's obvious talent, experience, and energy to complement my own background and experience in leading CDF. Chief Deputy Tuttle will bring added value to this organization and will provide leadership over Resource Management and other programs.

Chief Deputy Tuttle has served as deputy secretary for external affairs at the Resources Agency since 2004. He was previously a vice-president at Source Healthcare Systems from 1999 to 2004, deputy secretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency from 1996 to 1999 and served as California's Washington representative, acting as the state's chief liaison to Congress and the Clinton Administration from 1994 to 1996. He was also a policy and budget analyst for the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and a senior legislative assistant for U.S. Representative Norman Shumway.

For the purposes of rumor control and contrary to the news article that follows, the selection of Crawford Tuttle and my appointment had nothing to do with the pension issues, and was neither hasty nor unplanned.

With that said, I do want to report on progress being made on a few fronts. First, I want to thank Secretary Chrisman and Pat Kemp from Resources Agency, and Bill Robertson, Tom Lutzenberger, and Janet Barentson of CDF Management Services for their tremendous efforts on behalf of CDF on the current year and future years base budget deficiency. I also appreciate Finance Department staff for their hard work and long hours in working to reach a reasonable solution to a longstanding problem. While not yet complete, the progress is positive.

I do want to reiterate my direction to Region and Unit Chiefs that mission critical equipment in preparation for the fire season should be repaired and maintained in a state of readiness. We will open fire season based on fire threat, weather and fuel conditions, not on budgetary considerations. To do anything less is unacceptable.

Discussions do continue with the control agencies (DPA and Finance) regarding solutions to the concerns expressed in the news article below. While, I cannot discuss the details, I am optimistic that a resolution is near. I encourage you all to remain focused and supportive.

Finally, I want to thank the Shasta-Trinity Unit for a great time at the Unit's retirement dinner for 14 CDF employees on Saturday. I thoroughly enjoyed the events of that evening. It was gratifying to meet so many positive, upbeat, and dedicated employees and retirees. I continue to be impressed with the talented employees of CDF and I look forward to meeting more of you in the days ahead. Congratulations to the retirees!

And welcome Chief Deputy Tuttle.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Grijalva". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Ruben Grijalva, Chief  
Director and State Fire Marshal

**Schwarzenegger fills up top firefighter agency vacancies  
Perata calls for probe of pension loophole that created vacuum**

By Steve Geissinger, SACRAMENTO BUREAU,

**SACRAMENTO** — The governor hastily named a state firefighting director and deputy to fill a top leadership void Friday, after it was reported that a unique pension loophole had led to the retirement of many top fire officials with higher pensions.

Schwarzenegger appointed state Fire Marshal Ruben Grijalva as director of the California Department of Forestry, saying in a statement that the former Palo Alto and Sunnyvale public safety official would "improve our fire protection capabilities."

Crawford Tuttle, formerly of the state Resources Agency, was named chief deputy director.

The loophole so far has allowed about a tenth of state fire chiefs and supervisors to retire at well above the maximum cap of 90 percent of their salary, hitting up to 115 percent of their pay.

In response to articles Thursday, Senate leader Don Perata, D- Oakland, said the pension loophole should be probed by a pension commission he has recommended to Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The new director is expected to swiftly close the loophole allowing an unchecked exodus of veteran managers, ranging from chiefs of geographic regions known as "units" to supervisors of aircraft operations.

No matter where you live in the state, CDF is the mainstay of California's wildland firefighting forces. It provides mutual aid to overwhelmed cities and counties with their own fire departments, contracts out to unprotected regions and, together with the U.S. Forest Service, serves wilderness areas

CDF spokesman Michael Jarvis acknowledged the department is losing "institutional memory," which in a fire agency includes seldom-used strategies that were successful in battling a certain kind of wildfire, no two of which are exactly alike.

Replacements, therefore, are not readily available amid the unusual vacuum, officials said. And the wrong call at the wrong time can cost untold lives and homes.

In January, the supposedly accidental retirement loophole opened to key California fire officials in the 50s age range.

The reason for the loophole remains unclear, tangled amid bureaucratic and political claims and denials.

### **Aviation Management**

Annual pilot training has been the focus of effort lately, with both helicopters and fixed wing flying whenever the weather allows. Meanwhile, the maintenance department has successfully supported both this training and its ongoing winter maintenance. The most recent Aviation Operations Specialist Group (Firescope) meeting was held at the USFS facility at McClellan, and addressed subjects such as military helicopter Memoranda of Understanding; training; certification and qualification requirements; interagency communications; and night flying guidelines.

### **Office of State Fire Marshal**

Code Development and Fire and Life Safety staff continue to review the code change proposals for the new ICC codes in preparation for submittal to Building Standards on May 1. Fire and Life Safety staff was part of the evaluation team at the Capitol Evacuation Drill last week. The OSFM amended NFPA 25 document is out for review and comment. Comments are due back to OSFM staff by April 28 and hopefully the new document can be adopted and effective by December. The OSFM Fire Extinguisher Workgroup met on April 18 to review Chapter 3 of Title 19 and recommend areas needing further review and cleanup.