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# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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### **CAL FIRE Fills Key Leadership Positions Following Retirements**

**Sacramento** – Following the announcements of two key retirements within CAL FIRE’s Northern Region leadership, Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE director, announced the appointments of Scott Upton as the new northern region chief along with Greg McFadden as the new assistant region chief. Chiefs Upton and McFadden assume their new roles on Friday, January 1, 2016 succeeding the retirements of Northern Region Chief Keith Larkin and Assistant Northern Region Chief Eric Hoffmann.

Upton and McFadden will oversee CAL FIRE’s Northern Region which includes 12 operational units, 129 fires stations, 195 engines, 32 dozers, 102 inmate fire crews, 10 air tankers, six helicopters, more than 2,500 personnel and dozens of local fire agreements.

"Chiefs Upton and McFadden have over six decades of combined experience and are welcomed additions to our leadership team," said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE Director. "I want to express my deep appreciation for Chiefs Larkin and Hoffmann for their many years of dedicated service to the citizens of our state and I wish them well in their retirements."

#### **Scott Upton, Northern Region Chief**

Chief Upton, of Napa, began his fire service career in 1983, as a volunteer firefighter with the Town of Paradise Fire Department, ultimately becoming a permanent fire fighter for the town. In 2002, Scott accepted a position with CAL FIRE as a Fire Captain B in the Conservation Camp Program, working at both Devil's Garden Camp in the Lassen-Modoc Unit and Ishi Camp in the Tehama-Glenn Unit. In 2007, Scott transferred to the Butte Unit where he served as an air tactical group supervisor at Chico Air Attack Base. Scott then accepted a promotion in the Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit to Battalion Chief in 2009, and again in 2012 to Assistant Chief, where he was designated as the Napa County Fire Chief, overseeing the cooperative agreement with Napa County. Scott was appointed to Unit Chief of the Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit in August 2014.

In addition to his operational responsibilities, Scott was instrumental in developing the “C” certified faller curriculum and also served as a member on the Department’s Safety Officer instructional cadre. He has served as a Type 1 Safety Officer on CAL FIRE Incident Command Team 3 and as Incident Commander Trainee on CAL FIRE Incident Management Team 6. Scott holds an Associate of Arts degree in Behavioral Science from Butte College.

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**Greg McFadden, Assistant Northern Region Chief**

Chief McFadden, of Chico, began his fire service career in 1981, as a Firefighter I in the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit. In 1986, he joined the Santa Cruz City Fire Department, where he held the rank of Firefighter/Engineer. In 1988, he returned to CAL FIRE as a Fire Apparatus Engineer with the Butte Unit. For the past 28 years, Greg has been assigned to the Butte Unit, holding the ranks of Fire Captain, ECC Captain, Training Officer Captain, Training and Safety Bureau Battalion Chief, Field Battalion Chief, Administrative Division Chief, and most recently serving as the Butte Unit Chief and Butte County Fire Chief since August 2014.

Greg has served on various committees and teaching cadres, including President of the Butte County Fire Chiefs' Association, California Fire Fighter Joint Apprenticeship Committee, Wildland Urban Interface curriculum, SFM curriculum development for Rescue Systems I, and teaching Internationally for Emergency Service Fund in Quintana Roo, Mexico and Talcahuano, Chile. He has served on Incident Management Team 3 as the Incident Commander trainee, Operations Section Chief, Branch Section Chief and Training Specialist. Greg holds an Associate of Science degree in Fire Science from Cabrillo College.

**Keith Larkin, Retiring Northern Region Chief**

After starting in 1974 as a firefighter, Chief Larkin, of Redding, promoted through the ranks and by 1997, he had attained the rank of Battalion Chief and worked in that capacity in CAL FIRE's Tehama-Glenn Unit, Madera-Mariposa Unit and the CAL FIRE Academy. In 2000 he promoted to the rank of Division Chief in Sacramento where he managed the CAL FIRE and Office of the State Fire Marshal training programs.

In 2004, Chief Larkin took the position of Operations Chief for the Tuolumne-Calaveras Unit where he was responsible for the management of the Vallecito Conservation Camp, 10 CAL FIRE stations, the implementation of two new fire safe councils and three Amador contracts with local fire protection districts. He also served as the unit Administrative Officer managing all personnel and budgetary responsibilities.

In the fall of 2005, Chief Larkin promoted to department Training Chief at the CAL FIRE Academy in Ione where he served a dual role managing both the department's Academy and the Training Program for the department's 4,300 permanent and 2,400 seasonal employees. In 2007, he was selected as the unit chief for CAL FIRE Fresno-Kings Unit and also served as the fire chief for Fresno County Fire Protection District which covered 2,600 square miles, 13 fire stations and an annual budget of over \$19 million.

**Eric Hoffmann, Retiring Assistant Northern Region Chief**

Chief Hoffman, of Petaluma, began his career with CAL FIRE as a seasonal firefighter in the Mendocino Unit in 1983, while attending Humboldt State University to study Forestry. Hoffmann rose through the ranks working in six different CAL FIRE Units from Humboldt-Del Norte to Fresno-Kings.

Chief Hoffmann promoted to Battalion Chief in the San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit in 1997, and then transferred to Sonoma-Lake-Napa Unit (LNU) in 2001, where he served as the Fire

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Prevention/Law Enforcement Battalion Chief for eight years. He promoted to Division Chief at Delta Conservation Camp and then transferred to oversee the Sonoma Division in 2010. He served as the Unit Chief in Sonoma-Lake-Napa beginning in January of 2013. He completed the Department's Regular POST Basic Academy in 2002, and maintained his qualification until retirement.

Chief Hoffmann is a qualified Incident Commander and Plans Section Chief, serving on CAL FIRE Incident Management Teams for ten years. His last assignment was as Incident Commander of CAL FIRE IMT 4. Chief Hoffmann served as a former President of the Sonoma County Fire Chief's Association.

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Editor's Note: Click the links below for photos.

[Chief Scott Upton](#)

[Chief Greg McFadden](#)

[Chief Keith Larkin](#)

[Chief Eric Hoffmann](#)