STATE NEWS

July 17, 2008 - Fifteen members of the FEMA Region 6 Incident Management Assistance Team (IMAT) from Denton are on a deployment exercise this week and are shadowing the Lone Star State Incident Management Team in Granbury. The IMAT is working with the TFS team to gain a better understanding of how FEMA can work more effectively with other state and federal incident management teams on disasters around the country.

LaNina is forecasted to continue its grip across Texas creating the potential for major wildfires to peak around August 25. The peak period may create wildfire activity much like the 2002 and 2006 wildfire seasons. According to Rich Gray, TFS Regional Fire Coordinator “The 2008 fires are similar to those we saw in 2006 in that the drought has created very dry fuels; however, the fine fuel loads created by the 2007 rains are causing more intense and longer duration fires this fire season.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Fires</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Structures Lost</th>
<th>Structures Saved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1/08-8/08/08</td>
<td>12,116</td>
<td>1.459 million</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>16,624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/07-12/31/07</td>
<td>5,499</td>
<td>121,964</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>4,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/5/05-9/16/06*</td>
<td>29,141</td>
<td>2.26 million</td>
<td>2,054</td>
<td>34,756</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*2005/2006 winter fire season (January 1, 2005 to September 18, 2006)
(Texas Forest Service-including all reporting agencies) [http://www.tamu.edu/ticc/predictive_services/tx_sitreport.pdf](http://www.tamu.edu/ticc/predictive_services/tx_sitreport.pdf)

NATIONAL NEWS

Widcatter Ranch, Firewise Community/USA, Graham was recently listed as a top “staycation” destination in a June issue of USA Today. Congratulations to Ken Haggart and Ann Skipper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Fires</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1/08 to 8/10/08</td>
<td>56,751</td>
<td>3.985 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/1/07 to 8/01/07</td>
<td>58,656</td>
<td>5.455 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Yr Avg ('03-'08)</td>
<td>56,099</td>
<td>5.251 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Interagency Fire Agency [http://www.nifc.gov/fire_info/nfn.htm](http://www.nifc.gov/fire_info/nfn.htm)

HAPPENINGS

Terri Whaley reported a crew with the neighboring Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge created a shaded fuel break and buffer zone within Whitewater Springs this spring. A portion of the brush was burned with the remainder chipped for mulch to be distributed to the community’s homeowners.

Karen Archer made a Firewise presentation to the Hill Country Master Naturalist class of 2008 in Wimberley. Over forty people were in attendance.

Kay Mayfield has been instrumental in assisting Jan Fulkerson distribute prevention materials to contiguous counties surrounding Wimberley.

Priscilla Stanley presented Tierra Linda Ranch’s five year Firewise award to the HOA board July 8. She took the opportunity to update the board on Firewise progress in the community along with a draft of the CWPP. The board approved to include Firewise information in each Greeter’s package for all new homeowners.
IN THE KNOW

CWES TRAINING PAYS-OFF
Priscilla Stanley recently received the following email from Annie Rendon, a Texas Master Naturalist in her chapter who lives north of them on a large family ranch. Annie took the CWES class in Fredericksburg (February 2007) and acted after the class on what she learned. The CWES information was quite useful to her recently when a wildfire on a neighboring ranch spread onto their ranch. In part the email reads:

“Good morning Priscilla, because of the wildfire class I took last year, I went to the feed store and bought a half-dozen burlap sacks and put them in a five gallon bucket with lid and wrote wildfire on the lid. Last Friday we had a fire on the S.W. end of our property (15+ acres burned) and when I saw the smoke I immediately half-filled the bucket with water to wet the sacks. I asked someone who drove down our road if the sacks would be of help, knowing that in many places on the Klein Branch Creek in our pasture no one can drive. Later the owner of the property where the fire started told me that she had seen people beating the fire with the sacks. I felt really good about having taken the class and having the bucket ready and "knowing where it was a year later."

GETTING HER MONEY’S WORTH
Annie Rendon conveyed to Priscilla that the firefighting-burlap-sack-technique was put into service again late in the afternoon on July 15. An electric fence on her ranch became detached from the post falling into dry grass sparking a wind-driven wildfire. Annie’s quick action and fire department’s response kept a nearby home from being destroyed. The burlaps-sacks were used a third time on a rekindle later that evening until the fire department arrived.

SOLID AS A ROCK
An abundance of rocks on one’s property can be viewed as a nuisance; but, did you know, rock is a natural Firewise tool? Stack it, spread it or stick it together. Get creative and you can easily resolve landscaping issues such as areas with poor drainage, where vegetation won’t grow or the soil erodes easily. By building garden walls, dry stream beds, rock gardens, walkways, patios or enclosing decks and foundations you are creating natural firebreaks. Add low-voltage lighting and drought-resistant plants to enhance the areas. For unlimited design ideas, search the web.

BET YOU DIDN’T KNOW
Did you know the Weather Bureau started doing forecasts specifically for the fire weather community in 1914? This was 16 years after the Hurricane Warning Network was formed (1898) and 34 years before the first tornado warning was issued (1948.) In 1916 the first “mobile” weather unit was deployed to a fire. This mobile unit consisted of a forecaster and a team of horses carrying his weather equipment to the field to support the firefighters in the field. It soon became apparent that having a forecaster at the incident was a big plus for both tactics and for safety. The Fire Weather Service was formally inaugurated in 1926.
(Excerpt from NOAA Celebrates 200 Years of Science, Service & Stewardship.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS
National Night Out was observed by some communities on the traditional first Tuesday in August (August 5’ or some may have opted for the alternative pilot date, October 7. Should you be involved with NNO activities, visit texasfirewise.org to download and print brochures. Scroll down and click on National Night Out. You will find the brochures at the bottom of the page under ‘Links.”