



IASC/CARPA Spring 2014 Workshop

Placer County Air Pollution Control District

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PLACER COUNTY LANDSCAPE

- Sacramento Valley to Lake Tahoe
- 550,000 acres of forested land
 - ~50% of total county land, including three National Forests
 - ~40% in private ownership, 60% public
- Extensive wildland-urban interface throughout the County
- Heavy fuel loads throughout forested landscape from decades of successful fire suppression
- History of major wildfires in local forested areas over the past decade
 - Gap, Ponderosa, Star, Ralston, American River Complex, Angora, Robbers, American – 75,000+ acres burned to date (14% of the forested landscape)
- Wildfires have very significant impact on regional air quality
 - Impacts on public health from wildfire smoke may be significant
- Land managers are making concerted efforts to ramp up forest fuel hazard reduction thinning activities
 - By-product – excess biomass waste
- Very similar situation throughout most of the Sierra Nevada



DISTRICT PRE-PLANNING ACTIONS FOR WILD FIRE RESPONSE

- ICS and public information training
- Local joint information center team member trainings
- Placer County OES - PIO training
- Table top exercises
- Pre-fire season review with County Health Department and PIO's
- Participate in joint PIO team training and planning for incidents which may occur on the eastside of Placer County



DISTRICT ROLE – FOR FIRES LOCATED WITHIN THE COUNTY

- Integrate with OES and the IC's JIC center, providing technical air quality expertise
- Collect air quality data
 - Access permanent (fixed) monitoring sites data
 - Locate and operate temporary monitoring sites as needed
- Compile air quality data into easy to understand language/visuals for the public
 - Analyze data & create visual air quality graphics
 - Convert data information into air quality messaging
- Create and distribute air quality information
 - Generate joint air district – health department advisory
 - Distribute press releases to the media, including social media



DISTRICT ROLE FOR FIRES LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE COUNTY

- Monitor the situation, assess impacts, and provide support as needed
 - Review air monitoring data
 - Use web cams and satellite imagery to monitor county for smoke impacts
 - Network with lead air district to obtain and share information
 - Monitor key websites for wildfire updates
- If necessary:
 - Create and distribute air quality information to the public
 - Generate joint air district/health department advisory



2013 WILDFIRES IMPACTING PLACER COUNTY

- American Fire – Inside Placer County
 - Began on August 10th – contained August 29th
 - Burned 27,440 acres
 - Significant smoke impacts especially mornings
- Rim Fire - Tuolumne and Mariposa Counties
 - Began on August 17th – contained October 24th
 - Burned 247,314 acres
 - Widespread smoke impacts in Placer County exasperating the smoke situation from the American Fire



2013 WILDFIRE SMOKE IMPACTS

- Widespread smoke in California and the State of Nevada
- Affected schools, outdoor activities, and events
- IC/staging area for the American Fire experienced some of the highest concentrations of smoke
- Shifting smoke plumes made it difficult to predict areas of impact
 - Geography, including basins and drainages, were impacted by settling smoke
 - Diurnal and nocturnal winds move smoke plumes throughout the day
 - Transport winds moved the smoke over great distances, impacting far away communities and often combining with other wildfire smoke plumes

COMBINED SMOKE IMPACTS

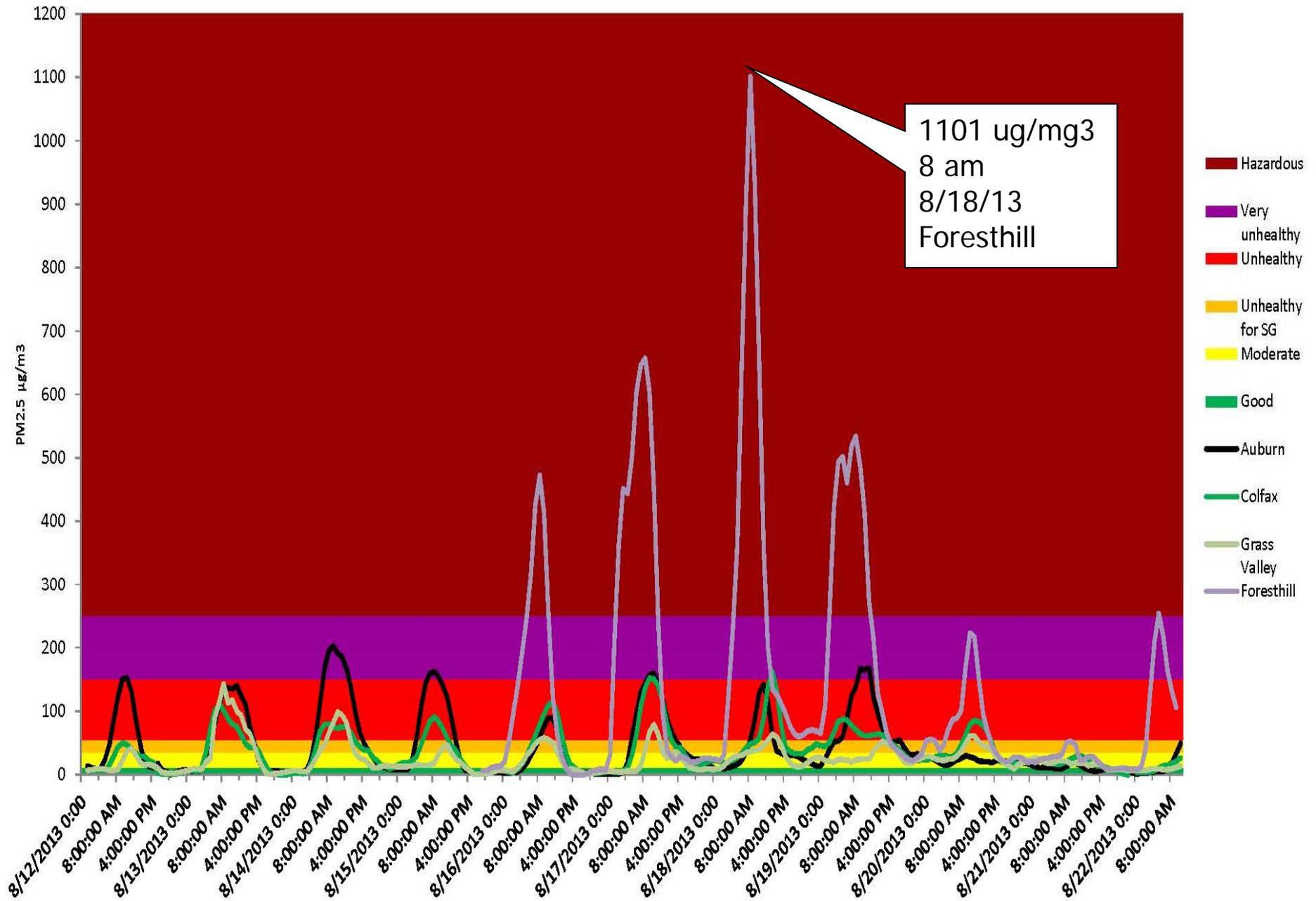
American Fire

Rim Fire

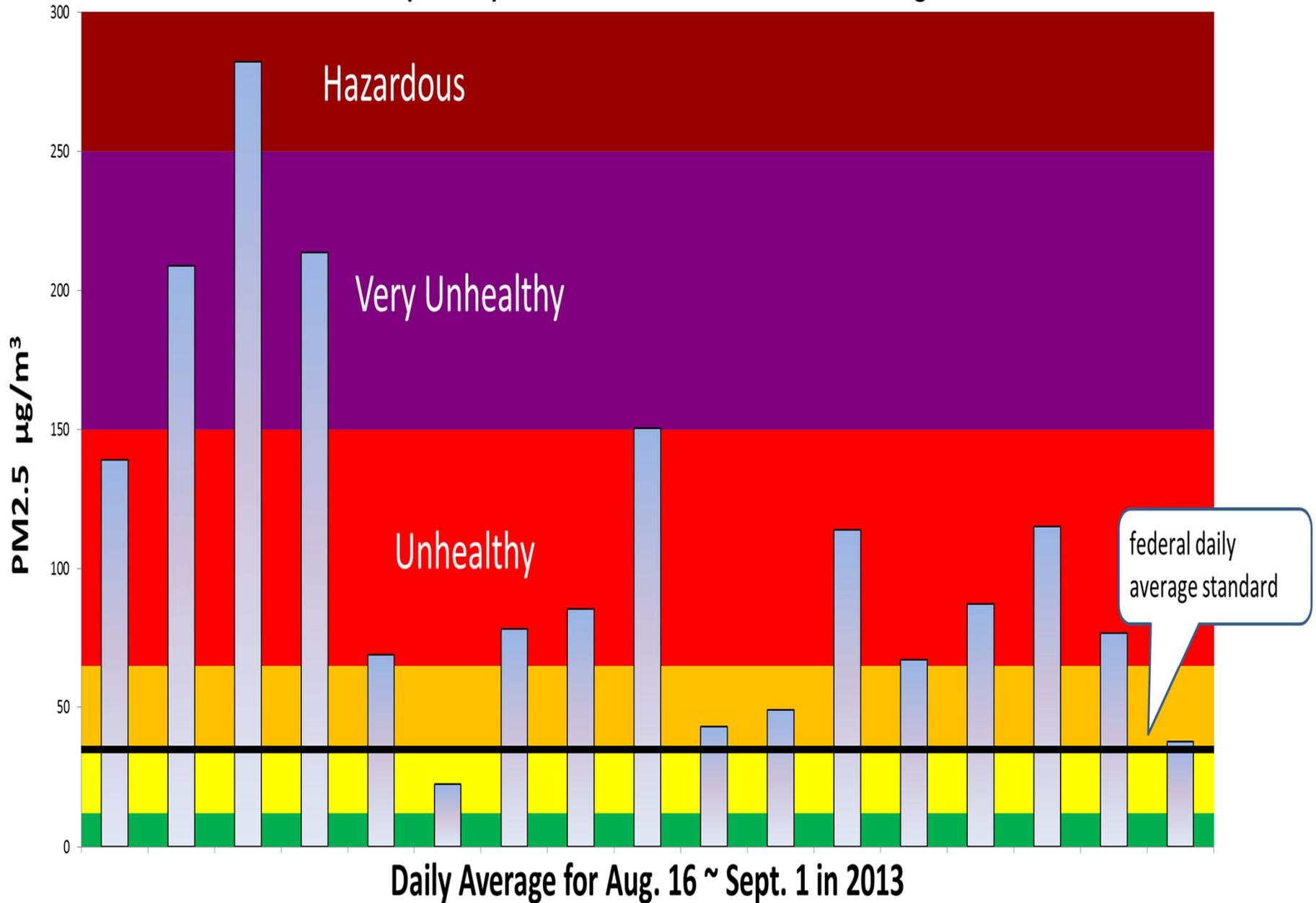
Morning of August
24, 2013



Western Placer County



Particulate Matter (PM2.5) Measurements at Foresthill during Wildfire Incidents





2013 COORDINATED WILDFIRE SMOKE RESPONSE

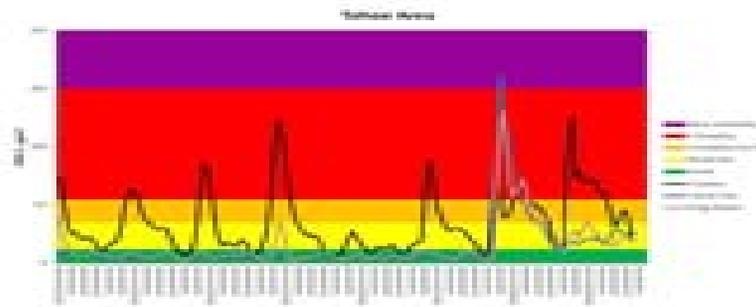
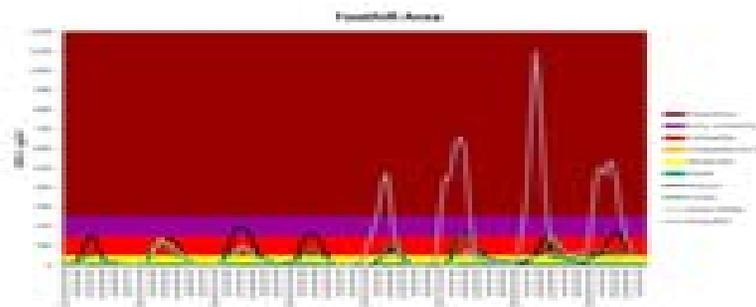
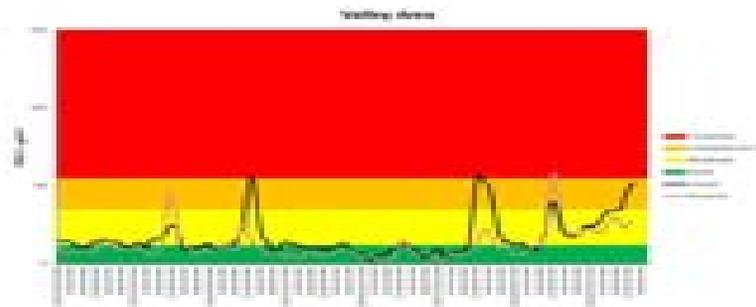
- PCAPCD and Placer County HHS relationship
 - Developed and shared air quality data
 - Prepared joint air district/health department air quality advisories
 - Coordinated overall air quality and health information
- PCAPCD and Placer County OES relationship
 - Provided staff support for the EOC during the incident
 - Provided support for public information centers during the incident
 - Attended morning EOC incident briefings
 - Attended community meetings
 - Developed direct contact information with the local school district superintendents



2013 COORDINATED WILDFIRE SMOKE RESPONSE

- Contacted Incident Command and PIO staff
 - Made available air quality data information
 - Provided local information for public outreach such as the U.S. EPA Smoke Brochure for “trap lines”
 - Attended morning cooperators meetings, providing air quality updates
- Worked with CARB and OES to deploy a temporary air monitor
 - Coordinated with operations to install and operate a temporary air monitor
 - Monitor was located at the Incident Command in a secure location
- Coordinated with the Incident Command’s on-site Air Resource Advisors
 - Worked to have a consistent air quality message to the public
 - Launched the www.northcasmoke.blogspot.com blog
 - Provided graphical air quality data updates daily at 10 am & 4 pm
 - Connected blog to Inci-web and Yubanet (website used in foothills)

SCREEN SHOT FROM SMOKE BLOG





LOOKING FORWARD

- Continue District staff training for wildfire incidents
- Explore additional resources for data collection during incidents
- Support interagency relationships
- Consider social media and other alternative methods for effective public outreach during incidents