



PARTICIPANTS

Natural Resources
Conservation Service

County of San Diego

United States
Forest Service

California Department
of Forestry & Fire
Protection

Forest Area
Safety Task Force
of San Diego

Bureau of
Land Management

Caltrans

San Diego
Gas & Electric

Community
Organizations

Interested
Stakeholders

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NRCS FUNDS HELICOPTER LANDING PROJECT

San Diego County, CA, February 24, 2005 – The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has partnered up with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, US Forest Service, County of San Diego, Palomar Volunteer Fire Department, and Palomar Fire Safe Council on a project to prepare a permanent landing area for helicopter operations on Palomar Mountain. This multi-agency effort over the next couple of months is a step toward helping make Palomar Mountain a safer place to live.

Palomar Mountain houses over 300 residents and welcomes tens of thousands of visitors, year-round. The helicopter landing area, to be located in the center of the mountain, will be used to rapidly transport residents and visitors to the hospital should an emergency situation occur. The area will also be able to accommodate multiple helicopters and can therefore be used as an operations center for fire suppression. Agencies also plan to store fuel reserves and one million gallons of water on-site to augment suppression activities.

NRCS will fund the project in full and oversee the treatment of the vegetation on site, while working together with the cooperating agencies. “This is just another example of how agencies can work together with local communities to make areas safer for everyone,” says Bryan Petit, NRCS Team Leader. This infrastructure improvement will be an extension of a current NRCS Watershed Recovery Project that is removing dead, dying and diseased trees in Palomar Mountain communities.

The Watershed Recovery Project and the Fire Safety and Fuels Reduction Program are cooperative efforts between federal, state and local agencies, community organizations and interested stakeholders. The \$45 million program is funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service, County of San Diego and others. More information is available at www.sdcdpw.org/tree or by calling the toll free hotline at 866-402-6044.

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