

**USDA Forest Service
San Bernardino National Forest
Front Country Ranger District**



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San Bernardino National Forest
34701 Mill Creek Rd
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For Immediate Release

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ANGELUS OAKS PILE BURN

Residents of Angelus Oaks and other mountain communities noticed more smoke and flames than predicted from the pile burning operation south of Angelus Oaks on Tuesday, March 8, 2004.

Despite big smoke and big flame, Front Country District Ranger Gabe Garcia said, "There was no threat to the community of Angelus Oaks; mostly because my terrific staff didn't start burning the potentially volatile southeast slope, known as the Glen Martin Creek area, until they'd secured the areas closest to homes. I'm glad this portion of the project is accomplished now, prior to Santa Ana winds and hot weather."

The pile burning started out in the morning as planned with easterly winds predicted at 10mph maximum. At approximately 1:00 pm, the winds shifted and the burning activity increased. Due to the change in weather, the pile burning was halted. The wind continued and caused fire to spread from the already ignited piles into adjacent piles. At this point, we stopped burning and started making sure the fire remained where firefighters wanted it.

The project design and implementation was to build a buffer adjacent to the community to protect Angelus Oaks from potential catastrophic wildfires in the summer/fall seasons. In order to accomplish this goal, the Front Country Ranger District continues to successfully burn approximately 15,000 piles of brush and debris.

Though the fire was quite active in the dried, stacked piles, the burn boss noticed that the fire died down as it crept into live vegetation. This showed us that we were burning

under the best conditions and there was no risk of escape. Firefighters worked quickly to cut fireline around creeping piles to avoid unnecessary damage to live vegetation and to keep the burn within the project perimeter.

By 8:00 pm all was cool. Two twenty person crews and two engines were left overnight to monitor the project area.

Thanks for putting up with our smoke. Burning piles of brush and debris is an important way of safely removing potentially dangerous fuel. For regular information about our burning efforts please visit us at <http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/sanbernardino/> or call the San Bernardino Fire Information Center at (909) 383-5688.

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