

## **The Joint Fire Sciences Project: Fire History of Mixed Conifer Forests of the Transverse and Peninsular Ranges of Southern California**

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The Joint Fire Sciences Project: Fire History of Mixed Conifer Forests of the Transverse and Peninsular Ranges of Southern California is a multi-agency funded look at the reconstruction of fire history using primarily fire-scar dendrochronology.

### **Project objectives:**

- 1) the collection, cross-dating and analysis of fire history information from the four National Forests in southern California (the Los Padres, Angeles, San Bernardino and Cleveland) and adjoining areas (Cuyamaca Rancho State Park). 2)
- 2) Climate interactions with fire history will also be examined in this project.
- 3) Portions of this research will be critical in the revisions of the Southern California Mountains and Foothills Assessment.

### **Project Status:**

As of Fall 2004, project sampling has already occurred within the Cuyamaca Rancho State Park. After the cataclysmic 2003 fire season, several areas of fire-killed forest have become available for sampling. A small portion of non-wilderness area on the Middle Peak area within the State Park is representative of the 'sky-island' mixed conifer forests seen throughout much of the San Diego County area. Fire intervals and climatic data relationships are pending completion of post-field processing of fire-scar specimens. Initial field observations from within this area indicate these forests are subject to both low-to-moderate severity fires on a frequency similar to nearby mixed-conifer forests, as well as fires of an intensity and duration which make long-term multi-century fire-scar dendrochronological reconstruction difficult.