



# South Orange County Firewatch Volunteer

## THE RESERVE AT RANCHO MISSION VIEJO

### PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY!

Help prevent local wildland fires by joining *South County Land Stewards*\* as a Firewatch Volunteer!

- Wildland fires endanger lives and property in adjacent communities.
- In the last 100 years, nearly all Orange County wildfires have been caused by humans.
- Portions of South County wildlands have not burned in over 50 years.
- Wildland fires threaten plants and wildlife, including endangered species such as the California gnatcatcher.
- The 2008 Freeway Fire cost \$6.1 million to fight, damaged or destroyed 381 structures, and burned 30,000 acres, including sensitive ecological areas.

\*South County Land Stewards includes *The Reserve at Rancho Mission Viejo*, Starr Ranch Audubon Sanctuary, Cleveland National Forest, Riley Wilderness Park, Caspers Wilderness Park, and O'Neill Regional Park. (NOTE: OC Parks does not recruit or supervise SCLS volunteers.)

### FIRE WATCH TRAINING

Volunteers receive training from Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) personnel or OC Parks.\*

Initial OCFA training will last 2 hours and focus on:

- understanding basic fire behavior
- identifying signs of wildfire
- dealing with suspect behavior
- contacting proper fire authorities
- providing useful information

Training includes a practice deployment at your assigned site.

Firewatch training prepares volunteers for deployment under conditions of severe fire hazard. On "Red Flag" days, South County Land Stewards will assign pairs of volunteers to wildland vantage points in rotating shifts of up to 4 hours. Volunteers serve as deterrent lookouts assisting fire professionals. We seek to place participants in locations easily accessible from where they live or work.

\*For info about OC Parks training, visit [www.ocparks.com/ocfirewatch](http://www.ocparks.com/ocfirewatch).

### HOW TO HELP

South County Land Stewards seek volunteers from **Dove Canyon, Coto de Caza, Wagon Wheel, Las Flores, Ladera Ranch, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Juan Capistrano, San Clemente, and nearby locations.**

Annual firewatch training is scheduled prior to peak fire season. In 2011, the 2 hour training session will be held from 7-9p on Thursday August 25 at OCFA Fire Station #58, Ladera Ranch.

*The Reserve* collects contact information from interested volunteers.

Please email name, address and phone to <[staff@rmvreserve.org](mailto:staff@rmvreserve.org)>. We'll add your name to our firewatch volunteer list, and keep you notified about firewatch developments.

***Tell your neighbors and friends about volunteering for South County Firewatch!***

We welcome your suggestions & input. Contact <[staff@rmvreserve.org](mailto:staff@rmvreserve.org)> or call 949-489-9778 with your input, questions and comments. Please feel free to circulate this flyer freely.

***The Reserve at Rancho Mission Viejo***—a growing habitat reserve located on historic Rancho Mission Viejo—is managed by the non-profit ***Rancho Mission Viejo Land Trust***, a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is "to preserve and enhance Reserve lands for ecological, educational, charitable, conservation, open space, scientific, and recreational uses." Through our public access and education programs, visitors can experience the natural beauty of South Orange County.

Visit [www.theconservancy.org](http://www.theconservancy.org), email <[staff@rmvreserve.org](mailto:staff@rmvreserve.org)> or call 949-489-9778 to learn more.