



THE CHALLENGE

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This past year was California's most destructive wildfire season on record with 8,500 fires, two million acres burned, \$20 billion in losses and over 100 deaths. One reason for this is a severe labor shortage. Agencies report significant vacancies and a scarcity of trained talent. To address this gap, California utilizes currently incarcerated people in its "fire camps" - 4,500 as firefighters and 3,500 as support staff - totaling 35% of the firefighting force.

Despite their extensive training and experience, these firefighters face nearly insurmountable barriers to full-time employment fighting wildland fires after they return home from prison. Fire camp firefighters save California billions every year and have the potential to fill a critical labor shortage and securing stable, middle-class jobs, yet few are able to attain these jobs due to their past convictions.

OUR SOLUTION

FFRP is building bridges between formerly incarcerated wildland firefighters and California's forestry fire labor force

FFRP was founded by former fire camp residents who successfully transitioned to become full-time firefighters after returning from prison. FFRP is designed to help thousands more people in fire camps obtain gainful employment post-release.

THE MODEL HAS THREE KEY COMPONENTS

1. **FFRP visits** fire camps across the state to recruit and prepare currently incarcerated firefighters to use their skills in a professional capacity post-release.
2. **FFRP operates** a Worker Hub for skills transfer, resume preparation, application and interview counseling and reentry supports.
3. **FFRP leads** a "Wildland Hazard Mitigation Specialist" pre-apprenticeship program in partnership with LA County that provides paid on the job training and case management to participants.

FFRP coaches and supports participants through the laborious process of transitioning from a fire camp firefighter to a full-time, paid member of California's firefighting force.

OUR LEADERSHIP



Brandon N. Smith

CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Brandon is an advocate for natural resources and conservation, working 6 years (both in and out of fire camp) as a wildland firefighter and forestry technician. During that work, he assisted in projects such as meadow restorations, forest health / drought surveying, and working nationally with the US Forest Service's Fire Behavior and Assessment Team. He attended UC Berkeley and Victor Valley Valley Colleges Wildland Academy. Brandon has advocating for and supporting the fire camp population since 2014.



Royal Ramey

CO-FOUNDER AND CHIEF OPERATIONS OFFICER

Royal has been wildland firefighter for 7 years (both in and out of fire camp). During that time, he obtained several firefighting certifications, furthering his education through College of the Siskiyou's, Victor Valley, and Crafton Hills College. Royal's success led him to a full-time career with CALFIRE. This summer Royal became the first person previously from fire camp to obtain special EMT approval before the mandatory waiting period (10 years). Royal has been advocating for and supporting the fire camp population since 2014.



OUR PARTNERS



In the past year we have grown from a volunteer led effort to a strategic partner to CalFire and LA County

FFRP recently received a \$500,000 contract from the State of California to expand our work and serve as a strategic ally to CalFire as it builds its labor force. In addition, FFRP is leading an apprenticeship program funded in partnership with LA County to provide comprehensive opportunities for training and credentialing to formerly incarcerated firefighters in Southern California

OUR STORIES OF SUCCESS

FFRP is providing living wage job opportunities to formerly incarcerated people while building the talent pool of wildland firefighters



Natasha N. Ruiz

"I am very grateful for you helping me to become a wildland firefighter. The encouragement, dedication and training helped me to come from Puerta La Cruz camp to now a helicopter crew members. Thank you for all your help, without you and everyone else I'm not sure where I'd be today."



David Rodriguez

"In 2016, I decided to pursue a career in Wildland Fire Fighting but I wasn't sure how to go about it. FFRP has been a big part in this journey, showing me the route I needed to take, always being there to help and motivating me to keep going."



Matthew C. Hudson

"After camp, FFRP introduced me to available jobs and various forestry personal and it took off from there. The training and intel gained from the program has definitely helped me with my future."

WHAT'S NEXT?

FFRP is growing fast. We are seeking partners to help expand and improve our recruitment, training and apprenticeship opportunities to reach the thousands of experienced firefighters throughout the state who want to address California's most pressing environmental challenge.

To learn more, please contact us at: brandon@forestryfire.org