



Pala Band of Mission Indians Enters into Historic Firefighting Partnership with California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PALA, CA – The [Pala Band of Mission Indians](#) has reached an agreement with the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to become a partner of the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System, becoming the first Tribal Nation in the state to do so.

Cal OES is assigning a Type III fire engine to the Pala Fire Department, increasing their capability to respond to local and statewide incidents. During times of disaster, the Type III engine may be called upon to preposition ahead of or respond to emergency incidents statewide.

“Cal OES is thrilled to create a historic partnership with the Pala Band of Mission Indians and the Pala Fire Department,” **said Nancy Ward, Director of Cal OES**. “Increasing capabilities of the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid System will ensure we can get vital resources to communities statewide during times of need.”

“The Pala Band of Mission Indians and the Pala Fire Department are thrilled to be partnering with Cal OES on a mutual aid agreement,” **said Robert Smith, Chairman of the Pala Band of Mission Indians**. “This is a momentous occasion for the Tribe and for the safety of our community.”

Established in 1978, the Pala Fire Department, with only two (2) firefighters and a 300-gallon water tank, expanded in 1980 to a full-time volunteer department – operating twenty (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week. In 2006 the Fire Department established its Advanced Life Support (ALS) Paramedic program providing the highest level of

service and industry-standard in San Diego to the community of Pala and surrounding areas.

Today, the Pala Fire Department enjoys twenty-nine (29) full-time suppression personnel:

- Two (2) Chief Officers,
- Six (6) Captains,
- Six (6) Engineers, and
- Fifteen (15) Firefighter/Paramedics

More information about the agreement can be found on the [Cal OES website](#).

View media coverage of the press conference:

[KPBS](#)

[KUSI](#)

[Cal OES](#)

The Pala Band of Mission Indians is a federally recognized tribe whose reservation is located along the Palomar Mountain range approximately 30 miles northeast of San Diego. The majority of the over 900 tribal members live on the 12,000-acre reservation, established for Cupeño and Luiseño Indians, who consider themselves to be one proud people - Pala.

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