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# 2007 California Wildfires Economic Recovery Recommendations

*for the*

## San Diego Region Business Community and Chambers of Commerce

**The International Economic Development Council**

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# Background & Experience

- **International Economic Development Council**
  - ❑ Association w/ 4,500 members
  - ❑ Economic Recovery Volunteer Program
  - ❑ Business Reinvestment Forum & Research
  
- **John Zakian**
  - ❑ Practitioner & disaster recovery volunteer
  - ❑ Gulf Coast Recovery Strategic Planning
  
- **Ines Pearce - Pearce Global Partners**
  - ❑ Community Legacy & disaster-resistant solutions
  - ❑ Business Continuity and Emergency Management
  - ❑ Public-Private Partnerships
  
- Team working with Chambers in the region
- Funded by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce through a grant from the Office Depot Foundation

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# Objectives

***Based on a tour of affected areas & meetings with key stakeholders, the IEDC Team sought to:***

- Perform an Assessment of Economic & Business Recovery
  - Evaluate the nature and scale of damage
  - Identify critical needs
  - Consult on next steps
- Bring an experienced outsider's perspective to the role of local and federal government and the private sector in long-term economic recovery
- Identify recovery needs & opportunities to meet current challenges and prepare for the future

# Situation Overview: San Diego County

- About \$2.09 billion economic impact/losses<sup>1</sup>
- 390,300 Acres Burned<sup>2</sup>
- 1,686 homes burned, 879 outbuildings burned<sup>2</sup>
- 250-500 high-value farms affected<sup>3</sup>
- No major infrastructure lost
- Economic Isolation – no movement of goods
- Loss of Tourism & perception issues

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<sup>1</sup>San Diego Institute for Policy & Research

<sup>2</sup>As of November 8, 2007, California Office of Emergency Services

<sup>3</sup>Farm Bureau Estimates



# High-Level Findings

- See new role and opportunities for chambers of commerce
- Identifying lessons learned from previous disasters & implementing change
- Begin preparation for the next disaster



# Strengths

- Partners working together to address current needs & prepare for next disaster
- Communication among levels of government (local, state, federal)
- Effectively applied past experiences – quick response
- Immediately addressing perception issue – “Open for Business”
- Creation of San Diego Region Chambers Disaster Coalition
  - Survey
  - Business Counseling - SCORE Network
  - Connection to other business organizations (Farm Bureau, EDCs, Better Business Bureau) & strengthening relationship w/ partners
  - Looking for funding opportunities (SD Foundation and EDA)
  - Linking Chamber Websites



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# Opportunities for Chambers & Business Support Organizations

- Identify new partners & communicate about resources
- Regional business resource & umbrella
- Mechanisms to measure & address impacts to:
  - Businesses, including home-based
  - Employment impact & dislocated workers

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# Opportunities for Chambers & Business Support Organizations

- Balancing recovery messages:
  - Internal support for recovery & preparedness
  - External messages to promote tourism & investment
- Advocate for a protocol to access facilities
- Self sufficiency and preparedness at the business level





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# Opportunities for Chambers & Business Support Organizations

- Seek and Develop Funds:
  - State & federal funds for business continuity training, business assistance volunteer coordination, and more
  - Create local resources to address delayed economic impacts
- Business assistance at the recovery centers
- Recovery Follow-up (now and in 6+ months)



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# Thank You

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