



NEWS RELEASE

Yocha Dehe Fire Dept. Earns Prestigious International Accreditation for the Second Time

August 31, 2015 (Brooks, CA) – The Fire Department of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation has again earned accreditation by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). The decision was announced August 27 in Atlanta, Georgia. The Yocha Dehe Fire Department (YDFD) first earned accreditation in 2010 and is the only Native American fire department to do so.

“We are certainly proud of our Yocha Dehe Fire Department, the hard work and dedication of its commanders and line officers, and its leadership in safety and emergency response throughout our region,” said James Kinter, Yocha Dehe Tribal Secretary and Chair of the Yocha Dehe Fire Commission. “We also know that we do not do it alone and are incredibly fortunate to have so many strong departments in our area with whom we can work as partners to make a real difference in all of our communities.”

In the five years since its first accreditation, YDFD has continued to work aggressively to improve its training, capabilities and services. Examples include partnering with other regional agencies on the development and deployment of a Computer Auto Dispatch (CAD) system; the construction and opening of a multi-discipline, live-fire training tower for use by YDFD and partner firefighters; and the achievement of significant reductions in ambulance response times in the region.

“When Yocha Dehe decided to build our fire department, we did so with a clear commitment to provide the finest level of services to our citizens and surrounding community,” said Tribal Chairman Leland Kinter. “We remain committed to the CFAI model because it is aligned with our desire to continually self-assess and improve, and provides a process that has helped us elevate our department.”

YDFD gained its second accreditation after an exhaustive peer review by CFAI. CFAI promotes rigorous development and self-assessment and its review carefully evaluates a department’s administration, training, operational skills, documentation, equipment and facilities. It is recognized internationally as the model for critical assessment of fire and emergency services. Only 218 of the estimated 33,000 career and volunteer fire departments in the U.S. are CFAI accredited.

“This accreditation is a tribute to the professionalism of the men and women of the Yocha Dehe Fire Department and the great working team relationship that has been developed among all of our talented auto aid partners,” said Yocha Dehe Fire Chief Gary Fredericksen. “The accreditation is also a testament to the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, and its determination to do everything it can to provide the finest emergency services possible for the community.”

(more)

Yocha Dehe Fire Dept. Earns Second Accreditation (cont.)

“Over the past five years, the Yocha Dehe Fire Department has used its status as a CFAI accredited agency to lead improvement in fire services across Yolo County and as a partner agency we look forward to working with them in the next five,” said John Heilmann, Chief of the City of West Sacramento Fire Department. “YDFD has become a model for other agencies to pursue accreditation and we salute them for their hard work in receiving accreditation for the second time.”

YDFD plays a vital role in emergency response and life safety throughout the Capay Valley and Yolo County by providing full-service fire protection, technical rescue, wilderness search and rescue, fire prevention, emergency preparedness, and paramedic services.

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Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is an independent, self-governed nation that supports our people and the Capay Valley, California community by strengthening our culture, stewarding our land and creating economic independence for future generations.

Contact: Greg Larsen 916.491.4094 (x1)
greg@larsencazanis.com

For more information about:

Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI)
www.publicsafetyexcellence.org

Yocha Dehe Fire Department (YDFD)
www.yochadehe.org/tribal-government/yocha-dehe-fire-department

Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
www.yochadehe.org

Photo Caption: Yocha Dehe government leaders and members of the Yocha Dehe Fire Dept. (YDFD) with CFAI officials after receiving CFAI accreditation in Atlanta, GA. (L-R) Norman Alexander, YDFD Firefighter; Mia Durham, Tribal Council Member / Fire Commissioner; Raul Lorenzo, Fire Commissioner; James Kinter: Tribal Council Secretary / Fire Commission Chair; Steven Westermann, CFAI Chairman; Gary Fredericksen, Yocha Dehe Fire Chief; Crystal J. Smyth: YDFD Business Manager; John O'Neal: CFAI Team Leader / Fire Chief, Addison, TX Fire Department; Sam Tyler, YDFD Engineer