

*California State University-Fresno*  
*Environmental Sciences Seminar Series*  
*Presents:*

***Fire, Earth & Rain: The Aftermath of the 2003  
Southern California Wildfires***

***Jerome V. DeGraff, Geologist***

Southern Sierra Province, USDA Forest Service, Clovis, CA

**Thursday February 24, 2005 at 5:00 pm  
Smittcamp Alumni House, CSU, Fresno**

(reception at 5:00 pm, followed by seminar at 5:20 pm)

**Abstract:** The southern California cycle of wildfire followed, during the rainy season, by floods and debris flows is a recognized natural process. The wildfires in 2003 demonstrated the twin threats posed by this cycle on the fringes of an increasingly urbanized area. Southern California experienced historic wildfire activity beginning in late October. Five major fires and several smaller ones burned nearly simultaneously from the Transverse Range south to the border with Mexico. Multiple agencies worked to identify potential hazards for the following rainy season and institute mitigation measures before their arrival. A strong, but not untypical, storm on December 24-25, 2003 initiated numerous debris flows and flood flows. Those associated with the Olds/Grand Prix Fires on the San Bernardino National Forest resulted in significant property damage and loss of life. A debris flow passing through the St. Sophia Church Camp was responsible for the largest number of lives lost. The presentation will examine the wildfire and the difficulties associated with assessing and mitigating expected responses to loss of vegetation, increased bare soil, and water repellency. It will also detail some of the debris flow and flooding caused by the Christmas Day storm event, including the St. Sophia Church Camp debris flow.

All members of the professional, educational, and research communities are welcome. For additional information, please contact the Earth & Environmental Sciences department office at (559) 278-3086 or [vengieb@csufresno.edu](mailto:vengieb@csufresno.edu)

Parking restrictions will be relaxed in Lot V (Shaw and Woodrow Avenues) between 4:30 and 7:00 pm for seminar participants. An online campus parking map is available at: <http://www.csufresno.edu/univrelations/map>