

EID and Growlersburg teams keep vegetation at bay

For 23 years, **Mike Reeves**, EID's real property specialist, has been working with CAL FIRE and their teams of inmates from the Growlersburg Conservation Camp to clear and burn brush, apply herbicides, and manage vegetation on some pretty remote EID properties.

In April, Mike worked with a CAL FIRE crew to clear the vegetation around our penstock, which descends steeply to the powerhouse. **Rick Carter**, pest and vegetation management technician with the district, was on hand to help with the herbicide used to control woody plants.

"The area along the penstock drops around 1800 feet in elevation," said **Jim Hilton**, who supervises the district's real estate services. "Mike works really well with the crews, and it has been of enormous value to EID."

Each crew—consisting of 17 inmates and a CAL FIRE captain—costs the district \$200 per day. Over the past few years, Mike said he's been using the crews on average 110 days per year. That's roughly 14,000 staff hours per year.

"In house, it's the equivalent of seven full-time staff members," Hilton said.

During the June 8 board meeting, Mike was recognized for his ongoing work with the teams. And he in turn had kudos for the crews. "It's been a great experience working with the guys from the camp and the CAL FIRE organizers," he said.

The Georgetown-based Growlersburg camp is one of 46 camps statewide that provide inmate firefighter hand crews for fire suppression and a workforce for floods, conservation projects, and community services.

The camps are jointly managed by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, CAL FIRE, and the Los Angeles County Fire Department.



EID's Mike Reeves (top, center) has been working with CAL FIRE inmate crews for 23 years on district vegetation management projects. In April, the crews cleared vegetation along the steep terrain where the district's penstock is located.