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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly to Host Colloquium on Wildland and Urban Fire Protection June 17-18

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The U.S. Department of Homeland Security will hold the first Wildland Urban Interface Fire Research Colloquium on Wednesday and Thursday, June 17-18 at Cal Poly.

Jointly hosted by Cal Poly Continuing Education and the Cal Poly Natural Resources Management Department, the focus of the colloquium is to help the federal government identify areas where additional study is needed to reduce the impact of fires and improve safety where wildland and urban areas come together.

“As urban growth spreads deeper into traditional wildland areas, the loss to property, infrastructure and lives due to wildland fires has increased dramatically in recent years,” said Dennis Parks, dean of Cal Poly Continuing Education and University Outreach. “During this research colloquium, experts from across the nation will bring their collective experience and knowledge together to address issues related to the wildland urban interface fire problem. The idea is to bring people from various governmental agencies and academic disciplines together to approach this topic from an interdisciplinary viewpoint.”

Approximately 25 invited scientists, researchers, engineers, university faculty, and professionals from fire-related governmental agencies will attend. Also participating will be representatives from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and its Science and Technology Directorate.

The colloquium is being coordinated by Dan Turner, executive director of the Urban Forestry Ecosystem Institute in the Natural Resources Management Department at Cal Poly. It is being developed through Cal Poly’s partnership with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Center of Excellence in Natural Disasters, Coastal Infrastructure and Emergency Management. The center is located at the University of North

Carolina Chapel Hill.

In addition to this colloquium, Continuing Education and Natural Resources Management are launching an undergraduate certificate in disaster management and homeland security in July. A master of professional studies in disaster management and homeland security is in the initial stages of development. Information on these programs can be found at www.continuing-ed.calpoly.edu/disastermgmt.html.

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