

National Fire Plan

Hazardous Fuels Reduction
Colorado
2003



VAIL, Colo. –The White River National Forest is collaborating with the Colorado State Forest Service, Northwest Colorado Council of Governments, Eagle County, local communities and community fire and emergency service agencies to adopt a defensible space plan for the upper Vail Valley. The defensible space plan will treat 310 acres across private, municipal, county, state and federal lands.



The Holy Cross Ranger District has participated actively in community efforts to create effective defensible space. Vegetation treatment and hazardous fuels reduction on National Forest System land are designed to complement similar projects on adjacent public and private land.

The defensible space plan applies wildfire mitigation guidelines from the Colorado State Forest Service's "Fire Wise" multi-agency program. The vegetation treatments will reduce wildfire threat to communities by improving public and firefighter safety and reducing potential property and environmental losses and damages.

The collaborative approach, which began in planning, carries over to on-the-ground implementation. Implementation began this summer with the treatment of 11 acres. Community participation in providing valuable labor and resources includes:

- U.S. Forest Service
- Colorado State Forest Service
- Homeowners and residents
- Eagle County Youth Conservation Corps crews
- Town of Vail
- Private forestry contractors
- Local caterer that provided lunches

The momentum gained and partnerships developed from implementation of defensible space treatments this year will be used to expand implementation next summer.