FACT SHEET

Making a Difference
## Dixie National Forest – Utah

The Pine Valley Fuel Break project was developed by the Pine Valley Ranger District of the Dixie National Forest in southwestern Utah to reduce wildfire hazard to the rural communities of Pine Valley and Central. The District staff believed that the risk to these communities was high, and the need to reduce fuels was urgent. They proposed the project as a national model for streamlined environmental analysis under the Council of Environmental Quality's guidance issued as part of President George W. Bush's Healthy Forest Initiative.

The project involved creating two shaded fuel breaks on about 560 acres of national forest land bordering the two communities. The height, spacing and amount of fuels such as pinyon pine, juniper and brush would be reduced.

The analysis was begun in May of 2002 and completed in August of 2003. This is about the same length of time as would be required for a standard environmental analysis, but the document was a crisp and focused 12 pages. The project had broad community support and was not appealed.

Implementation of the project is nearly complete. Slash piles resulting from the fuel reduction work will be burned this winter. The likelihood of wildfire burning into the communities from adjacent national forest land is now very small. In addition, District employees provided information to residents of both communities describing how to create defensible space around their homes. Virtually all homeowners have done work to reduce fuel on their property.

The project received strong support from the community fire councils of Pine Valley and Central. Both councils have completed a community fire plan. The State of Utah and the Bureau of Land Management were partners in project.

Area before shaded fuel break

Area after shaded fuel break. Note, less trees.
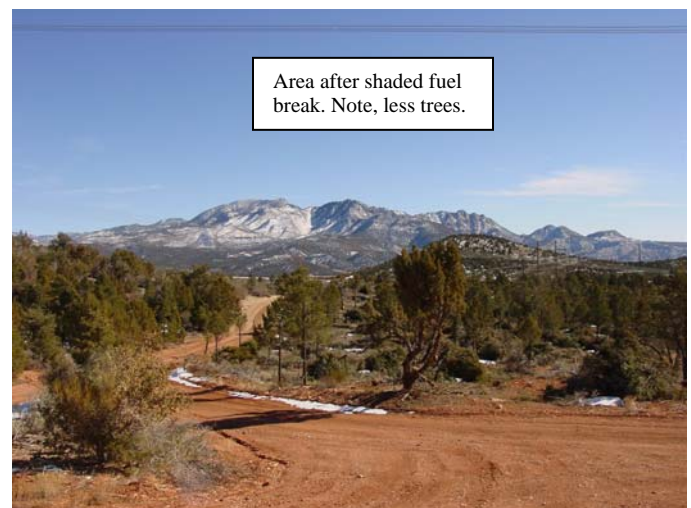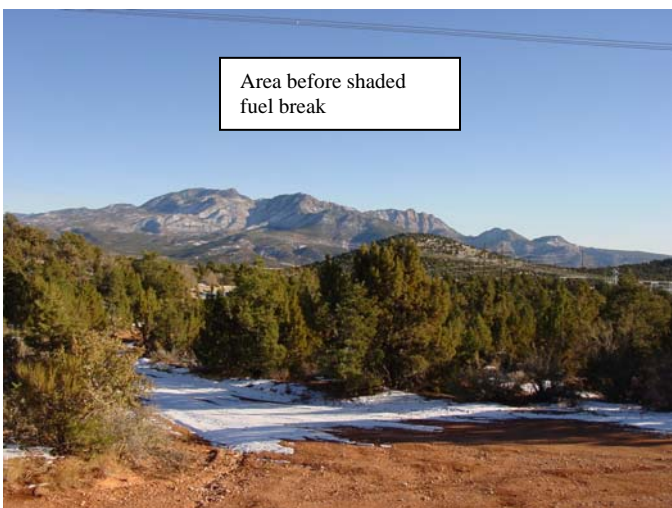
For more information on the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and the Healthy Forests Initiative, visit http://www.fs.fed.us/projects/hfi/ or http://www.doi.gov/hfi/newhfi/