



FACT SHEET



United States Department of Agriculture
Web: <http://www.usda.gov>

United States Department of Interior
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Making a Difference Colville National Forest - Washington

The Burnt Valley Wildland Urban Interface Project area is located 5 miles north of the town of Chewelah, Wash on Three Rivers Ranger District on the Colville National Forest. The purpose of the project is to reduce fuels in the area by using prescribed fire, mechanical treatments and combinations of both. The treatments will reduce the risk of undesirable impacts of wildland fire to public and private lands within the project area, and provide safety for firefighters undertaking wildland fire suppression operations in the wildland urban interface.

Prescribed fire and mechanical treatments will decrease surface fire intensity and lessen the potential for high-intensity crown fires by:

- Reducing surface forest fuel loading,
- Reducing ladder fuels,
- Reducing the number of trees with inter-locking crowns that contribute to crown-fire initiation and crown-fire spread, and
- Maintaining forest stand conditions that favor fire-resistant tree species in short interval and mixed severity fire regimes.

The HFI Fuels Reduction categorical exclusion was used, with a Decision Memo signed on July 30, 2004. The project includes 778 acres of thinning and 1,531 acres of prescribed fire treatments.

The Colville Community Forestry Coalition was the primary group with which the Colville National Forest collaborated on the project. However, local landowners were also involved as well.

The mechanical treatments associated with this project, which include the removal of merchantable-sized trees, would not have been possible without the Healthy Forests Initiative authority. Without the new Healthy Forests Initiative authorities the project would have required an environmental assessment, and would have taken more time to complete.

The town of Chewelah is developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which is in draft at this time. This project fits within the strategy of that plan. There is also a National Fire Plan grant that was requested through the Washington State Department of Natural Resources for defensible space and fuels reduction work for the Burnt Valley area.

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For more information on the Healthy Forests Restoration Act and the Healthy Forests Initiative, visit www.healthyforests.gov