

National Fire Plan

Hazardous Fuels Reduction



Montana - In the Grant Creek community near Missoula, Mont., 160 private landowners reduced the hazardous fuels on their property in 2001 with funding from the National Fire Plan. With an offer of expert advice and free chipping for material removed by a certain deadline, landowners who had longstanding good intentions sprang into action. The project was spearheaded by the Missoula County Fire Protection Association, which includes all firefighting resources in the area.

A key aspect of the project was the personal involvement of landowners. Each of them worked with pride and a sense of ownership, putting their own sweat equity toward a positive outcome for the whole community. "It was better to involve the people ... that way they get themselves educated ... when you do it for them, not as much gets done for your money," said Brian Walter, who helped organize his neighborhood.

Knowing that their neighbors were participating made people feel even better about the project; no one worried that their efforts would be wasted because of the fire danger next door.

"I'm really grateful to the Forest Service employees and others for getting the project and funding approved...I think they stepped right into a need and fulfilled it," — Kim Birck, Grant Land 1-10 Neighborhood Association



For additional information on the National Fire Plan, visit www.fireplan.gov