

Snapshots

Successes of BLM hazardous fuels projects ...

Eastern States Office

Jupiter Inlet Natural Area

BLM's Jackson Field Office in Mississippi completed a second prescribed fire at the Florida Jupiter Inlet Natural Area in February 2002. Approximately five acres were targeted, which took about two hours to complete and about 70 percent of the fuel load was consumed. The goal was to reduce the possibility of destructive wildfire which would threaten many properties in the area, including a gas station, several restaurants and condominiums.



BLM Eastern States prescribed fire crew.

Habitat for wildlife was also improved. The area treated is located against the north boundary of the tract, adjacent to the first burn. The burn fulfilled the objectives laid out in the Jupiter Coordinated Management Plan.

The Jupiter Inlet tract is an urban "island" of scrub, mangrove and hardwood topical hammock. This tract, located in Palm Beach County, Florida, reverted to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in July, 1996, after over 100 years of use by the U.S. Coast Guard. BLM has partnered with the local county government to oversee the management of the tract. In fact, seven agencies participated in the burn including BLM, Forest Service, Village of Tequesta Fire and Rescue, State of Florida Division of Forestry and three county agencies.



Prescribed fire at work on Jupiter Inlet.

February 22, 2002



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Ignition phase of the project. A fire break was constructed to protect homes in the local community.

An interagency agreement between BLM and the Fish & Wildlife Service for prescribed fire operations in the southeast was recently finalized. The agreement establishes the parameters for the Jackson Hotshot Prescribed Fire Modules to do prescribed burning for Fish & Wildlife National Wildlife refuges in Region 4.

New Mexico

PINOS ALTOS FUELS TREATMENT PROJECT Unique Challenge, Textbook Opportunity

The Bureau of Land Management's Pinos Altos Fuels Treatment Project, identified by the State of New Mexico as one of the most vulnerable communities at risk, is a perfect example of a wildland-urban interface project envisioned by the National Fire Plan.

Within five years, approximately 1,900 acres adjacent to the town of Pinos Altos will be treated by BLM. The complex land ownership patterns around this southern New Mexico community created a significant challenge for the BLM, the U.S. Forest Service and the New Mexico Forestry and Resources Conservation Division. Through creative cooperation, the agencies successfully accepted the challenge by working together on issues ranging from planning to the continuing mitigation operations. The long-term plan is designed to blend well with the future proposals of the partner agencies.



Area landscape type prior to being treated.

Because there were no local contractors to perform the work required, the BLM and the Forest Service solicited, trained and put new teams in the field by designating six training units. These

February 22, 2002



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units, each approximately five acres, assisted with new contractor development and are being used to give prospective contractors the skills needed to determine their work completion costs. The BLM completed two larger acreage contracts (approximately 20 acres each) in early November, 2001.

In addition, the project has integrated public outreach programs to identify and eliminate fire danger on private lands. For example, a Firewise Workshop was held in Silver City in May 2001, and another is in the planning stages now for Silver City. New Mexico's forestry agency and the Soil and Water Conservation District, in conjunction with the BLM and the Forest Service, have held workshops on the availability of State grants to help private landowners reduce fuels and create defensible space.

The Pinos Altos project is the National Fire Plan's affirmation of President Bush's "citizen-centered" government. In December 2001, the Office of Fire and Aviation presented the "National Wildland-Urban Interface" award to the Las Cruces Field Office for "... collaboration, cooperation, and communication that must take place for the National Fire to be successful."

February 22, 2002



Post prescribed fire treatment achieved the project goals.