

National Fire Plan

Eldorado National Forest Pacific Southwest Region California



Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project Independence Fuelbreak

Project Description. The Independence Fuelbreak is a collaborative effort located on both the Eldorado National Forest and private lands near the communities of Pollock Pines and Camino, California. The project was approved in September 2002 following the completion of public involvement activities and NEPA analysis. This project is a critical first-line of defense for residences located in this forest and brush covered mountain communities. A combination of Forest Service National Fire Plan Community Protection Grants, Hazardous Fuels funds, stewardship contracting, and private landowner participation will be used to complete the project.



Forebay Road overgrown with dense brush and small trees would offer a serious threat to homeowners escaping the area in the event of a major fire.



Forebay Road after fuels treatment showing a significant decrease of brush and small trees insuring a much safer escape route for homeowners in the event of a major fire.

Key Points:

- More than 60 people enthusiastically participated in pre-project planning meetings.
- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CDF) and Forest Service completed a joint defensible area strategy.
- Approximately 1,200 acres of National Forest System land will have fuels reduction treatments.
- Stewardship Integrated Resource Contracting will be utilized to accomplish much of the fuels reduction work, enabling funds generated by the project to be used for immediate fuels treatments.
- Forest Service will conduct all prescribed burning.
- CDF was awarded two locally granted Community Protection grants totaling \$300,000 to accomplish fuelbreak work on private lands

- El Dorado Irrigation District and Sierra Pacific Industries have expressed interest in contributing additional fuels reduction work along the fuelbreak
- The El Dorado County Fire safe Council website at www.edcfiresafe.org features the fuelbreak.

Implementation and Accomplishments. Eldorado National Forest has completed 224 acres of mastication of large brush along key roads, and thinning and hand piling in plantations. An additional 120 acres are being treated this winter, while an Integrated Resource Contract is being prepared to treat 400 acres. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection is overseeing completion of fuels reduction projects on adjacent private lands, utilizing National Fire Plan Community protection grant funds.



Brush mastication was accomplished along primary transportation routes with the machine displayed here. Standing brush and small trees are mulched down to a low compact fuel bed.



Driveways into residences show brush and overstocked trees that represent a significant hazard of high intensity fire.



After treatment there is obvious reduction in ladder fuels which lowers the chance of fire burning on the ground climbing into the tree crowns.

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