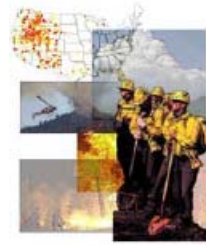


National Fire Plan

Mendocino National Forest Pacific Southwest Region California



Hazardous Fuels Reduction Project Tar Flat Prescribed Burn/Upper Lake Ranger District

Project Description. The Tar Flat Prescribed Burn Project is located on the Upper Lake Ranger District, Mendocino National Forest. The project was designed as a fuels reduction, forest health burn with the consideration of providing some protection for a number of cabins on adjoining private property.

Success of Objectives. On the morning of September 4, 2003, a lightning storm moved across the Mendocino National Forest, igniting 77 fires over the course of 2 hours. Due to the ignition of a large number of fires and a lack of available resources, initial attack was made at 1:00 PM by a single Type III engine responding off another incident. The Bear Fire was approximately 7 acres in size when initial suppression action was taken. Due to fire activity and a lack of resources, the initial suppression actions were unsuccessful.

During the evening of September 5, additional suppression resources were assigned to the incident, with the strategy to: pick up the North flank, provide structure protection to the cabins on private land, and allow the West flank (head of the fire) to burn into the Tar Flat burn area. Suppression personnel, on scene when the Bear Fire burned into the Tar Flat burn area, observed the main advance of the fire stop.



Figure 1. Bear Fire is below the road and prescribed burn is above the road.

The Bear Fire final size was 400 acres at containment. If it were not for the previous fuels treatment, the Bear Fire would have been at least several times larger, resulting in significant increased suppression cost and the potential loss of structures.

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