



Protecting Historic Camp Taylor – Idaho Spring 2005

The Westside Ranger District of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest in Idaho is working hard to protect people and property around Camp Taylor from wildfire. A popular getaway destination about ten miles south of Pocatello, Camp Taylor was built in 1920. Facilities include a lodge and cooking facilities, nine cabins, a shower facility, and outdoor recreation areas in both organized and natural settings. The camp draws 2,000 to 3,000 visitors each year, including Scout troops, family reunions, weddings, and other gatherings.



But the area could be a hazard to visitors if a large fire were to burn through it. One narrow road leads to and from the area, so access is a concern.

“If there was ever a fire down in the lower canyon, campers would be trapped,” says Ron Young on the camp’s board of directors.



A crew of 20 Forest Service employees and volunteers from the Camp Taylor foundation thinned, limbed, pile burned, and cleared brush from the area. These efforts to provide defensible space around the camp’s buildings will make the area more fire-safe for visitors and for firefighters.

Greg Burch, Fire Management Officer for the Westside Ranger District, said they removed fuels around the perimeter of the property so firefighters could better defend it. “This is also good practice for the crew members,” he said, “to come together and prepare for the rigors of July and August.”



The project took two days and covers about 15 acres surrounding the camp. It is just one section of about 80 acres that are being thinned to reduce the risk of wildfire in the area.