



Traprock Hazard Reduction Project Minnesota 2006

The central Minnesota Anoka sandplain ecosystem covers a 13-county area and is the source of drinking water for several major cities. Increasing populations in central Minnesota have resulted in the expansion of the wildland-urban interface in this important area. Based on historical fire occurrence, Anoka sandplain communities were identified as a high priority for the Firewise Minnesota program, which began in 2001. The wildland-urban interface areas in and around the city of Ramsey, MN, are typically overstocked with Norway spruce and nonnative Scotch pine stands. There are also several forest health issues, including a bark beetle infestation, that are causing tree mortality and increasing fire risk.

The Firewise Minnesota program provides technical assistance to communities and uses National Fire Plan funding to provide grants for implementing Firewise practices. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources uses community resources, such as community foresters and fire departments within priority areas, to help implement the program.

Within the town of Ramsey, the neighborhood of Traprock was selected to receive a hazard mitigation grant. In 2004, the grant was used to complete a hazard assessment for the Traprock development; to conduct a Firewise/Defensible Space workshop for residents, fire department officials, Master Gardeners, and county officials; and to develop a hazard mitigation project that would thin the Scotch pine, remove ladder fuels and the “carpet” of pine seedlings, and prune branches of residential trees. Thirteen homes within the Traprock neighborhood, each valued at more than \$200,000, participated in the hazard mitigation project.

On April 9, 2005, the treated area was tested by a wildland fire that was ignited by a resident burning debris in an adjacent neighborhood. When the fire reached the Firewise-treated neighborhood, flame lengths shortened significantly and the fire slowed and spread less aggressively. The threat to the homes was effectively removed and firefighters easily extinguished the fire. The \$13,300 National Fire Plan grant leveraged \$37,471 in local matching funds from the city of Ramsey. The total cost of the project was \$50,770. The value of the project to the Traprock community is priceless.



Fuelwood from the Traprock hazard reduction project awaits transport to the mill. Photo courtesy MN DNR

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