

# National Fire Plan REFORESTATION AND RESTORATION Montana 2002



Tree planting on the Bitterroot National Forest went extremely well this year. In 25 days, nearly a million seedlings were planted on over 3,000 acres burned during the wildland fires in 2000. Seedlings included ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine, western larch, and Englemann spruce. The Forest also planted nearly 10,000 deciduous trees and shrubs – alder, willow, dogwood, snowberry, rose, and kinnikinnick – near streams and disturbed sites where vegetation is slow to recover.

It will take more than a decade to plant trees on the burned, Forest lands targeted for artificial regeneration. Earlier this year, 50,000 acres of the 307,000 acres burned in 2000 were targeted for planting. A portion of that acreage, located at high elevations supporting lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir, burned at a high severity. While it appeared these areas had no available seed source, recent visits to some of these areas revealed that wind can carry lodgepole pine and Douglas-fir seeds over a longer distance than originally believed. This means fewer acres will need to be planted allowing for a quicker restoration process.



The full cost of planting, including seed collection, seedlings, planting, and follow-up site surveys, was about \$400 per acre. Funding is primarily provided through the National Fire Plan, supplemented with normal,

***A good tree planter can plant about 1,500 seedlings in a day.***

appropriated funds and from partners like the National Arbor Day Foundation. This year, private individuals and groups donated \$50,000 to help with the reforestation of burned lands. This spirit of “Caring For The Land” was greatly appreciated and the donations were used to purchase seedlings.



***Local school children get a hands-on learning experience as they plant seedlings in an area burned in the Blodgett Fire of 2000, just west of Hamilton, MT.***