

The National Fire Plan

Blue Ridge Urban Interface National Fire Plan Project And the Springer Fire Arizona 2002



Implementation of the Blue Ridge Urban Interface project began in September of last year on the Mogollon Rim Ranger District of the Coconino National Forest. The project was designed to reduce the risk of fire around 10 subdivisions totaling over 1,000 homes located near the town of Clint's Well, Arizona. So far, the project has completed 4,230 acres of prescribed burning, 1,600 acres of commercial thinning, and the chipping of thinning slash material on about 220 acres.

On May 14 of this year, the objectives of this project were put to a test when a human caused fire broke out just south of the Blue Ridge Urban Interface planning boundary, approximately seven miles north of Clint's Well, Arizona. Within an hour, the fire had grown to five acres. Increased winds and individual tree crowning caused numerous spot fires and the fire began to spread rapidly. The fire moved northeast toward Clear Creek Pines. As it moved into a portion of the Blue Ridge Urban Interface project that had been treated with prescribed burning in February 2002, the fire activity decreased significantly and was no longer burning through the tops of the trees. Some spotting continued to occur but the lessened fire activity allowed suppression resources to get around the head of the fire and contain the fire safely, approximately one mile from Clear Creek Pines. If the fire activity had not decreased, the fire would have had an opportunity to move through one of the subdivisions containing homes at an average value of \$150,000.

