

# National Fire Plan

## Dixie Fuelbreak

### Idaho 2002



The Red River Ranger District on the Nez Perce National Forest is currently in the second and final year of constructing a defensible space fuelbreak around the community of Dixie, Idaho. A need was recognized to reduce wildland fire threat to Dixie. The town is located in an area where the vegetation community is dominated by persistent or climax lodgepole pine. Stand replacement fires occur at 150 or more year intervals with non-lethal fires occurring at 40 or more year intervals in this vegetation type. The purpose of the project is to create



defensible space where fire suppression activities can be conducted safely, and reduce the risk of catastrophic fire by reducing fuels in and around the community. This project contributes to the National Fire Plan in that it mitigates the risk to the community of Dixie in the Wildland Urban Interface.

Treatments are occurring on federally administered lands around Dixie as well as on private land within the town site. Treatments consist of light to moderate levels of thinning and pruning with the cut material being hand piled for burning. Light treatment removes the vegetative materials 3 inches or



less in diameter. Moderate treatment is the same as light except that pole to sawlog-sized trees are cut to separate tree crowns to a spacing discouraging crown fires. Treated distance is 100 to 200 feet from structures, depending on the slope. Similar treatments are occurring on private land with assistance from Idaho Department of Lands.

The Dixie Fuelbreak is a coordinated effort between USDA Forest Service, Idaho Department of Lands and Dixie landowners. Funds were made available through the National Fire Plan and the State Fire Assistance Program. Response from Dixie residents and contributing agency personnel has been overwhelmingly positive and the project has been

viewed as a “template” for future defensible space projects planned on the Red River Ranger District.