

National Fire Plan

Pacific Creek Fuels Reduction Project

Wyoming 2002



The Pacific Creek project is located near Moran, Wyoming, adjacent to the Bridger-Teton National Forest and Grand Teton National Park. A local, interagency group from Teton County, Grand Teton National Park and the Bridger-Teton NF identified the Pacific Creek subdivision as a high priority “community at risk” from wildland fires due to the potential for high intensity fire behavior. Approximately forty homes are located in this 80-acre private in-holding of mixed conifer and sagebrush.

The objective of the project is to provide a buffer along the perimeter of the private land where fire intensity would be reduced to a manageable level under most fire season conditions. Treated areas will now only support a low to moderate intensity fire under all but the most severe weather conditions. Additionally, fires in treated lands are less likely to move from the surface to a fire in the crowns of the trees. A high intensity fire moving towards the subdivision would be slowed, allowing suppression efforts to be more effective. This treatment was also designed to keep any ignitions originating within the private lands area at fire intensities that could be safely and successfully controlled before they threatened federal lands. The Teton Interagency Fuels, Engine and Helitack Crews as well as a contract firefighting crew implemented the project over a three-year period. The crews thinned live trees, piled the dead/down woody materials and removed many of the standing dead snag concentrations. The remaining piles were either burned or chipped.

While the Park and Forest crews worked on the federal lands, Teton County fire personnel have worked with private local landowners; advising them how they can increase defensible space around their homes and how to make the structures themselves more resistant to ignition from wildland fires.

Throughout the project all of the agencies have emphasized to the public that fuels hazard reduction projects will not work without private landowners taking responsibility for reducing fire hazards around their structures.