

National Fire Plan

Warm Lake Natural Fuels Reduction Project

Idaho 2002



Forty-seven summer homes, valued between \$50,000 to \$300,000 dollars, located along the western shoreline of Warm Lake, north of Boise, Idaho, are better protected from wildfire due to a multi-year fuel reduction project. Fire fighter safety is also enhanced by the changed fuel structure, which hopefully will keep a wildland fire on the ground instead of in the tree crowns.



Entry to residential area before treatment



Untreated forest area with thick lodgepole pine stands adjacent to residential areas

The project is within the sensitive South Fork Salmon River watershed and the Warm Lake area was threatened in the late 1980's by large wildland fires and is being coordinated by the Boise National Forest Cascade Ranger District.

After preparing a NEPA Categorical Exclusion signed in 2001, a 283-acre area is being thinned and the larger remaining trees are being pruned to eliminate ladder fuels. Some material generated from the activities was sold for post and pole processing. The remaining slash is piled and burned. All work is being done using hand labor.



Treated forested area with piles ready for fall burning

Prescribed fire treatments in the area started in 1996 and have continued through 2002 treating approximately 6,700 acres.

Homeowners have been receptive to the work, which is occurring primarily in a lodge pole pine, sub-alpine fir vegetation. “I am really impressed with the great job, hard work, and excellent cleanup,” said cabin owner Fred Adolphsen. “We walked most of the project area and saw how through the workers were and just how big of an area has been treated.” He went on to say how helpful this work would be in the event of a wildfire, noting how close the fires in the late 1980’s came to their cabin. “My only concern is with damage to the remaining trees when they burn the piles,” Adolphsen added. “I did talk with the district ranger and he said there probably will be some mortality, and I realize how tight the space is between the remaining trees and the piled limbs.” Adolphsen also stated he had cleared vegetation near his cabin with the objective of keeping a fire on the ground.



Treated site adjacent to residential area.

The Student Conservation Association Fire Education Corps plans to work with cabin owners next year to help them develop means to reduce fire vulnerability around their structures.